Conclusion: Where Do We Go from Here?

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From our different corners of the world, we have been struggling to make sense of the relationship between religious and citizenship regimes. We have been in a conversation around these issues, on and off, for over a decade. We have met at different points in time and in various locations, in different pairs or groups, only once as the entire group. What we have documented in this volume are snapshots of how we view and have viewed the relationship between religion and citizenship at various moments and from a variety of positions. This collection reflects the development of our own thinking over the course of time and through reflection of what other group members have been saying. In a sense, the contributions to this volume represent empirical data for an investigation of the significance of religions for notions and practices of citizenship. At

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the same time, we already work with this material that we have created ourselves to draw diverging analytical conclusions. It has become evident that we, while agreeing on different aspects, were unable to come to one overarching, straightforward result.

1 How to Reduce the Conceptual Ambiguities of Citizenship and Religion?

Let us reiterate our ‘conversation’ and place it within the existing scholarly debate about the relationship between religion and citizenship. In the first part, we outlined our personal struggles with citizenship, religion, and secularism. We describe ‘from where we speak’, a basic requirement of feminist and other critical scholarship, as Blanc has mentioned in his Chap. 3. It provides the ‘lens’ through which we look at citizenship and religion. We position ourselves in order to create an understanding between ourselves, and between us and the reader, on some of the reasons why we see things the way we see them. Our view of citizenship and religion is coloured by the problems we have experienced in our own lifetime with these issues. These experiences were made in a wide range of times and places, which makes this collection quite unique.

Our methodological approach could be included among the ‘lived religion’ approaches (Hall 1997; Orsi 2003; McGuire 2008) and the ‘lived citizenship’ approaches (Lister 2003; Siim 2000) that have replaced earlier approaches to citizenship and religion that have largely focused on status and rights. ‘Lived’ approaches work from the bottom up in order to understand dynamic relationships and developments rather than describing static positions on the macro level. In this sense, the first part of this book provides an ‘alternative narrative of the role of religion in the public sphere’ that interrogates ‘more precisely when, where and how religion played a (legitimate or disputed) role in democratic deliberation, policy formation and implementation’ (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016: 34). It represents a bottom-up approach to the investigation of both citizenship and religion that helps us to discover ‘that religion—rather than being a single entity—is made up of diverse, complex and ever-changing
mixtures of beliefs and practices, as well as relationships, experiences and commitments' (McGuire 2008: 185). The first part of this book is a good illustration of this.

We are citizens of three European and two MENA (Middle East and North African) countries, but all having experiences of living abroad for long stretches of time. Thus, while we all have roots in a particular citizenship regime, we all have been ‘guests’ among people with different citizenships from our own. These experiences of being ‘other’ have also shaped our critical views of how we can be active citizens and under which conditions. In other words, the first part describes different ‘shades’ of citizenship that we have personally lived and witnessed. What unites us in this part as well is that we all write from a minority perspective of sorts, be that of being non-religious among a religious majority, of women in a patriarchally dominated society, of being a foreigner, of belonging to a religious minority, or of having a contested political identity.

The problems that seem to emerge from our contributions in the first part of this volume mirror in part the scholarly debate about citizenship in general and the relation between citizenship and religion in particular. Storrie’s Chap. 2 offers a personal perspective on how the multiplicity of cultural regimes has played out in the struggle to construct ‘citizenship’ in Great Britain during his lifetime. He offers a detailed description of the various aspects that play a part in these processes—social class, gender, religion, ethnicity.

Different reform movements have contributed in diverging, often small, sometimes larger ways to a practice of citizenship that has become increasingly more participatory. The citizenship regime in Britain that is marked by the different pluralities represented in society has gradually moved towards the ideal of ‘participatory parity’ (Fraser 2003)—everybody should have the same status as partners in social interaction and be enabled to fully participate—even though there is still ample room for improvements. This ideal ‘background’ for just citizenship regimes is also pointed out by Werbner and Yuval-Davis (1999: 9): ‘particularities can only flourish in the context of shared, broad-based universalist-democratic and social-economic equality’, a standpoint shared by all contributors to this volume.
Another aspect of the relationship between religion and citizenship discussed by scholars emerges from Storrie’s Chap. 2 and Blanc’s Chap. 3: the tension between and the difficulty of clearly separating secular and religious, or public and private domains. For Blanc, a lengthy stay in the United States triggered a rethinking of this relationship and of the context in which he had been brought up. The question whether religion is a public or private matter has been at the heart of Blanc’s thinking about the link between citizenship and religion and shaped his contemporary view on the role of Islam in today’s secular France that he analyses in the second part of the book. Scholars have long struggled with this uneasy relationship between public and private, between religious and secular, beginning with Max Weber (1922).

