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Equality, difference and the absent presence of 'race' in citizenship education in the UK

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This paper examines the political and historical antecedents of the absent presence of 'race' in successive policies for citizenship education in contemporary Britain. It questions the possibility of embracing an emerging cosmopolitanism and politics of difference, within the limiting frame of the nation state and its overarching appeal towards common values and goals. In that schools are widely regarded as important repositories of social and moral values, the paper moves to consider how policy tensions can be productively employed by teachers to produce a re-articulation of equality and difference in order to enhance education, citizenship and social justice.

Keywords: 'race'; citizenship education; policy; equality; difference

Introduction

This paper questions the politics of citizenship education at a time when social relations are becoming increasingly frayed at the site of local communities UK-wide. Such tensions have a long lineage in the history of multicultural Britain, but have more recently intensified in a climate of social, political and economic instability. The recent rise of the extreme right with the British National Party (BNP) claiming two European Parliament seats has been viewed as a 'ticking time bomb' (Hari 2009): an invidious reflection of modern Britain 'sleepwalking to segregation' (Phillips 2005). Forms of cultural separatism and the self-segregation of minority ethnic communities (Modood 2005) have created a serious and challenging social imperative for citizenship education. They have sharpened the focus on how multicultural Britain can embrace an emerging cosmopolitanism and politics of difference, within the limiting frame of the nation state and its overarching appeal towards common values and goals (Banks et al. 2005). Central to this political dilemma is the perennial issue of 'race' and problem of ensuring that 'difference' is properly recognised and accommodated through the liberal state (Straw 2007).

With this in mind, the paper takes an original turn, providing an historical overview of policy for citizenship education spanning the last two decades. In particular, it focuses on three significant documents: *Education for citizenship* (NCC 1990), *Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools* (QCA 1998) and the *Curriculum review: Diversity and citizenship* (DfES 2007). In a sense, it could be argued that such a selection is not strictly comparable, since the first two documents (NCC 1990; QCA 1998) were clearly influenced by the Speaker's Commission on Citizenship (1990) – (an eclectic assemblage of educationalists, industrialists, two bishops and a politician from each of the three main political parties), which gave considerable political weight to their discursive formation. Moreover, *Education for citizenship* emerged under a Conservative government whose political rationality was to make education more efficient and standardised, and thereby erase ideology and politics from all curriculum discourses (Pykett

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2007). Later, the Speaker's Commission had a spectral resonance in the political discourse of New Labour policy, where *Encouraging citizenship* became part of a 'social panacea': a discursive landscape of social and educational reform in which the behaviour 'of the whole child as citizen' came under increasing regulation and surveillance (Pykett 2007, 304). In contrast, *Diversity and citizenship* (DfES 2007), commissioned by the Department for Education and Skills, was a low-key affair, developed in-house and without cross-party political representation. It emerged from a wave of 'inter-ethnic group violence' (Kiwan 2008, 18), 'fears about "home grown terrorism"' (Osler 2009, 86), policy developments around community cohesion (Home Office 2001a, 2001b, 2002), and later, the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act (TSO 2002), prompting changes in the process of naturalisation (Home Office 2005; Kiwan 2008). However, the apparent incommensurability of the selected documents does not detract from the fact that the politics of 'race' is consistently present in its absence in the policy discourse of citizenship education. Moreover, all three documents act as crucial signifiers of recent curriculum developments and the teaching of citizenship in schools: first through non-statutory guidance (NCC 1990), then statutory provision (QCA 1999) and, finally, in providing a fourth strand to citizenship education in England (DfES 2007).

Against this backdrop, the analysis draws upon the historical antecedents of the politics of 'race' and white supremacy in Britain, to examine the relationship between notions of equality and 'difference', and consider how policy tensions can be productively employed to achieve a re-articulation of such concepts, to enhance the discourse of 'unassimilated otherness with justice' (Young 2004, 203). This is especially significant given that schools in the UK and elsewhere are regarded as important repositories of social and moral values, where teachers have a duty to raise the level of political literacy among young people, not least as part of the formal requirement of the revised curriculum for citizenship education (in England) (DfES 2007). Indeed, many of the themes raised throughout this analysis are generic ones and could apply equally well internationally, where the pervasive influence of globalisation has served to produce new levels of complexity, hybridity and cultural inter-dependence, with corresponding implications for the politics of 'race', citizenship theory and education.

