



Loul B., Willott J. & Robinson S. (2014) Refugees' Encounters with Christianity in Everyday Life. In G. Vincett et al (eds.) *Christianity in the Modern World: Changes and Controversies*. Farnham, Ashgate

## **Refugees' Encounters with Christianity in Everyday Life**

**Bereket Loul, John Willott & Simon Robinson**

### **Introduction**

With the rise of 'super-diversity', the dynamic mix of ethnicities and cultures characteristic of many large cities (Vertovec 2007) and the postmodern era, Christian identity in the West seems to be increasingly less clear. The monopoly of state religion is itself hard to sustain given the diversity even within the Church of England. It is hard for a particular religion or denomination to claim core spiritual and moral values when these are perceived differently within the institution and when general humanist values seem similar if not the same (Robinson 2008). In turn, this raises many questions. What does belonging involve in the context of cultural and religious diversity? How are different narratives handled in the development of identity, meaning and purpose? One test of such questions is to see how newcomers react to this in their pastoral, spiritual and cultural journey. In the case of refugees, especially, one might expect a strong desire for clear belief to provide the basis of coping in an unfamiliar and diverse society.

This chapter will examine evidence emerging from ongoing research with refugees in the UK which suggests that belonging and belief are often focused in engaging diversity, even after the experience of forced migration.

## **Refugees in the UK**

Asylum seekers are those persons who have lodged an asylum claim (in the UK with the UK Border Agency, part of the Home Office) and who are awaiting a decision on their claim. They are not allowed to work, but do have access to housing, welfare, medical treatment and legal counsel, and have to report to appropriate authorities on a regular basis. A person is only recognised as a refugee when their application for asylum has been granted, having met the refugee criteria set out in the 1951 United Nations Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, namely “a person who, owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his/her origin and is unwilling or... unable to return to it.” (Convention of 1951, Article 1A (2)). Refugees are allowed to work, and have broadly the same rights as UK citizens. In addition to settled refugees, there are growing numbers of destitute asylum seekers who have exhausted their legal rights of appeal but for various reasons cannot be detained or deported (Lewis 2007).

Since 1999 UK immigration policy has been to disperse asylum seekers from the south east (where most arrive) to the regions where there is available capacity of housing, usually to inner-city areas of large metropolitan cities. Asylum seekers have no choice in the matter and may be moved several times, including after they gain refugee status. This can leave them relatively isolated from others of their nationality, ethnicity or faith, and populations are likely to be relatively recent and transient, and so lack established support structures. A consequence of this relocation of asylum seekers to poorer inner city areas, already home to large immigrant populations, is that they encounter, and contribute to, ‘super-diversity’ (Vertovec 2007), the dynamic mix of ethnicities and cultures characteristic of these parts of the UK.

## **Refugees and religion**

Much of the literature on religion within immigrant communities focuses on long-established communities or economic migrants (reviewed in Cadge & Ecklund 2007). There is an important distinction here. While economic migrants may be escaping relative poverty and poor life prospects, and they leave much behind in

doing so, their movement is nevertheless a choice they make. Asylum seekers and refugees are forced to leave their country of origin because of fear of death or persecution (often including religious persecution). Furthermore, other migrants may be joining families and are relatively free (within financial constraints) to choose where they settle. For obvious reasons, they often choose areas where there already exists a sizeable community of their country of origin or ethnic group, and where there will be religious, community and support networks available. As described above, this is not the case for asylum seekers and refugees in the UK, although in other countries where policy gives greater freedom to choose where to settle, such as Australia for example, it may be (Colic-Peisker & Tilbury 2003).

Most research on the experiences of dislocation, movement, reception and treatment, and integration of asylum seekers and refugees tends to focus on external/visible realities of forced migration, such as the practicalities of accessing housing, education and welfare, and the nature of communities, resources, institutions, systems and policies. It overlooks the internal multiple and dynamic subjective and intersubjective dimensions (in the sense of Wilber 2006 & 2007) of the experience of forced migrants, and how these shape their perspectives and practice. The subjective dynamic involves individual values, beliefs, intentions, emotions and attitudes, and the intersubjective those collectively shared social values, mores and beliefs. It is through these that external experiences are filtered to produce meaning, identity and purpose. Accessing this meaning calls for contributions from academic disciplines such as religious studies and pastoral care and a deep understanding of individual narratives.

