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1

Coming to Terms with Change

Anyone could be forgiven for believing that problems of racism, inter-ethnic conflict and prejudice and intolerance are simply intractable and that the idea of peace and harmony between different communities is just a naive pipe dream. After all, these problems seem to have been with us for all time, they also have been the cause of some of the most appalling atrocities and injustices and are present in some form or another in every part of the world. And what could be more understandable than wanting to favour our own kind? Surely it is natural to be suspicious about people who appear not to be 'like us' and with whom we are asked to believe that we have little in common? Is the 'fear of difference' then, simply a natural phenomenon with which we have to live?

However, any study of race and diversity tends to focus on the problems of multiculturalism and ignore the fact that many mixed ethnic and faith communities do live in harmony and that our ideas about who is 'different', about who we have some affinity to and understand and trust, change profoundly over time. Many of the people that are used to diverse environments, would not even agree that 'difference' is something we should fear, as it expands our knowledge and learning and provides additional and more interesting life experiences.

There is little choice in any event, for there is no turning the clock back to the days of rigid national borders built around homogeneous populations and where the vast majority of people had virtually no knowledge of, let alone affinity to, whoever lived beyond them. Migration is a fact of life and though it is often turned into a political issue, the march of global communications, international trade, business and tourism means that dynamic community relations are now the norm. Even greater diversity is inevitable – it is simply the way in which our world is moving – becoming 'smaller' in every way. The challenge for us, then, is to make multi-faith, multi-ethnic and multicultural communities work.

This chapter provides an overview of the development of our present state of race and community relations and the present debate about the nature of

'multiculturalism'. It also begins to develop the more fundamental question of, how 'difference' has been conceptualised and dealt with in the past and how and why we have also failed to tackle underlying societal attitudes and values. A new framework based on community cohesion is proposed.

The world on the move

The composition of many industrialised societies is changing. In little short of 50 years many, predominantly, white nation states have become multicultural, with the influx and growth of ethnic minorities on a significant scale. For the most part, ethnic minorities were encouraged to emigrate from their own countries, with the expectation of a higher standard of living and a welcome place – at least in the labour markets – of their new countries.

Hundreds of thousands of people moved from the West Indies and the Indian sub-continent to Britain to work in the textile factories, transport or the new National Health Service; from Algeria to France and from Turkey to Germany, to boost production in the burgeoning car assembly plants and the manufacturing sector generally; from South America to North America to fill a wide range of labour market gaps; and from South Asia and across the globe to create a labour market of sufficient size to build the new nations of Australia and Canada. Migration also impacted on many other countries and, significantly, became aligned with clear racial or ethnic differences.

The increasing mobility of the world's population has been very marked. The number of people living outside their country of birth has doubled since the mid-1970s and now stands at about 175 million (UNDP, 2004, p. 30). The number is continuing to grow and at an accelerating rate. Globalisation of the economy, more accessible travel, the ease of communications and the expanded horizons of tourists, all combine to ensure that we really do live in a small world. However, it is ironic that whilst migration patterns have created tensions between ethnic groups, much of the present movement of population is attributable to inter-ethnic conflict, persecution and war in the originating countries. Inter-ethnic conflict and the consequent flow of people fleeing from it, has increased in recent years and shows no sign of slowing down.

Tourism is adding to the world movement of population, particularly since the advent of cheaper air travel with, for example, some 60 million British tourists now leaving the country each year, and travelling to more far-flung places than ever before. In the other direction, over 26 million tourists travel to Britain and as many as 25,000 people even commute in to the country to work. Students now think little of studying abroad, with the western universities courting students from the Far East and even establishing campuses in countries like China and Malaysia. Global businesses, with global brands, also extend their operations and international trade knows virtually no boundaries as the movement of goods becomes relatively easy

and low cost. From these, largely short-term movements of people, it is not surprising that an increasing number develop into permanent re-locations and migration patterns.