Citizenship education: the absent-presence of 'race'

Drawing on Foucault's (1972) concepts of archaeology and genealogy, the proceeding analysis seeks to expose meanings around the discursive formation of policy and successive guidance for citizenship education. 'Archaeology' refers to a form of historical analysis which examines the rationality and discursive regularity around particular types of statement to ask: 'how is it that one particular statement appeared rather than another?' (1972, 27). The regularity with which such statements occur, in turn defines the configuring episteme, where the rules of formation of a discourse are reflected through the operation of power and notion of 'government' implicit in social practice (Foucault 1979). Archaeology is thus an ensemble of rules, micro-politics or 'régime of truth' (Foucault 1980), which operates on practice to expose and establish meaning. For Foucault (1977, 148), such practices and historically informed choices can be only properly understood alongside the concept of 'genealogy', which explores the descent or 'eruption' of historical ideas captured *in situ*.

Education for citizenship

Against this methodological backdrop, I begin by addressing the document *Education for citizenship* (NCC 1990), which provides an initial reference point for the absent presence of race within a 'neutral' and de-politicised policy discourse. Archaeologically, the articulation of rights

and responsibilities presume a liberal understanding that all individuals *qua* citizens are equal and all communities are unimpeded by structural inequalities. Society is fair and just under the rule of law which operates to ensure no infringements occur and that equality exists between 'different types of community' within a 'pluralist society' (NCC 1990, 6). The liberal conception thus assumes a fundamental equality of rights and responsibilities, as a means to counteract the negative consequences of a market driven economy (Miller 2000).

The absence of a discourse on social rights and the Welfare State provides further evidence of the politicised nature of the document presented as a largely neutral and de-politicised formation, thereby obscuring the 'politically informed criteria and standards' which the authors' 'own use of the concept [of citizenship] unavoidably incorporates' (Carr 1991, 374). This suggests two things discursively. The lack of any serious consideration of social rights means that structural inequalities and social injustice around 'race' is casually overlooked, since despite appearances 'neutrality is an impossible goal' (Kymlicka 1995, 108) in any liberal model of citizenship. Secondly, this important omission (and tacit condonation) suggests that the relationship between the citizen and state is conceived in terms that are explicitly contractual (Miller 2000). This alignment is consonant with the politics of the New Right and libertarian conception of citizenship, where the configuring discourse translates to a 'naturalised' politics of citizenship education, combining an uncritical and depoliticised knowledge of how the institutions of government work with a passive socialisation into the status quo (Carr 1991). Indeed, this is hardly surprising given the political context of a Conservative administration under which the document emerged, and whose principal purpose was to achieve a muted consideration, if not permanent erasure, of more radical forms of social and political engagement. Such statements have greater resonance in the context of their genealogy and political emergence.

The discourse of *Education for citizenship* (NCC 1990) emerged from a 'general set of Education Reforms designed to create a free market system of education' (Carr 1991, 382). While bringing improved wealth and prosperity to many of the white majority it also exacerbated economic and structural inequalities for most minority ethnic communities (Gewirtz, Ball, and Bowe 1995). The pervasive influence of markets in education and transmogrification of the discourse of citizenship education into a depoliticised form of political rhetoric was matched with the 'eruption' of a so-called 'new racism' throughout the 1980s (Barker 1981). This emerged from a long and chequered history of ill-feeling and discrimination (Rex and Moore 1967; Mullard 1973), deficit theorising (Coard 1971), hostile immigration policies (Patterson 1963) and deep structural inequalities. Throughout the 1980s 'the "new racism" served to reinforce Powellite views[1] of who was to be included or excluded within a British national identity and provided a rationale for xenophobia and racism towards minorities' (Tomlinson 2008a, 71). Accordingly, white hegemony was allowed to prevail and racism came to be seen as something normal (Taylor 2009). A radical break with the principles of the Welfare State coincided politically with a move towards competitive individualism (Tomlinson 2008b), and a growing belief in the need to safeguard and protect the British national identity (and white majority) from the 'enemy within' (Gilroy 1987). As Ball (2008, 82) suggests, in this climate 'inner cities are represented as a pathological "other" in relation to certain fixed core values', where, for example, the history curriculum became more traditionally British and 'nationalistic' (of which, more later). Such enunciations were later reinforced through statements like: 'teachers should teach children how to read, not waste their time on the politics of *race*, class and gender' (John Major, cited in Tomlinson 2008a, 110, emphasis added). As Gillborn (1998, 718) notes 'education reforms of the 1980s and 1990s came increasingly to be characterised by a "de-racialised" discourse that effectively removed ethnic diversity from the agenda and glossed many discriminatory processes'. By the mid-1990s, the non-statutory guidance of *Education for citizenship* (NCC 1990) had all but disappeared:

eclipsed by the hegemony of neo-liberal reform, which served to produce an 'absent presence' (Apple 1999) of race and ethnicity in education.

Policy reincarnation: Education for citizenship and the teaching of democracy in schools (Crick Report)

This genealogy usefully maps the descent of citizenship education, reflecting the status of 'race' and multicultural politics within the 'policyscape' (Ball 1999), leading up to the beginning of the Crick (QCA 1998) era under New Labour. The change of government in 1997 and installation of 'third-way' (Giddens 1998) thinking brought new hope of a radical shift towards the politics of inclusion and social justice, in particular the possibility of 'developing palliatives to mitigate disadvantage' (Tomlinson 2008b, 91). However, the discourse of inclusion was tempered by a contradictory and altogether more performative régime (of truth), with more exacting standards and ubiquitous micro-politics of surveillance, including forms of self-policing (Foucault 1988). Here, citizens are to assume responsibility for their own social, moral and economic welfare and community involvement, through the new mixed economy of positive welfare (Jerome 2009) and political technologies of 'civility and decency' (Pykett 2007, 305). The emphasis on the performative and managerial, as technologies of control, in this process illustrates the constraints under which various members of the hand-picked Advisory Board were ostensibly operating. Thus, any move perceived to 'rock the boat' and undermine the contrived neutrality of the Report and its fixed core values was strictly not an option (Pykett 2007, 307), especially when a 'political opportunity… had to be seized quickly' and where the absent presence of diversity and anti-racism was acknowledged only many years later (Crick, cited in Kiwan 2008, xiii–xiv).

In this discursive context, it is no surprise that the re-incarnation of citizenship education through the Crick Report (QCA 1998), should contain only two paragraphs on multicultural issues (Tomlinson 2008a), and, significantly, no mention at all of racism. As Osler elaborates, 'the Crick report to some degree reflects, rather than challenges, the institutionalised racism of British society: it characterises minorities as having a deficit; it uses patronising language and stereotypes in its depiction of these groups' (2008,13). Some of these issues can be illustrated through the archaeology of the document, drawing insights from two earlier critiques (Garratt and Piper 2008, 2010).

A useful starting point is the Advisory Group's assertion that with 'the increasingly complex nature of our society, the greater cultural diversity and the apparent loss of a value consensus … Cultural diversity raises the issue of *national identity* (QCA 1998, 17, emphasis added). Here,

> … the discursive formation and linkage of the terms *nation, value consensus* and the need to address *cultural diversity* in the context of *national identity* is significant as 'diversity' can be read to imply a 'lack', or otherwise interpreted as a 'persistent anxiety' or 'problem'… to be dealt with through a frame of 'ethno-cultural unity' (Watson 2001; Osler and Starkey 2001). (Garratt and Piper 2010, 45)

The political response to 'restore a sense of common citizenship, including national identity that is secure enough to find a place for the plurality of nations, cultural and ethnic identity (QCA 1998, 17), is significant as an affirmation of 'naturalised' fixed core values. Thus, while a surface reading points to a rhetorical reintroduction of the politics of 'race', at the same time it appeals to a 'sanitized (white-washed) version of history' (Gillborn 2009, 52) and majoritarian conception of 'Britishness', prevalent throughout the 1980s and 1990s. This in turn privileges a public discourse of political community and national identity that is suspect on at least two counts. First, by ignoring the theme of racism, the Crick Report (QCA 1998) is complicit with the continuation of the absent presence of 'race' in education and 'other structural disadvantages which act as a key barrier to full and equal citizenship' (Osler 2008, 13). Second, it treats minorities as somewhat 'suspect communities' (Pantazis and Pemberton 2009) of the 'enemy

within' (Gilroy 1987): to be held apart from the white majority and challenged on their right to belong as legitimate members of the political state.