One of the first studies of the place of spirituality and religious belief for forced migrants in coping with dislocation, crisis and suffering was of Kosovar Albanian refugees resettling in the United States (Gozdziak 2002). Gozdzak emphasised how this group of forced migrants 'conceptualised their suffering as a spiritual experience', arguing:

*Being a refugee – the suffering of wartime, loss of homeland and family members, and the challenge (and sometimes failures) of life in a new country – is for many forced migrants, a spiritual crisis of unparalleled severity. Many of the basic spiritual needs – hope, meaning, relatedness, forgiveness or*

*acceptance, and transcendence – are threatened in the forced migration process. (p. 144)*

It is argued that forced migrants faced with such profound crisis and spiritual pain, cope, survive and respond by drawing 'emotional and cognitive support' from their spiritual and religious belief and practices (Gozdziak 2002, pp. 136). Tweed (2006) and his 'diasporic theory of religions' developed from studying Cuban Catholic exiles in Miami also ascribed similar roles to religions in forced migration. He defined the 'religions of the displaced' as 'confluences of organic-cultural flows that intensify joy and confront suffering by drawing from human and suprahuman forces to make homes and cross boundaries' (2006, pp. 54). In addition to enabling forced migrants in coping with and surviving suffering, Gozdziaak also added that religions and spirituality offer forced migrants 'a form of social and political expression and mobilisation, and a vehicle of community building and group identity' (2002, pp. 136).

Religion matters to asylum seekers and refugees. Many immigrants classify themselves by religion or nationality, as opposed to ethnicity (Haines 2007). A snapshot survey in a UK reception centre showed only 9% declared no faith, with 75% declaring to be Christian or Muslim (cited in Pirouet 2006). Furthermore, many organisations offering assistance to asylum seekers are faith-based (Nawyn 2006). Nevertheless, the importance of religion and faith has mostly been a neglected area of research (Gozdziaak & Shandy 2002; Pirouet 2006). Some recent work has begun to address this. Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Qasmiyeh (2010) explore the changes in religious identity and practice in Muslim asylum seekers arriving in the UK, and how these interact with political and cultural experiences, including masculinities and the process of growing up and parenthood. Snyder (2011) focuses on the role of faith-based organisations, who may have provided sanctuary and support as part of their mission, but who in the UK are increasingly finding themselves delivering services via government contracts, a state of affairs which can create tensions as they critique and challenge policies.

Refugees and asylum seekers face key transitions; from their original homeland, community and family, potentially to a place of different culture, faith and language, and there has been some work on the role of religion in coping with this. Ní Raghallaigh (2011), working with unaccompanied young asylum seekers in Ireland, suggests the importance of religion in coping (in the sense of Pargament 2007). She

finds religion is a source of continuity in their lives, and comfort and companionship which needs to be recognised in the provision of support services.

We suggest that none of these studies focus on the *development* of spiritual identity within the lived experience of refugees, particularly when faced with 'super-diversity' and the large range of cultural and religious practice this encompasses, which usually contrasts sharply with the lives they have left behind. The research described below begins to address this gap in our understanding.

## **Methodology**

We draw on a wider study of autobiographic narratives and lifestory interviews conducted with 16 refugees aged 16-25, with participants mostly based in Leeds, the largest city in the Yorkshire and the Humber region of the UK (northeast England). The region receives the largest number of dispersed asylum seekers of any in the UK, with Leeds receiving most, and approximately 4,000 refugees settle in the region each year (Westmorland, 2006), although numbers have declined more recently. Participants were from 11 countries, comprising 4 male and 12 female, with 9 identifying as Christian, 6 Muslim and 1 Apostle (Vapostori). Interviews were conducted in English by one of us (BL), a refugee of African origin who in addition to having experienced some of the issues we discuss first hand, also had experience of working in refugee support organisations. The interviews sought to draw out the underlying value and belief systems of the participants, their engagement with formal religions (particularly Christianity), and the role these and other religious encounters play in their everyday lives. We explored how the experiences of migration, transition and encountering super-diversity affect individual's search for meaning; the importance of the specificity of any religious context (e.g. social centred Christianity, or that within a tightly knit community, such as Ethiopian Orthodox); and to what extent religion intersects with issues such as gender, ethnicity, culture, sexuality and inter-generational relations. We were particularly interested in whether any role of religion is psychological (for coping and emotional support); spiritual (providing significant life meaning) or practical (including the shelter of institutions, advice, and a support network), or elements of each of these.