One result of this debate is the so-called secularisation thesis, prophe- cying a declining influence of ideas about the sacred (ibid.), a decline of religious explanations as opposed to scientific explanations (Bruce 2002), a process whereby religious institutions, actions, and consciousness lose their social significance (Wilson 1966: xiv), and an increasing privatisation and individualisation of religion (Berger 1967; Luckmann 1967). Blanc’s early experiences, even in his own family’s diverging understandings of religiosity, reflect more recent developments in this scholarly debate that consider the secularisation thesis largely untenable, particularly when looked at on a global scale (e.g. Demerath 2007).

As Berger (1999: 2) puts it: the secularisation thesis is mistaken and the world is ‘as furiously religious as it ever was’. While the religious landscape worldwide is certainly changing, the significance of religion has obviously not decreased. Different concepts have been put forward to describe the processes, with which Blanc has also been struggling: Davie (2007) has called them ‘believing without belonging’ and ‘vicarious religion’. Day (2011) has conceptualised belief as the experience of belonging in a social context, an aspect Droeber picks up in her Chap. 12 in this volume. Others have described the renewed role of churches and other religious institutions in public policy debate and in the delivery of welfare services (Bäckström and Davis 2010; Dinham and Jackson 2012; Reynolds 2014), as well as religious growth and vitality due to immigration (Davie 2002; Ebaugh and Saltzman Chafetz 2000). Woodhead (2003) speaks of a ‘relational turn’ in modern religion, where emotions
and relationships have moved centre-stage in contemporary religiosity. In other words, processes of secularisation and sacralisation seem to coexist in contemporary Europe, and in the world as a whole.

Linked to the debate about secularisation is the conceptual separation of public and private spheres that also features in Blanc’s Chap. 3. Even before the secularisation thesis and the secular-religious binary used to be questioned, feminist scholars challenged the public-private binary. Particularly in the field of religious organisations and practised religion, the boundaries between public and private are blurred. Nyhagen and Halsaa (2016: 66) argue that ‘in combining private religious beliefs, civil society activism, and public deliberation and intervention, religious organisations represent a contested borderland where the practice and negotiation of citizenship status, rights, identities, participation and belonging may become especially acute’.

Michon’s Chap. 4 supports the critique of the secular-religious binary as witnessed in his own life and in his research. In fact, he argues that teaching (about) religions should be an essential element of a functioning citizenship regime. Only when religions are taught in a ‘study-of-religion’ kind of approach is it possible to be Muslim in contemporary France, to answer the question he raises at the beginning. Such an approach, similar to that taken in Germany, as Droeber outlines in Chap. 13, could be a mechanism of inclusion of minorities into a particular citizenship regime (Benhabib 2004). Including religious education as a subject taught in schools may not only help stretch the discursive boundaries of the ‘citizenry’, but also, as Nussbaum (1999: 107) suggests, ‘contribute to the struggle for justice’. The focus on religious education would also take into account the kind of religiosity practised by the young people Michon has interviewed in Germany and France. While arguably changing in nature, religion and religiosity remain important issues in young people’s day-to-day lives and this ‘lived religion’ should be taken seriously for the development of ‘lived citizenship’.

Another issue that features in the scholarly debate about religion and citizenship and that has been the focus of much feminist research is the role of gender in the construction of citizenship. It is at the heart of Bouatta’s experience described in her Chap. 5. The exclusionary nature of most citizenship regimes when it comes to gender equity or equality has
been highlighted by feminist research on citizenship theories and practice. While for the male contributors to this book gender is not in the foreground of their personal experiences (although they may have later developed a critical stance), and Droeber, as the only other female contributor, does not describe personal discrimination on the basis of gender differences, for Bouatta it has become a central theme of her life story. Her personal experience in Algeria reflects the classical case discussed in much feminist scholarship on citizenship and gender since the 1990s. It is a useful reminder that while ‘Western’ feminist scholars may have moved beyond rights-based approaches to citizenship to also focus on questions of identity or participation (Lister 2003; Lister et al. 2007; Siim 2000) there are other countries where women cannot even claim formal equal rights and status.