Perhaps, the most surprising migration trend has been 'tourism to residency', in which the middle classes of the more affluent countries gradually make the transition from the occasional visitor to second home owner and eventually buying a property for their permanent use, often settling into retirement in a new country. The exercise of choice in the housing market has now crossed national boundaries. It is estimated, for example, that 300,000 British citizens have moved permanently to Spain and many more live and work in other European countries, such as France, Greece, Cyprus and Italy (Blair, 2004). These out-migration figures are destined to rise, with 180,000 second homes being built in Spain alone (40 per cent of which are being purchased by Britons) and as new destinations such as Turkey, Bulgaria and Slovakia, become more popular due to price differentials.

The net result is that, in the nearly 200 countries of the world, there are some 5,000 ethnic groups and in two-thirds of these nations there is at least one substantial minority – an ethnic or religious group – that makes up at least 10 per cent of the population (UNDP, 2004, p. 2). However, the number of foreign citizens in developed nations is often exaggerated and is still quite small, with most of the European countries remaining under five per cent of population and virtually all under ten per cent in 1998. Countries with the largest programmes of 'nation-building', of course, have larger proportions, (of foreign-born) with the United States at 9.8 per cent, Canada at 17.4 per cent and Australia at 23.4 per cent (Stalker, 2001, p. 15).

Many developed nations have experienced both outward migration as well as inward migration over many years. Over the past two centuries, millions of Britons have left the United Kingdom to seek work in America, Canada, Australia and further afield. There are 200,000 UK passport holders living in New Zealand alone and applicants from the UK account for almost a quarter of employment visas issued each year by the New Zealand government. The United Kingdom remains the largest source country for skilled migrants to Australia. Nationals from the UK form the third most important group of immigrant workers to Canada – behind only the United States and Mexico in 2002 (Blair, 2004). Many British people, it seems, take the opportunity to live in other countries and see it as their right to do so, whilst their former compatriots often remain hostile to the reverse trend – inward migration. In a recent radio interview, one unnamed migrant from Britain to Spain, for example, claimed that she had left Britain to live in Spain because 'there were too many foreigners in Britain'. But, a number of factors could lead to further, more dramatic and sudden population movement. Catastrophic change through the impact of global warming could create millions of 'eco-refugees'. Flooding is likely to have the most immediate and devastating impact, but changes in the world's climate could make huge

areas of the world uninhabitable within relatively short periods. This could include parts of the developed world, such as the American mid-west, as well as those countries and continents already regularly ravaged by climate extremes, desertification and soil erosion. Some climate models now also predict much colder climates for countries like the UK and Ireland, because of the potential breakdown of the Gulf Stream. Sea levels are rising and are forecast to rise another 88 cm by 2100 threatening 100 million people globally who currently live below this level. The number of people affected by floods worldwide has already risen from seven million in the 1960s to 150 million today (Blair, 2004a). Bangladesh is perhaps one of the countries at most immediate risk from flooding with tens of millions of people potentially affected, even on the mid-range scenarios that have been developed. Violent storms and hurricanes now regularly ravage the Caribbean and the United States, destroying the infrastructure upon which normal life depends and necessitating millions of people to move away on a temporary basis. What once seemed far-fetched and distant possibilities are now very real threats, not just for future generations but for the present one too.

In the even shorter term, the process of EU enlargement will enable many thousands of people from the poorer sections of Eastern Europe to move unhindered across European boundaries, though the potential impact of this has been used to cynically raise the political temperature. For example, in early 2004 the British press worked itself into a frenzy about the tens of thousands of Roma people or 'Gypsies', then only mobile within a limited number of eastern European states but apparently poised to move in great numbers to Britain (Ouseley, 2004). This proved to be 'scaremongering' of the worst sort, and the focus has more recently shifted to the prospect of Turkey joining the EU with the 'clash of cultures' being the source of new consternation.

The continuing prospect of further economic migration and especially the increased number of asylum seekers and refugees to a number of European nations, as well as the continuing differences between the majority and existing minority populations, remains a political and social challenge. This issue has, more than any other, been responsible for the growth in support for far right parties across Europe, where they regularly attract around 20 per cent of the popular vote.

However, more generally, globalisation is changing our perceptions of race and culture, making some boundaries redundant and yet, creating new divisions and threats. We need new paradigms to help us to conceptualise this change and to develop policy and practical responses to it. These are more urgent than ever before.