Here we present case stories of four individuals to illustrate the diversity of religious beliefs and experiences, and how they are negotiating religion to develop identity, meaning and purpose. Brief biographical details of interviewees are presented but names are anonymised.

## **Refugee stories**

### *Case Story 1: 'My Church is like my second home'*

Sarah's (16; female) parents were originally from West Africa. She was born in Austria but moved to Britain with her parents when she was about nine years old. She was born into a Pentecostal Christian family and described her early religious life in Austria: 'I was still in Sunday school. I wasn't really ... [pause] not like I didn't believe, I did believe in God but it is not like serious. I was just looking forward to Sunday school to play with my friends.'

Sarah's relationship with her faith community and church in Leeds has been positive from the start. She has been regularly attending a branch of the same Pentecostal church she used to go to in Austria. She described her church as 'a second home' and 'feels comfortable and saved there.' Within her faith community and church, her youth pastor and big brother are the two relationships that stood out. Sarah felt that within her culture, there were barriers to speaking openly to her parents about problems or crises she encountered. She said her older brother and youth pastor are more accessible and she always turns to them for guidance and support.

In contrast to her experience in Austria, Sarah's school life in Leeds has been full of intercultural encounters. She has met and kept company with young people from diverse religious and social backgrounds. She asserted that 'it doesn't bother her, if one of her friends is a Muslim, Sikh or something else.' She said she accepts and values her friendships with people of different or no faith. For Sarah, the unconditional acceptance and respect that she extends to others is 'inspired by Jesus.' She added 'though some people do not respect Jesus, I respect them.' However, she emphasized that, even if she values her friendships, nothing is more important than her religion and the Bible guides her everyday life. Having the same church in Leeds and consistent pastoral support and guidance has helped her

maintain and stay centered in her Pentecostal faith. Her journey through encounters with super-diversity (religious and cultural) has not shifted her belief and practice of her religion.

*Case Story 2: 'I didn't need to say my religion is the right one'*

Thomas (18; male) identifies as a Catholic and moved to Britain from Zimbabwe just over a year ago to reunite with his parents. For Thomas, his migration experience was initially 'overwhelming' as it meant not just 'changing a country but changing a continent.' It was tough for him leaving behind his 'old friends' and trying to get used to 'totally different' people. He admitted he dearly missed and 'had a hard time getting over' his friends and Zimbabwe. However, he was very happy to be reunited with his family and 'felt at home' in a short period of time. Owing to the timing of his arrival, Thomas didn't start college for the first four months of his new life in Britain. He spent most of that time travelling and visiting his extended family in different parts of the UK. He said he 'felt like little Dora the Explorer' [a reference to a children's cartoon character who travels the world and meets new people] and recalled the vital part that experience played getting him oriented and adjusting to British customs and way of life.

Thomas was worried about experiencing 'racism and discrimination' when he first started college. He mentioned encountering bullies and a few with prejudice against Africans, which at first he 'got offended by' and which challenged his 'self-esteem'. But he was quick to pause and reflect that what he was experiencing mirrored the ignorance and prejudice he once had against British youth as being predominantly 'rude, violent, drug addicted hooligans.' He decided not to be offended, nor to lose his self-esteem. For Thomas, that he spoke English and the life skills he developed at his international boarding school back in Zimbabwe helped him challenge the stereotype directed at him.

However, one thing that his old all-Catholic school couldn't fully prepare Thomas for was the level of religious diversity he encountered at his new school in Britain. He said engaging with people from different religious

backgrounds previously 'only read about in books or heard in RE classes' was hard at first, but rewarding. Thomas asserts that he didn't want to offend others and felt he had to learn how to control himself and be able to understand them. Armed with that attitude, he was able to engage and form strong friendships with young people from Jewish, Muslim, non-Catholic Christian and atheist backgrounds. He said that 'If my parents were Muslim, I would surely be a Muslim' and reflecting on the chance of birth he felt it was not necessary to 'say my religion is the right one. I need to respect other people and they need to respect me.'