Werbner and Yuval-Davis (1999: 8) have rightly observed that ‘in the states of the South, democracy and universal citizenship are—when they exist at all—relatively recent, often fragile achievements’. More than 25 years after Sylvia Walby asked whether citizenship was gendered (Walby 1994) Bouatta’s answer would be an emphatic ‘yes’ for the case of Algeria. It is against the background of her own struggle within the Algerian feminist movement that Bouatta has come to view the involvement of religiously motivated groups in Algerian politics with suspicion as they appear to undermine the feminist demand for equality of all citizens regardless of gender, class, ethnicity, or other such markers of identity. In this stance, she would agree with Nancy Fraser (2003), who speaks about the need for ‘participatory parity’ (ibidem: 29) of all citizens, that is, all citizens regardless of gender, religion, class, or other background should be granted the same status of full partners in the community, a right Bouatta would consider as conflicting with increasing participation of religious groups in decision-making positions. As Skjele (2007) has rightly pointed out, gender equality legislation does regularly not apply to religious associations, so that they can legally discriminate on the basis of gender or sexual orientation when such discrimination is based on religious doctrine.

Shafei’s Chap. 6 is not only a useful reminder of the fact that the citizenship debate, just as the secularisation thesis, has its origin in Western Europe—Eurocentric or Occidentocentric, as Bauböck (2009: 10) has
called it—and that the terms of the debate cannot be easily ‘transplanted’ into other parts of the world that are marked by diverging cultural and/or religious traditions, historical developments, and political regimes. In both of his two contributions, Shafei elaborates convincingly on this problem. He reminds us, moreover, that citizenship, belonging, and identity are not only something we construct ourselves behind closed doors but are essentially, and often violently, influenced by political circumstances. Shafei’s experience of military occupation and of having both identity and citizenship constantly contested reflects what Werbner and Yuval-Davis (1999: 8) describe as a ‘particular, often hegemonic, vantage point’, which imposes ‘what is in reality a partial vision on others, placed differentially’. It reminds us that citizenship ideals—equal opportunities, participation on a par, legitimate identities—remain but a distant illusion in times of siege. Shafei’s contribution does, however, bear witness to the emotional and psychological aspects of citizenship also referred to in Droeber’s Chap. 7, albeit from a very different angle.

Droeber’s personal experiences of a sense of belonging in a number of religious communities support another strand in the scholarly debate about religion and citizenship: the idea that religious belonging and participation within a religious community foster community engagement, particularly among migrants (Levitt 2008). Indeed, some scholars have moved towards using the term ‘religious citizenship’, without defining precisely what is meant by this, with the exception, perhaps, of Hudson (2003), who made out two levels of ‘religious citizenship’: the nation-state level and the civil society level. The former would be defined as the kind of citizenship ‘that your nation-state allows you to exercise in religious matters’ (ibidem: 426), whereas the latter is described as citizenship ‘which citizens exercise as religious persons in the civic sphere’ (ibid.).

Droeber’s Chap. 7 would fall neatly into the second category, where belonging to a religious community is the basis for civic engagement. In line with similar arguments in the scholarly debate about citizenship and religion, we see how the areas of religion and citizenship can be bridged through the notion of ‘belonging’. Citizenship itself has been defined as belonging (Yuval-Davis 2006). This conceptualisation takes into account an often neglected part of citizenship referred to above, that is more frequently mentioned with regard to religion: emotional and psychological
aspects. A sense of belonging, while perhaps positive for the person who belongs, also always creates ‘outsiders’, those who do not belong (ibid.). Many of the contributions to this book provide evidence for these processes of ‘Othering’ in European societies, in the sense that Werbner and Yuval-Davis (1999: 5) have described it: the ‘specific location of people in society mediates the constructions of their citizenship as “different”’. Cesari (2013) and Joulli (2015) and others before them have shown that it is particularly the Muslim minorities in European societies who are excluded from ‘belongingness’ through the creation of symbolic boundaries between ‘Us’ and ‘Them’. The ‘politics of belonging’ are thus at the core of both citizenship regimes and religion.

In short, part one of this volume provides ‘glimpses from below’ on both citizenship and religion and the relationship between the two. It establishes the places ‘from where we speak’ and provides some ‘raw data’ on both lived religion and lived citizenship. Most of the issues relevant to the scholarly debate about religion and citizenship have played out in our personal lives to some extent or another. It is from this basis that we have engaged in further conversations about the relationship between religion and citizenship, and how we evaluate this relationship.