The tendency towards deficit theorising in Crick can be found elsewhere within the report's archaeological formation. For example, in the statement: 'a more plural approach to racial *disadvantage* requires forms of citizenship which are sensitive to ethnic diversity and offer respect both to individuals and to the social groups to which *they* feel *they* belong' (QCA 1998, 17, emphasis added). This formation can

> … be read to convey an implicit pathology of difference, where the locus of the meaning of 'disadvantage' is entwined with the concept of 'race', which itself is a social construct. Then portrayed as requiring… sensitivity or special treatment, ethnic diversity is condemned as the inferior 'other', through the deployment of a notion of belonging that is characterised 'exotic' and which is taken to reside somewhere outside the territory of the authored claim. (Garratt and Piper 2010, 45)

The persistent 'othering' and implicit condescension and assimilation of minorities within the discourse – (against the 'common-sense', invisible perspective of whiteness), is present in the assertion that 'majorities must respect, understand and tolerate minorities… minorities must learn and respect the laws, codes and conventions as much as the majority' (QCA 1998, 18). As Garratt and Piper (2008,11) claim:

> … critics of this implicit hierarchy (Osler and Starkey 2001; Hoffman 2004; Faulks 2006) note that its condescending tone can be read to imply that minorities are less law-abiding than the dominant white group … thus, 'it seems that the dominant group is doing all the teaching and the ethnic minorities all the learning!' (Hoffman 2004, 267)

In the Foucauldian sense, here 'toleration' implies a technology of control: a strong disapproval of behaviour endured by the ruling white majority whose assumed sovereignty can be used to suppress such behaviour if necessary (Modood 2007). Yet arguably integration should always be a two-way process or even a 'multilogical' one (Modood 2007, 65).

The rationality and discursive regularity of this 'colour blind' emphasis is consonant with the 'policyscape' of New Labour, and represents something of a continuation with the past (Tomlinson 2008a). However, it can be argued that colour-blindness is wholly impotent as a means of promoting social justice, since by definition, this 'prohibits the recognition of particular group identities so that no citizens are treated in a more or less privileged way or divided from each other' (Modood 2007, 68). Thus, ironically, colour-blind policies may serve to reinforce and perpetuate existing racial inequalities by placing 'race *equity* at the margins… [and] retaining race *injustice* at the centre' (Gillborn 2009, 65). Consequently, claims about the pedagogical value of political literacy in Crick, to ameliorate the absence of an anti-racist stance (Osler 2008; Olssen 2004), seem mildly optimistic. Like its predecessor, the Crick Report neatly (and perhaps even deliberately – cf. Kiwan 2008) manages to side step such issues and offers no clear guidance for teachers on how to resist the enduring problem of widespread racism. Meanwhile societal ignorance around the politics of 'race' and racism continues unabated amid a smokescreen of performative, managerial and choice-oriented political technologies and social and education policies (Ball 2008; Chitty 2009).

The third coming – Curriculum review: Diversity and Citizenship (Ajegbo Review) and beyond

At the beginning of the twenty-first century, debates on diversity and citizenship began to increase and intensify in the wake of inter-ethnic disturbances in northern towns in 2001, the 9/11 terrorist attacks in America and London bombings in 2005, with urgent calls for citizenship education to address these issues (Rammell 2006, cited in Kiwan 2008). As noted above, the Home Office published a series of reports to address the resulting emergent political themes of

community cohesion, diversity and belonging, as well as the need to find a way of reinforcing British values and national identity, whilst countering the potential threat of terrorist activity (Osler 2008). As Kiwan (2008, 24) notes, Gordon Brown, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, 'had played a major role in initiating the review… and particularly in influencing the framing of its terms of reference'. In Foucauldian terms, this constitutes a form of 'bio-power' in which the government exercises the 'conduct of conduct' (Pykett 2007) over the archaeological formation and genealogy of policy. In 2006, for example, in a speech to the Fabian society on the 'Future of Britishness' Gordon Brown raised the question of what it means to be British in a post-imperial world of plural identities and changing values (Brown 2006). This followed an earlier appeal in which Brown (2004) questioned the 'core values of Britishness', claiming 'there is a golden thread that runs through British history', comprising 'liberty', 'tolerance' and a 'tradition of fair play'. Going further, in 2007 Jack Straw, then Leader of the House of Commons, claimed that 'we have to be clearer about what it means to be British… a "British story" must be at the heart of this' (Straw 2007).