Encounters with new cultures and practices presented challenges to Thomas' world view. He remembers a conversation he had with his older sister about sexuality and gay rights in Britain, and the need to avoid perjorative language. At the time, Thomas found this uncomfortable and hard to digest. Thomas' attitudes towards homosexuality were formed by Catholic teachings and African social mores. However, when Thomas befriended a lesbian classmate, he had a transformative experiences. He sums up, 'it doesn't matter which religion you are from, because being gay is what you are from the inside. You can be a Christian or you can be a Muslim, but you shouldn't keep from being gay because you are afraid of others.'

Though Thomas's religious outlook and attitudes have significantly shifted from his encounters and engagements with super-diversity, he still affirmed his overall Catholic Christian identity. In fact he now goes to church more frequently than he used to in Zimbabwe, partly at least because there are more activities here including dance, youth, bible study and charity groups run by the church.

### *Case Story 3: 'It is all God's house... We all came from the same God'*

Anastasia (24; female) was forced to flee her home country in Eastern Europe with her husband after being persecuted for their political activism. She has been living in Leeds for over two years and identifies herself as Russian Orthodox Christian. She described Orthodox Christianity as 'part of life' in her home country. She saw herself



as religious back there in the sense that '[I] try to go to church every Sunday and if not, pray at home.' She emphasized that the hardship and suffering of her dislocation experience had brought her closer to and reinvigorated her faith in God, saying that in tough situations 'you don't need religion ... but if you don't believe in God ... you can go crazy. You are lost and that is it'. She felt that 'all you need is [to] just believe' and 'I have seen miracle when I do that'. Anastasia was visibly upset as she tried to speak about what happened to force her to leave her home country. She said, 'you just can't forget about everything' and 'thinking about it feels the same, scary....' She admitted it took time to let go of her painful memories that made the start of her new life in Britain very difficult. She had to make a conscious decision to stop reliving her past for her own well-being. She said: 'it makes you go mental. I will forget all that. We are here now and safe. That is why I wanted to start from a new page.' For Anastasia, starting life anew felt being 'like a new born.', saying:

*You are living here and you have to respect these people and their language. I can't just speak my language and expect these people to understand me. I need to speak their language as well as their culture and traditions. You need to start from zero to understand and be part of community.*

A turning point in the journey from 'ground zero' to becoming part of a community came when she walked in to a church near her home without regard for its religious orientation or denomination.

*I didn't know what type of church or religion it was. I just got inside, it was open and nobody was there. I was staying and praying and praying. I even started crying until one lady working there came and said 'are you ok?' I said yes. 'Do you like coffee, tea?' I was just wow, somebody in a church asking me for coffee. I said no thank you. I was there long time and she asked me again ....She then said let's pray together. She just met me!*

Anastasia describes how she saw a different face of Christianity as a result of this encounter and through the relationship she built with the lady (whom she calls 'my angel') and her ongoing involvement with the church.

*Back there [in her country of origin] it was more talk but nothing in action. Here it is different, it is action and less talking. It is actually people doing something. They have big heart, big souls to open-up and understand everybody and try to help.*

The encounter and exposure to a different manifestation of Christianity has shifted Anastasia's understanding of what it mean to be Christian as well as how she engages with her Russian Orthodox faith. 'We go to church but not always to our own, because it is far. We go to the nearest church whether it is Catholic or any other church, it is all God's house.'

Anastasia has subsequently become a volunteer in a refugee support project, hosted by the same church she first entered, which means she has met and made friends with people from many different religious and national backgrounds. Such ongoing encounters with diversity and relational exchanges helped her spiritual growth to cross beyond her Christian religious boundaries and embrace others from different faith traditions.

*With all the people that I met .... we may be talking about a little bit different types of religions. But at the end of the day we are talking about the same thing. Different language .... different names ... different prophets. It is all the same; we all came from the same God.*

#### *Case Story 4: 'My Christianity is really important'*

John (18; male) was originally from Zimbabwe and came to Britain to reunite with his parents when he was about 12 years old. He used to be a Christian and regularly attended his church back in Zimbabwe. Within the last two years he has converted to an indigenous Zimbabwean faith called Apostles (Vapostori in Shona). He described his new Apostles faith as having some elements in common with both Christianity and Islam:

*We don't read the Bible or the Qur'an. We believe in the olden time where we have prophecies and the Holy Spirit just comes upon someone ... So, we believe in the time of Moses when God spoke through him. We*

*believe he was an Apostle, same like Jesus and the twelve Apostles...Prophet Mohammed... God can speak through anyone. And when we gather at the church that is what we open up to: God talk to us and lead us and guide us.*

He knew about the Apostles back in Africa but he wasn't attracted to it, and only converted to the Apostles when his 'life depended on it.'