2 The Interactions Between Citizenship and Religion

In the second part, we essentially consider whether religion is a resource or a barrier for active citizenship. What has emerged—quite unexpectedly—as a central theme in our discussion is the ‘re-emergence’ of religion, particularly of Islam as a social and political force in the places where we are located. In our lifetimes, we have been witnesses to developments of the increased visibility of religious symbols and practice in public spheres. This is not to say that we support the notion of a ‘post-secular turn’, but we have observed changes in the quality of religion as lived.

The main question that we have been posing to ourselves against this background has become whether this increased visibility of and emphasis on religious behaviour in public (and private) was a good thing or an
obstacle for what we understand as ‘active citizenship’ in a democratic system. To cut a long story short, we were unable to agree on an answer for a variety of reasons, often related to our personal experiences. We obviously also could not agree on the role of secularism in finding an answer. What we did agree on is that historical, geographical, and political contexts as well as definitions have to be spelt out and analysed thoroughly in order to provide a context-specific answer to the question whether religion is a resource or a barrier for citizenship. Issues that we identified as playing key roles in any analysis of the relationship between religion and citizenship are terminological problems and translation of concepts into other languages and societies, gender and generation relations, fundamentalism, and the impact of education.

In Chap. 8, Storrie puts his finger on a sore subject: the role of culture in social change. He has positioned himself on the secular side of the citizenship spectrum, but would probably agree with Joan Scott (2009), who pointed out that secular society is not, in and of itself, a guarantor for political or social equality between women and men, or between other groups of people for that matter. Thus, while secularism—the concept that religion should be a private matter and not appear in the public sphere—might seem, at first sight, the best option for a just and democratic society, particularly feminist scholarship has shown that not only does the secular-religious binary not hold in a strict sense (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016: 4) but also that identity, participation, belonging, and an ethic of care, tolerance, respect, and love are essential pillars of both religion and citizenship regimes (ibid.).

Storrie throws another element into the equation, namely culture. He argues that, even if secularism was the best solution for a just citizenship regime, cultural precepts, including religion, are stumbling blocks in the process of secularisation and democratisation. Culture and religion, in Storrie’s reading, are a barrier to democratic and secular citizenship because they are something that we have been socialised into and that we carry within us on an unconscious level, and that is, therefore, hard to break. This traditional, unchangeable aspect of institutional culture (including the religious cultures of churches) is something he has experienced himself during his lifetime, as he describes in his first contribution.
This appears to go against the grain of much contemporary scholarship on citizenship and religion that has moved away from a focus on institutional forms of religion towards day-to-day forms of religious practice; that has come to emphasise the commonalities of many religious and citizenship ideals and values (e.g. Dillon 2010; Hall 1997). However, Storrie also pleads for a move away from institutionalised religion if personal beliefs no longer coincide with the precepts of a religious institution, a move he historically identifies in the Protestant Reformation in Europe. In this sense, Storrie would also argue for a ‘lived citizenship’ approach, one that sees the workings of citizenship regimes less in institutions, but rather in people’s relationships with each other.

Shafei starts his Chap. 9 with an experiment among his university students in order to illustrate the problems of ‘lived citizenship’ as opposed to discussions on a conceptual level. Particularly in the Arab-Muslim world, the citizenship debate suffers from two problems: first, the terms of the debate are borrowed and poorly translated from European cultures and languages and they are, therefore, ill-understood by the ‘citizens’; second, Islam offers competing concepts and ideals that have increasingly emerged in the citizenship debate in recent decades. However, Shafei also shows that much of this ‘alternative’ Islamic terminology that has increasingly come into play in political debates goes back to pre-Islamic languages and cultures. Here, he identifies a similar mix of barriers to democratic citizenship practices, as did Storrie, albeit in a Muslim-dominated context.

The challenge of translating concepts into other languages has also been analysed by Parolin (2009), who also traces it back to ancient eras, for instance concerning Greek philosophical concepts. Similar to Shafei, Parolin (2009) argues that in the Arab-Muslim context, European concepts of citizenship cannot be applied one to one since the socio-political structures have historically differed and continue to do so to a large extent. He identified at least three competing identities that play central roles in most Arab-Muslim societies and cultures: kin group, religious community, and nation-state. Often, membership in those diverging groups crosscut, sometimes they do not, but the different senses of belonging that have priority in different contexts, may be one reason for the frustrating confusion of terms and values in Shafei’s experiment.
A second reason for the confusion amongst his students would have to be sought, according to Shafei, in the values attached to different concepts and terms in the citizenship debate in the Arab world. Evaluation varies with the degree of conformity with Islamic ideals as they are currently interpreted from Quranic verses or Prophetic sayings. An ethic such as ‘human rights’ is highly valued and accepted as far as it seems in conformity with Islamic ethics. The concept of ‘secularism’, on the other hand, appears pejorative since it seemingly contradicts Islamic precepts.