Given the terms of reference, it is perhaps not surprising that any critical consideration of the concept of 'Britishness' is conspicuously absent in the report of the Ajegbo panel (DfES 2007). For example, just prior to its publication, Alan Johnson (then Secretary of State for Education) is reported to have 'proposed that schools should focus on "core British values of justice and tolerance"' (cited in Kiwan 2008, 94), despite otherwise significant concerns regarding the complexity and contested nature of 'Britishness' in relation to matters of 'race'. Moreover, some would say that 'race' itself is an invidious naturalising concept (Miles 1993; Mason 2000). So, while, more recently, it has become fashionably interchangeable with notions of ethnicity, it remains a socially and politically corrosive concept, 'reflecting the colonial roots of Britain's immigration experience' (Mason 2006, 105). Accordingly, over time the term Britishness has come to mean

> … different things to different people… identities are typically constructed as multiple and plural. Throughout our consultations, concerns were expressed, however, about defining 'Britishness', about the term's divisiveness and how it can be used to exclude others. (DfES 2007, 8)

In the context of government ministers' political exhortations, the discourse is revealing for its tendency to 'speak' commonsense (white-sense?) to 'race' through an 'unwillingness to name the contours of racism' (Leonardo 2000, 32 cited in Gillborn 2009, 54) embedded in the discourse of 'Britishness'. Thus, while extending beyond the narrow colonialism of Crick, the Ajegbo Report (DfES 2007) nevertheless fails to engage with the pervasive problem of colour-blindness, beneath a veil of liberal democracy. This irony is further compounded by the assertion that 'issues of identity and diversity are more often than not neglected in Citizenship education' (DfES 2007, 7) and 'tend not to be linked explicitly enough to political understanding' (DfES 2007, 8). In conflating and further sanitising the discursive relations of raced inequities and common values and goals, the panel can be found guilty of breaking its own injunction. This is most surprising given the key findings of the Maylor et al. (2007) review – (intended to support the Diversity and Citizenship Curriculum Review Group), which found that:

> … in order to effectively acknowledge diversity in Britain, the curriculum needs to provide discursive resources to promote 'collective identities' and to *challenge ideologies that construct the nation and national identity in ways that exclude minority ethnic groups.* (Maylor et al., 1, emphasis added)

For example, if it is important that young people are enabled to 'consider issues that have shaped the development of UK society – and to understand them through the lens of history' (DfES 2007, 8), surely this would show that the politics of 'race' and histories of racism (Taylor 2009) have been repeatedly overlooked in the reimagining of 'Britishness' and citizenship education?