*It was last year. There were people in Africa that I knew were Apostles but back in the days I wasn't a strong believer. But somehow, I kind of did when my life depended on it. God saved me. I was in a kind of problem in a hospital. I just collapsed and somehow, I don't know, God spoke to me somehow.*

John rationalised the medical condition that left him hospitalised as inevitable to get 'closer to God.'

*I am a healthy child but for some reason my body was not functioning well. I had a kidney failure; I fainted and had a fit. Things were not really working out for me. Why it happened? I had to experience that thing. It is a way of getting closer to God. Everything has a reason.*

Despite this crisis that led to a religious conversion, he nevertheless affirmed the significant place that Christianity still holds in his life.

*All my life I have been a Christian and without God I will be lost. So, I give all the glory to Him. Even for me to come to England it is not about my parents but it is about Him bringing me together with them. So, my Christianity is really important.*

John summed up his philosophy of life as caring 'about how other people live beside how I live.' and stressed that the meaning and purpose of his life had always been 'helping others.' It is through helping and caring for others that he finds his 'true inner self' and sees the role of his religious faith as strengthening what he innately has. He didn't see his religious conversion as a change of his inner value or his persona.

*It didn't really change me that much. It just opened my eyes to see things in different ways. ... When I became an Apostle it showed me how to deal with certain things, which I wouldn't have dealt with when I was a Christian. So, it kind of made me to grow stronger. It didn't change me but made me grow stronger.*

## **Discussion**

From the initial research several things have emerged which contribute to the discussion of contemporary Christianity. First, in relation to the Gozdzia (2002) thesis outlined above, it is not clear that religion is simply used by young refugees as a coping mechanism at a time of crisis. Only one of the participants (Sarah) used an institutional church as a form of coping mechanism. It is not clear even in that case that the coping mechanism was a conscious set of beliefs attached to that church. Coping for her was focused in relationships with people, and she chose two people in particular who were not associated with authority structures in the church or family. All this suggests an affective basis to coping, echoed by the Orthodox Christian (Anastasia), rather than a strong institutional, conceptual or existential (in the sense of relating to a divine being) basis. Gozdzia's research considered one community with a shared religious and ethnic background. Working in super-diverse communities, we have shown that encounters with religion and Christianity are themselves more diverse.

The evidence secondly suggests that the participants did not style their experience as one of crisis. For the most part their sense of crisis was in the past and the positive sense of safety experienced led them to look for a new identity in the new life and culture they were experiencing. The experience of that new culture was once more person- and affect- centred rather than focused in religious meaning. Hence, the experience of school or college directly faced the participants with great cultural diversity embodied in different relationships and the immediate challenge of handling that. This partly involved searching for acceptance in and embracing diverse new cultures where the participants did not have to fear for their lives. This did not mean total change of identity, as several participants retained key values, mostly humanistic, national and cultural. Part of the reaching out to the new cultures

involved a search for values that could be the basis for becoming part of a new community, partly echoing Woodhead's idea of tactical spirituality (Woodhead 2012). This also led to a strong acceptance of diversity within the Christian Church.

Thirdly, there is evidence that diverse encounters led to the development of new values which could contradict premigration values, but the culture and religion which gave rise to those values were not rejected wholesale. The participant who got to know a lesbian at college made a clear decision to accept homosexuality, based on the experience both of the person and also of the tolerance embodied in the educational culture. Importantly there was evidence of individual moral agency, making a judgement about homosexuality, partly through Thomas's consciously standing out against both his cultural and Catholic Church background. He was happy to remain associated with both those cultures and like others saw them as the basis for core humanistic values, but also was able to critique them on the basis of relational experience and on the different values of the wider culture. Such changes led to a strong sense of plural identity. The example of the views about homosexuality suggests that this was not about a pick and mix spirituality, but one that critically engaged the different narratives, and was able to hold them together; there was a critical appreciation of the different narratives and what they and the relationships that embodied them gave to the person.