Learning the lessons of the past

The position and status of foreigners in the nation state has changed very quickly. Prior to the Second World War, most foreigners were simply seen as

'aliens', people who would seldom be invited to become part of the host nation. Their rights were limited and they did not expect equal treatment. As most European nations are the products of centuries of successive waves of immigrants, often the result of conflict, war and persecution, aliens were eventually assimilated over the generations, becoming almost indistinguishable from the host community. Nevertheless, the pace of change was slow and perhaps, only the Jewish community managed to remain a significant and visible international minority over hundreds of years, with an identity and culture that transcended the many nations in which they were to be found. Small black communities were also resident in a number of European cities in the early part of the twentieth century (and earlier), often settling in major ports that had had some connection with the slave trade, but without the means to maintain an international conception of themselves and often surviving as a beleaguered minority. A very different picture is evident today, with modern communications allowing transnational identities to be much more easily supported and even reinforced.

As the twentieth century unfolded, nations were still grappling with the development of the concept of equal rights for their own citizens. Political power was only beginning to slip from the hands of the landed class and the right to vote was still related to property rights. These were societies in which everyone 'knew their place', in which rigid class divisions and deference defined social relations. Women did not enjoy a number of basic entitlements, let alone equality; universal suffrage was not yet established. In these circumstances, the promotion of foreigners' rights to equality before the law was unlikely to be a priority. The pace of social and political change was, however, quickening. The growth of mass political movements, the real possibility of revolution and the rights of the common people moved inexorably up the political agenda. By the Second World War, the political landscape had changed forever and the days of empires and colonialism were coming to an end (at least in a political, if not economic, sense). The colonies of European nations were gaining independence, just at a time when more labour was required to fuel post-war reconstruction and economic expansion. Mass production of consumer goods, fashion items and clothing, the rapid expansion of the automotive industry and the development of service industries required to look after the new 'affluent workers', meant that many nations looked beyond their borders for extra labour. Where better than their former colonies and dependencies – people with an understanding of the cultural and linguistic requirements of the host countries?

But just as earlier immigrants had found, the new arrivals were soon the subject of racism and discrimination and conflicts developed in the newly settled neighbourhoods. The host white community were, at best, ambivalent towards their new fellow workers and, in some cases, implacably hostile. Attempts were made in Britain to stem the tide of immigration almost as

soon as it had started, but this had to be balanced with the evident continuing need for labour and the need to keep faith with the people from the colonies who had always been afforded special status as subjects with the right to enter and live in Britain. Similar debates were held in many other European countries and especially those, like Holland, that had also had a number of former colonies and dependencies. The first response of the British Government, again in parallel with developments in other European countries, was to, by degrees, to try to institute controls on the numbers of immigrants, from the early 1960s. In Britain the number of immigrants from the Commonwealth had nevertheless reached 336,000 by 1951 and 942,300 by 1966. Crucially, however, the number of black and Asian people had grown from 74,500 in 1951 to 595,100 in 1966. The number of immigrants from Ireland, Cyprus and Malta had also grown significantly (Rose *et al.*, 1969, p. 97).

The 'immigration problem' was now, more evidently than ever before, a matter of 'race'. To the people of Britain and the many other white European nations that had for so many generations dominated the world, maintained empires and controlled international trade, their evident military and economic superiority was synonymous with their whiteness. Their 'pecking order' had been constructed over many years, reinforced by their history and by lifelong socialisation processes. Black and Asian people, migrants from southern European states – and most foreigners – were by definition inferior 'races'. Yet, they were now suddenly to be welcomed in to the nation state and to be regarded as equals. This change had come upon these countries in dramatic fashion; empires were fast disappearing, and people from those empires and elsewhere were moving into their communities, appearing amongst them as doctors and nurses, or working alongside them in factories and serving them in the corner shop – and in Britain at least it was increasingly recognised that migrants were here to stay.