This question encourages further critical analysis of the link between Ajegbo (DfES 2007) and the wider political and genealogical context in which such tensions have emerged. The appeal to debate around notions of 'Britishness' as a means to resurrect a 'British story' (Straw 2007), or 'golden thread that runs through British history' (Brown 2004) is dubiously melancholic (Gilory 2004), but also highly pertinent to the development of a fourth strand for citizenship education. To this, there are three components: 'critical thinking about ethnicity, religion and "race"'; an explicit link to political issues and values; the use of contemporary history in teachers' pedagogy to illuminate thinking about contemporary issues relating to citizenship' (DfES 2007, 12). Archaeologically, the inclusion of 'critical thinking' in the Review usefully encourages the possibility of opening up the discourse of citizenship through a 'principle of dislocation' (Derrida 1981); that is, where the conflation of Britishness and nationalism might be interrogated as a means to acknowledge Otherness and develop a more cosmopolitan conception of national identity as 'essential difference' (Pykett 2007, 310), counting beyond the binary of two: majority/minority. Disappointingly, however, the discourse forecloses prematurely on the possibilities for examining ethnicity and 'race', by twice displacing (and subordinating) the concepts: 'issues of ethnicity and "race", whilst often controversial, are more often addressed than issues relating to religion' (DfES 2007, 7, 84). Instead, the review runs the risk of trivialising the issues, by suggesting that 'pupils should have the opportunity to celebrate and embrace diversity' (106), much in the way that multiculturalism was criticised by anti-racist commentators in the 1980s for its perceived flagrant tokenism (Troyna 1993). Elsewhere, ironically we are reminded that 'myths and stereotypes are still around' (DfES 2007, 26), that 'there is evidence that issues of "race" and diversity are not always high on schools' agendas' (34), and, further, that 'there is insufficient training for teachers to feel confident with issues of identity [and] "race"' (67). Indeed, if critical thinking on such matters of 'race' and ethnicity is to amount to anything more than mere political rhetoric, then the absence of any articulation of what constitutes criticality in this context is highly dubious. More so perhaps, given that teachers are widely reported to lack confidence in the area and where such issues are a low priority in many schools; less so now perhaps that 'the revised QCA Programme of Study at KS3 and KS4 does not contain any explicit reference to anti-racism' (Kiwan 2008, 94).

With respect to the future development of education and society, the tensions of our historical past may be productively employed to develop points of resistance and challenge the absent presence of race in citizenship education. Indeed, this is something which Maylor et al. (2007, 1) reinforce when they suggest that citizenship education 'should allow national identity and historical events to be "retold" in order to demonstrate the contribution of minority ethnic groups to British society'. In the context of the Home Office initiatives noted above, it is disappointing that the idea to 'introduce a fourth "pillar" to the citizenship education curriculum on "British social and cultural history"' (Kiwan 2008, 70), was ultimately rejected. One might question, for example, why is it that Gordon Brown's (2006) commitment to 'liberty', 'tolerance' and a 'tradition of fair play', as the self-styled trinity of 'white civilizing values' (Gillborn 2009, 51) underpinning British society, sits at odds with Britain's racist past? For the so-called 'golden thread' running through British history glosses all forms of protest and resistance through a discursive naturalisation and reification of majoritarian assumptions. As Kymlicka notes 'politics is almost always a matter of both identities and interests. The question is always *which* identities and interests are being promoted?' (Kymlicka 2002, 328). In this case it is a form of politics defining a liberal context in which the 'naturalised' discourse of a 'tradition of fair play' is effectively displaced as the 'state unavoidably promotes certain cultural identities, and thereby disadvantages others' (Kymlicka 1995, 108). As Osler suggests:

> The message for educators and the wider public, as reflected in the media, is that Britishness and the British story need to be framed within narrow territorial boundaries. Outsiders need to learn

> British history in order to integrate into the community of the nation. British history is presented as a single, unproblematic narrative, rather than a complex process, reflecting the various stories and perspectives of Britain as a 'community of communities'. (Osler 2009, 92)

The importance of such narrow interests and identities can be illustrated through Jack Straw's (2007) tendency towards 'pathological nostalgia' (Gilroy 2004), in which he argues that within the concept of British nationality:

> … there is room for multiple and different identities, but there has to be a contract that they will not take precedence over the core democratic values of freedom, fairness, tolerance and plurality that define what it means to be British. It is the bargain and it is nonnegotiable.

In a sense, there is nothing inherently British about such values, which simply represent international human rights principles (Osler 2009). Yet ironically the evolving heritage of multicultural Britain appears to have been erased through the telling of a single 'British story', where 'national identity' has come to mean 'beyond ethnicity' and/or standing outside 'minority' and 'other' (Mirza 2007). This has served to reinforce the combined effect of the demand for tighter immigration controls (Londinium 2008) – (especially against asylum seekers) and plans for 'more exacting' British citizenship tests, in order for immigrants to demonstrate 'commitment' and 'prove integration into communities' (BBC 2008). It is also contradictory and at odds with what is known culturally and politically and legalistically, for example, the way in which 'dominant narratives have often rendered aspects of the past (even the recent past) invisible to contemporary eyes' (Osler 2009, 97). Consider, for example, New Labour's commissioning of the Macpherson Inquiry into institutionalised racism, which, while paving the way for the legal amendment of the Race Relations Act 2000, is still not always fully observed in practice.