Our fourth observation is that this response to 'super-diversity' was essentially positive. Participants were not lamenting the loss of a more homogeneous, familiar, and therefore 'safe' background. Building hope, meaning and purpose for most participants were not based simply in the meaning structure of institutional religion but in the effective engagement with diversity. This coheres strongly with Snyder's (2000) view of hope. Snyder argues that hope is developed essentially through practice and engagement, focused in the development of agency, pathways and goals. Most participants were aiming to develop the capacities associated with agency and pathways that enabled them to respond to the diverse culture. Critical to this hope was the experience of safety and freedom. Because of this focus there was predominantly a sense of excitement about possibilities. There was little evidence of any sense of identity focused in victimhood and no sense of working through issues of shame, forgiveness and so on. This was one of the surprising findings that went contrary to the conventional wisdom that has informed our own

preconceived views as well as the practices of many agencies, including faith-based organizations that often are at forefront of refugee support. Snyder (2011) cautions against paternalistic responses of faith-based organisations in supporting asylum seekers, and only seeing people as victims in need of support rather than as individuals with agency. As one of our research participants put it, 'people may see and pity the caterpillar as an ugly worm but the caterpillar knows he is a beautiful butterfly in the making.'

For most of the participants, the trauma of what happened in their home country, and the perilous migration journey, were not what mainly concerned them. Rather, it was their initial experiences in Britain, when their hopes and expectations were not matched by reality, which created a crisis of self. Many felt such crisis as an interruption to their projected self, a finding mirrored in work with professionally qualified refugees (Willott and Stevenson, in press). Hence, making sense of experience and the search for meaning in times of crisis was mainly in their immediate relationships and practical demands that resonate with their ambitions, passions and visions.

Unlike the common sense understanding of religion as a major source of life meaning and anchor of identity and belonging, our participants' religiosity was performed, expressed and engaged differently in different social spaces (see Hopkins et al 2011, and Vincett et al 2012). Central to this was a learning experience quite different from Fowler's stage approach to spiritual development (Fowler 1995). Participants spoke of continued challenges and relational tensions, and becoming used to handling these. Typically they would work through those by first returning to a safe place (cultural, family or religious), analogous to Fowlers stages two or three. Then once they developed skills and confidence to engage the new community they became dissatisfied with the narrow relationship, and moved into further positive engagement with the different narratives of their immediate community.

## **Conclusions**

Our research inevitably captures one moment within a life course encompassing for these people not only the personal journey of development as they mature, but one

which has involved dislocation and a journey across different cultures. We are aware that a longitudinal study may unveil different trajectories of faith and identity development that respond to shifts in life priorities and challenges. Secondly, the reflections and interpretations here offer only idiographic representation of reality from the perspectives of young refugees. Capturing the full picture of the encounters and dynamics of super-diversity may require exploration of lived experiences of refugees and their young counterparts from the host communities in tandem. We have been able to explore how encounters with diversity have shaped experience because our research was centred in Leeds, one of the most diverse cities in Britain, where new arrivals are furthermore dispersed across the different established communities creating a global presence in every neighborhood. There is no doubt that our participants' experiences would have been very different if they had been re-settled into less diverse surroundings.

The face of Christianity and the religious landscape in Britain is in flux as a response to new immigration and new belief systems and practices. The rise of scientific rationalism had challenged Christianity's pre-modern claims over monopoly of truth and shrunk its domain of influence that previously pervaded both public and private life. Christianity was further pushed to the periphery of public life as rational secular values took root influencing the belief systems and organizing principles of modern society. In late-modernity, advances in technologies and social-scientific knowledge brought the world virtually closer challenging both ethnocentric values of Christian Britain and Eurocentric worldviews of secular Britain. Increase both in magnitude and diversity of migration in the postmodern global age brought physical presence and voices of diversity to social ecology allowing the birth of super-diverse Britain.

From the outside, the impact of immigration in terms of demographic shifts at national and congregational levels is fairly visible. Taking an everyday lived perspective allowed us to extend the place of religion beyond formal religious organizations and ethno-religious boundaries of cultural spaces. It allowed us to see the human and social dynamics that are unfolding. We have shown in our case stories how our informants' Christian faith is constantly questioned and shaped by a complex interplay between an individual developing human agency and the social contexts of changing structures and diverse relationships in everyday life.

Our study has also shown how flexible and responsive young refugees are in encountering and adapting to super-diversity. They do not describe a spiritual crisis, nor seek to affirm the ethnocentric and dogmatic rigidity of their own religiosity and identity. Rather, we saw individual spiritual growth and development that is socially engaged and responsive.