Against this background, he, too, would see religion—here particularly Islam—as a barrier to a democratic citizenship regime. In the Near Eastern context, Shafei has experienced the connection between religion and citizenship as fraught with tensions and inequality as the debate about it has become part and parcel of a ‘politics of belonging’ that creates ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’ (Yuval-Davis 2006). While in the European context, it is often Muslims that have been constructed as ‘Others’ (e.g. Cesari 2013), in the Near Eastern context, it seems to be the non-Muslims (or non-practising Muslims) and ‘their’ concepts that have become the ‘Other’ within the rhetoric of the politics of belonging. The discourse that Shafei describes is one that ‘creates symbolic boundaries between those who allegedly belong and those who allegedly don’t’ (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016: 61). It appears that what Nyhagen and Halsaa (ibid.) describe for Europe’s past is valid for the present in the Near East: ‘Religion has historically been used as a traditional boundary marker between people […]. Religion has also been used in various ways to instil terror in people’s everyday lives’.

This experience is shared by Bouatta, who completes the picture from an Algerian perspective. In Chap. 10, she uses the term ‘Supermuslim’ in the discussion of the politics of belonging that has been taking place in Algeria in recent decades. For an apparently increasing number of Algerians, it has become necessary or relevant to identify as ‘more Muslim than Muslim’, that is, as particularly and openly devout. Bouatta’s experience shared in both of her contributions exemplifies the feminist debate about the significance of religion for feminist struggles.

On the one hand, we find feminist scholars who argue that religion ‘can contribute to the struggle for justice’ (Nussbaum 1999: 107), which would also include gender equality, while others maintain that religiosity
and feminist ideals cannot go together well and that ‘all world religions
are inherently patriarchal’ (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016: 55; Okin 1999;
Jeffreys 2012). Given Bouatta’s personal involvement in the feminist
struggle in Algeria and her personal negative experiences with increas-
ingly fundamentalist readings of Muslim tradition and texts, her view of
religion as a barrier to democratic citizenship and her struggle are easily
conceivable. She would, therefore, probably find it difficult to compre-
hend what recent intersectional research is beginning to show: gender is
not always ‘of primary importance to women’s lives’ and ‘women experi-
ence different forms of inequality depending on their positioning in rela-
tion to multiple identities and inequalities’ (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016:
58). In other words, as Nyhagen and Halsaa (2016) have shown, piety or
submission under a particular religious order is for many believing
women an active choice and one that is not necessarily contrary to demo-
cratic citizenship values. Bouatta, while obviously struggling with such
an analysis, does indicate that young women’s piety in Algeria is one way
to ‘bargain with patriarchy’ (Kandiyoti 1988).

Regardless of the interpretation of young ‘Supermuslim’ women in
contemporary Algeria, what can be observed is some kind of social polar-
isation, also picked up by Michon in his Chap. 11. He, too, identifies
diverging interpretations of the interplay between religion and citizen-
ship or politics, this time in contemporary France and Germany. Like
Bouatta, he is also looking at young people in order to reflect on the
directions democratic systems and societies are taking. Yet, while Bouatta
reflects on young women’s pious agency, Michon analyses young people’s
discourses on this agency and its place in a democratic society. He adds to
the debate that young people’s discourse on these issues takes place on
similar terms as the historical debate that has known two poles: a repub-
lican one and a democratic one. These two poles have split French—and
arguably other European societies—and are reflected in the debate about
secularism and the role of religion in a democratic system. Michon has
identified an identitarian discourse on secularism—emphasising ‘neutral-
ity’ of the state—and a denominational one—accepting freedom of con-
science, particularly with regard to Islam. Just as Bouatta’s observations
can be interpreted along these diverging lines, Michon finds that French
and German societies are split in two about this issue. The polarisation
identified here is equally reflected in the scholarly multiculturalism debate that has focused on rights and status, on the one hand, on more nuanced approaches that take into account marginalised groups, intra- and inter-group dynamics, and diverging kinds of agency. Michon’s contribution is a reminder that in the debate about the role of religion and religiosity in democratic citizenship practices, wider social and political discourses have to be taken into account since they, too, direct people’s behaviour. Michon’s research is an example of how ‘lived citizenship’ can be investigated in order to take aspects of identity, participation, and belonging into account.