'Race', multiculturalism and citizenship: the beginnings of a re-articulation

In response, the aim it is to elucidate some key tensions in policy, as a means of gesturing towards a more sophisticated form of political literacy and practice for teaching professionals. This is consonant with recent research which shows that intending teachers are resistant to 'simple political rhetoric calling for the teaching of Britishness and specific values' (Clemitshaw and Jerome 2009,19), and believing that the question of patriotism must 'be classified as rationally unsettled' (Hand and Pearce 2009, 458). Thus, the preceding analysis usefully demonstrates the importance of the requirement to move beyond all simplistic readings of 'race' couched in crude models of assimilation. Outside the frame of the liberal state, the politics of 'race' and 'multiculturalism is Janus faced: it has both a forward-looking or progressive side and backward-looking or conservative side' (Kymlicka 2002, 368). This latter conception, resonant in the rhetoric of British Prime Ministers past and present, is bound up with the sentiment of nationalism and nation building, to return to a golden age of 'old fashioned cultural conservatism' (Kymlicka 2002). However, as Young (2004, 195–9) reminds us in relation to the idea of community, for which we can also read 'national identity'/'nation':

> The desire for [national identity] relies on the same desire for social wholeness and identification that underlies racism and ethnic chauvinism on the one hand and political sectarianism on the other… the project of the ideal [nation] as the radical other of existing society denies difference in the sense of the contradictions and ambiguities of social life… no telos of the final society exists.

At the heart of the problem is the binary of 'Britishness' with the concept of multiculturalism, where the wistful nostalgia of the former clashes with the catholic pluralism of the latter. This produces a state-defined politics of national identity: historically fixed and nonnegotiable, it is a concept sitting in conflict with the empirical reality of an increasingly heterogeneous

cosmopolitan society. Such tensions are worthy of further critical analysis by teachers and schools. For if the hierarchy of national identity over 'difference' is abandoned in favour of a more expansive view of political democracy – one which is apt to consider the revisability and plurality of social ends (Kymlicka 2002), then the concepts of 'difference' and equality need not be at odds. As Lister (2003, 101) notes:

> … we can only escape the straitjacket… by breaking out of the binary oppositions… reconstructing both equality and difference… in such a way as to ensure that all individuals can develop and flourish as citizens.

However, in practice the process of reconstructing the twin-notions of equality and 'difference' is far from straightforward. For example, while the Ajegbo (DfES 2007) review can be complimented for its reference to 'the legal framework of the *Race Relations* [Amendment] Act 2000… which requires schools as public bodies to promote race equality' (Osler 2008, 14), still the Act remains enshrined within a liberal framework and the legitimisation of its so-called commonsense assumptions. On this view, the achievement of social justice requires that institutions should treat ethnic minorities in a difference-blind fashion, in order to move away from any 'politicization of ethnicity' (Kymlicka 2002, 366). As Modood (2007, 69) argues, 'liberal citizenship is not interested in group identities and shuns identitarian politics; its interest in "race" is confined to anti-discrimination and simply as an aspect of the legal equality of citizens'. In fact, even when old laws are repudiated and new ones introduced, 'the status inequality is still reflected in more subtle ways' (Kymlicka 2002, 330). Thus, how is it possible to explicate a more reflexive notion of equality in order to produce fresh insights on 'difference' in their evolving relationship with the politics of 'race' and identity?

A way forward?

These issues are clearly important to the Ajegbo (DfES 2007, 27) panel who suggest that 'given current fears and tensions, we are now in a new debate about how diversity and shared values live together, although issues of racism and discrimination, based on old hierarchies must not be ignored'. Expressed differently, this is consonant with the notion that multicultural politics 'is no longer conceptualised as the contrast between static majority and minority cultures, but rather in terms of what could be considered a … postmodern recognition of the "complexity of identity"' (Arnot 2009, 153).