## Reference

Wendy Cadge and Elaine Howard Ecklund, 'Immigration and religion', *Annual Review of Sociology*, 33 (2007): 359-379.

Val Colic-Peisker and Farida Tilbury, "'Active" and "passive" resettlement: The influence of support services and refugees' own resources on resettlement style', *International Migration*, 41/5 (2003): 61-91.

Peter Dwyer, *Integration? The perceptions and experiences of refugees in Yorkshire and the Humber* (Migration Yorkshire, ).

<http://www.migrationyorkshire.org.uk/?page=publications#YFresearch>. Accessed 01/08/2012

Elena Fiddian-Qasmiyeh and Yousif M. Qasmiyeh, 'Muslim asylum seekers and refugees: negotiating identity, politics and religion in the UK', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 24/3 (2010): 294 – 314.

James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* (New York, 1995).

Ezbieta M. Gozdziaik, 'Spiritual Emergency Room: The Role of Spirituality and Religion in the Resettlement of Kosovar Albanians', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15/2 (2002): 136 - 152.

Ezbieta M. Gozdziaik and Dianna J. Shandy, 'Editorial introduction: the role of religion and spirituality in forced migration', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15/2 (2002): 129-135.

David W. Haines, 'Ethnicity's shadows: Race, religion, and nationality as alternative identities among recent United States arrivals', *Identities-Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 14 (2007): 285-312.



Peter Hopkins, Elizabeth Olson, Rachel Pain and Giselle Vincett, 'Mapping intergenerationalities: the formation of youthful religiosities', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers*, 36/2 (2011): 314-327.

Hannah Lewis, '*Desitiation in Leeds: the experiences of people seeking asylum and supporting agencies*' (York, 2007).

Stephanie J. Nawyn, 'Faith, ethnicity, and culture in refugee resettlement', *American Behavioral Scientist*, 49 (2006): 1509-1527.

Muireann Ní Raghallaigh, 'Religion in the Lives of Unaccompanied Minors: An Available and Compelling Coping Resource', *British Journal of Social Work*, 41/3 (2011): 539-556.

Kenneth I. Pargament, *The Psychology of Religion and Coping: Theory, Research, Practice* (London, 1997).

Louise M. Pirouet, 'Why religion matters' in Temple & Moran (eds.), *Doing Research with Refugees* (Bristol, 2006), pp.167-182.

Reese, L. Morality and identity in Mexican immigrant parents' vision of the future. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 27/3 (2001): 455 - 472.

Simon Robinson, *Spirituality, Ethics and Care* (London, 2008).

Dianna J. Shandy, 'Nuer Christians in America', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 15/2 (2002): 213 - 221.

C. R. Snyder, 'The past and possible futures of hope', *Journal of Social and Clinical Psychology*, 19/1 (2000):11-28.

Susanna Snyder, 'Un/settling angels: faith-based organizations and asylum-seeking in the UK', *Journal of Refugee Studies*, 24/3 (2011): 565 – 585.

Thomas Tweed, *Crossing and Dwelling: A Theory of Religion*, (Cambridge, 2006).

Steven Vertovec, 'Super-diversity and its implications', *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 30/6 (2007): 1024-1054.

Giselle Vincett, Elizabeth Olson, Peter Hopkins and Rachel Pain, 'Young people and performance Christianity in Scotland', *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 27/2 (2012): 275-290.

Pnina Werbner, 'The place which is Diaspora: citizenship, religion and gender in the making of chaotic Transnationalism', *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 28/1 (2002): 119 - 133.

Elizabeth Westmorland, 'Asylum seekers and refugees in Yorkshire and the Humber, 2001-2006', *The Yorkshire and Humber Regional Review* 16 (2006): 21-23.

Ken Wilber, *A Sociable God: Toward a New Understanding of Religion* (Boston, 2005).

Ken Wilber, *Integral Spirituality: A Startling New Role for Religion in the Modern and Postmodern World* (Boston, 2006).

John Willott and Jacqueline Stevenson, 'Attitudes to employment of professionally-qualified refugees in the UK', *International Migration* (in press).

Linda Woodhead, *Strategic and Tactical Religion*. Opening speech of Conference 'Sacred Practice of Everyday Life' (Edinburgh, 2012).