Blanc picks up this debate on secularism in France, asking about the place of fundamentalist interpretations of Islam in a democratic citizenship regime, therefore adding yet another aspect to the debate: what kind of religion are we talking about? There would be little controversy about the role of (any kind of) peaceful, quietist religiosity or piety in a democratic citizenship system. The splits that Michon has described appear when it comes to more openly expressed, counter-cultural, or even extremist and violent religiosity, as they were also described by Bouatta. In Chap. 12, Blanc asks how we can avoid the development of extremist interpretations of religion and describes various attempts that have been made. Unfortunately, there is no ‘one-solution-fits-all’ in this case. What has been tried is to dispel the fascination of fundamentalist worldviews by various preventative measures particularly among the young. What remains unclear is how to treat fundamentalist prisoners and criminals, including the question of whether citizenship rights can be removed in such cases. These questions seem a far cry from Nyhagen and Halsaa’s (2016) discussion of whether Muslim and Christian women’s beliefs and piety in a number of European countries constitute a barrier towards their citizenship participation. Blanc is not dealing with an ‘ethic of care’ that Nyhagen and Halsaa (2016) have identified among believing women and that is also at the heart of most citizenship regimes. Instead, he worries about the destructive side of religiosity that has very little to do with care for others. This side of religion must certainly be counted as a barrier to democratic citizenship.

This aspect of religion is certainly also at the heart of Droeber’s Chap. 13, including observations about the discourse on Islam in Germany.
While there is a growing number of people who consider Islam (more so than any other religion present in contemporary Germany) as a barrier to democratic citizenship, there are parallel efforts to actively include Islam into the concept of German citizenship. These efforts—as particularly evident in the establishment of Islamic religious education in state schools—are arguably the result of very pragmatic political considerations rather than the conviction that Muslims must be granted the same citizenship rights as members of other religious communities, which in Germany includes the right to denominational religious education in state schools.

Yet, they reflect a trend in contemporary scholarship on religion, citizenship, and identity: it has been argued that religious belonging and identity as well as participation and involvement in religious communities can enhance engagement in the wider community (Levitt 2008; Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016). The results of this project of acceptance of Islam into the ‘religious-education-fold’ at German schools remain to be seen. The hope is, and anecdotal evidence indicates, that the civic engagement of many Muslims in Germany is increasing with the acceptance of the Muslim community as equal partner, at least in the education game. In this sense, Droeber would probably argue that religion may largely be a resource for democratic citizenship regimes.

Where do we go from here? Our conversation has ended here for the time being. We have put forward arguments, observations, and research which indicate that religion can be both a resource and a barrier for democratic citizenship regimes:

Religion is thus a malleable resource that may have empowering and disempowering effects in relation to citizenship as lived or practised. (Nyhagen and Halsaa 2016: 68)

These authors further recommend that the question of whether religion is a barrier or a resource for citizenship practices ‘must therefore be investigated in specific, historical and socio-political contexts’ (ibid.), which is what this book has tried to do. Authors from a variety of backgrounds have provided evidence for and reflection of the relationship between religion and citizenship. The book is also a plea for a bottom-up...
approach to both citizenship and religion, or ‘lived religion’ and ‘lived
citizenship’, as Nyhagen and Halsaa (2016) have called it. We hope to
continue this conversation on both a personal and a scholarly level to
listen to each other and learn from each other in our effort to make citi-
zenship democratic in the best sense of the word.

3 Citizenship, Religion, and Extended Complexity

When the team of authors decided to write this book together, their
first aim was to consider the impact of citizenship and religion on the
protection of nature and of the environment, threatened by industrial
modernity. The Bruntland Report (1987) promoted sustainable devel-
opment—associating ecological, economic, and social issues—as a global
answer. Sustainable development quickly appeared to be a necessary but
not a sufficient solution: we believe that citizenship and religion also are
key factors to take into account.

Today, although we do not know the precise causes of the expansion of
the coronavirus which have given birth to a world crisis, the deregulation
of both nature and the environment is presumably playing a huge part.
However, religion and citizenship, as well as solidarity, already appear to
be other major factors to enable us to get out of this crisis. Following
Edgar Morin (2008), sustainable development is a restricted entirety and
it should be incorporated into a general entirety, including also health,
citizenship, and religion, and possibly other pillars not yet identified.
This is the challenge of the increasing complexity of the world society.

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