A relevant point of departure is where multiculturalism is defined in terms of a site of struggle, leading to a 'political mobilization' of interests and accommodation of 'difference' (Modood 2007). This is where 'race' politics is not derived *a priori*, but rather built 'up from the specific claims, implicit and explicit, of the postwar extra-European/non-white immigration and settlement and their struggle and the policy responses around them to achieve some form of acceptance and equal membership' (Modood 2007, 40). The implied sense of belonging to which this model aspires makes its appeal to a politics of 'recognition' (Taylor 2004, 275). This in turn plays to an 'understanding that identities are formed in open dialogue', or as noted earlier a 'multilogue' (Modood 2007, 65), and not by any pre-defined 'social script' (Taylor 2004, 275). Recognition is then articulated between the twin notions of equal dignity and equal respect (Taylor 1992; Modood 2007); in which there is a fine balancing point between universal claims to equality and the specificity of individual and group recognition as a basis for recognising 'essential difference'. Multicultural politics is thus 'not a matter of choosing between difference, integration and equality, for positive difference is necessary to integration that is informed by equal respect as well as equal dignity' (Modood 2007, 58). This suggests an ongoing and reflexive articulation – an 'anatomy' of sorts (Johnson 1993) with relational meaning, of political interests and concerns working across ethnic and cultural boundaries.

Thus, what I am proposing is not so much a model of 'institutional multiculturalism' in terms of 'strengthening the quality of the citizen–state [vertical] relationship' (Kiwan 2008, 115), or indeed, re-presenting what Pykett (2007, 316) refers to as a '"learning politics" – a politics which learns from the Other'. Rather, I am wanting to play upon Parekh's (2006, 340) notion of multiculturalism, interpreted as a 'community of citizens and community of communities… a community of communally embedded and attached individuals', whose interconnectedness, seen through a post-structural lens, seeks to draw upon the struggle for understanding, both (our)selves and Other, through stories and re-tellings of our historical past.

Throughout this paper I have argued that issues of 'race' and ethnicity are conspicuous by their absence from the discourse of citizenship education policy over the last twenty years. This, I suggest, is illustrated through the descent and archaeological formation of a range of guidance, where statements about citizenship are both sanitised and expressed through the regularity of a largely neutral and de-politicised policy discourse. Such discourse and the rules of its formation have worked to eliminate 'race' at the level of practice through which policy is articulated. This is dangerous, but not entirely forlorn. The role of education is to question critically such received values in order to recognise the antecedents of our historical past in ways that are responsive to new cosmopolitan situations, personal, political and institutional. As noted earlier, for example, how can a discourse of 'white civilising values' be placed alongside Britain's racist past? In Foucault's (1972, 72) terms, this quandary represents a key *point of diffraction* or incompatibility within the same discursive formation, but one which is potentially apt to be educative if used to help us recognise plurality and hybridity as a means of creating more fluid and less essentialised understandings of our heritage: past, present and future.

The tensions in policy raised throughout this paper, presuppose a methodology and progressive pedagogy of teaching and learning, in which articulations of difference are achieved through a relational praxis, leading to 'a reinterpretation of the… boundaries within which a history and a culture have been able to confine their criteriology [for community]' (Derrida 1990, 953). In this sense, there is no final *telos* of the community, or community or communities, only a liminality which recognises in-between-ness as a means to challenge the absent presence of the essentialised Other. Thus, an appeal to uncertainty, which moves away from the classic binaries of majority/minority, insider/outsider, self/Other, might help us to avoid repeating some of mistakes that have served to perpetuate the British melancholia over the last half century. While it may be true that education cannot compensate for society (Bernstein 1968), unless politicians, schools and teachers begin to learn from history (and act upon it) then future generations will likely be consigned to ignorance and blind prejudice. Critical involvement rather than implicit resolution, I suggest, is the means through which policy tensions in guidance for citizenship education may be productively employed as part of a more radical critique of the assumptions, functioning and political structures of contemporary education policy and practice.

Note

1. Reference to the 'Rivers of Blood' speech, by Enoch Powell at the meeting of the Conservative Association, 20 April 1968.

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Dean Garratt is a Reader in Education. His research interests span a wide range of issues and themes and are informed by a critical perspective and commitment to social justice, centring on the critique of citizenship education, education policy and the concept of professionalism.

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