Whilst governments again turned to the use of immigration controls to assuage the concern of the host white communities, they also had to respond to the immigrant communities that were demanding an end to the discrimination and, in particular, to the unfair treatment in housing and employment. Governments were forced to recognise that the disaffection of both the host white community and the immigrant communities would lead to even greater potential for conflict. Immigration controls were no longer an adequate response. They therefore developed two further approaches (which are dealt with in more detail in Chapter 2). First, anti-discrimination measures were introduced. In Britain, these did not appear until the mid-1960s, with the Race Relations Acts of 1965 and 1968, following many years of wrangling and heart searching about the rights and wrongs of immigration.

Second, there were some very limited attempts to 'promote good race relations' by working with the white community to improve their understanding of the black and minority ethnic communities and by promoting

more effective support for immigrants to help them settle and integrate. In Britain, this approach has been enshrined in legislation since the 1960s in some form or other, though it has never been more than a marginal activity with very little energy and resources behind it. By contrast, the 'equalities agenda' burgeoned, with an increasing weight of legislative programmes, which were also extended to other disadvantaged groups. The failure to invest in promoting good race relations and helping people, especially from the host community, to come to terms with change is of great significance and very relevant to the present day community cohesion agenda. Many lessons can be learnt from this period, especially the need to attend to the social and psychological needs of communities; to develop a clear awareness of and commitment to, the need for change; to provide a realistic level of local resources to reduce competing demands upon them and; the need for clear leadership, in which programmes are mainstreamed, rather than left to poorly resourced voluntary organisations.

The developments in Britain were, nevertheless, relatively progressive compared to other European countries and represented a more coherent, albeit limited, national strategy than attempts elsewhere, which were even more piecemeal and localised. However, they had been preceded by anti-discrimination measures in the United States in the 1940s and 50s and by more radical 'affirmative action' in the early 1960s, culminating in the 'monumental piece of social legislation' – the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Micklethwait and Wooldrige, 2004, p. 54). The enlistment of hundreds of thousands of black servicemen in the Second World War (and in subsequent conflicts, most notably Vietnam), could only enhance the demands for equal rights. The Civil Rights movement in the United States grew and developed with the enactment of further significant civil rights legislation in the 1960s, including the 1965 Voting Rights Act and a further Civil Rights Act in 1968, as well as a range of social programmes to tackle education and health inequalities. The period of non-violent and peaceful protest under the civil rights movement, however, seemed to pass with the death of its most powerful advocate, Martin Luther King in 1968. It gave way to a more radical approach, epitomised by 'black power' (Ratcliffe, 2004, p. 130) the ripples from which soon spread across the Atlantic. Many European countries were experiencing similar tensions by the 1970s; the black and Asian communities in developed countries had grown in confidence, would no longer accept either second-class citizenship, nor take kindly to being patronised with attempts at initiatives designed 'to understand them'. Young second generation black men were beginning to take to the streets.

Primary migration into Europe ended, or all but ended, in the early 1970s. Britain acted first in 1971, followed by Germany and Denmark in 1973 and France and a number of other countries in 1974 (MacMaster, 2001, p. 188). But by then countries were having to re-define themselves as 'multicultural' including countries like Germany, where their 'guest-worker' schemes had

enabled them to harbour an illusion that the migration was temporary. Further, most of the European states had little option but to allow family dependents to join the existing migrants, which consolidated their positions as de facto citizens.

Gradually the anti-discrimination legislation was extended, for example, in Britain it covered 'indirect' forms, through the 1976 Race Relations Act. However, this and subsequent legislation has only had a limited effect with black and minority ethnic households remaining at the bottom end of virtually every social and economic indicator and with limited attitudinal change amongst the host community. In 1980 and 1981 there were riots in Bristol, Liverpool, Brixton in London and elsewhere bringing with them a recognition of the impact of poverty and social disadvantage, through the recommendations of the Scarman Report in 1981. Another wave of riots nevertheless took place in other cities with substantial black and minority populations, such as Birmingham and Nottingham, in the mid-1980s. The Macpherson Report in 1999 following the murder of black teenager, Stephen Lawrence, moved the equalities agenda on still further by focussing on 'institutional racism'. It was followed by the Race Relations (Amendment) Act in 2000, which ensured that all public bodies had further race relations measures imposed upon them. But 'disturbances' again took place in 2001, this time in the northern cities Bradford, Burnley and Oldham and, on this occasion, they involved the Asian community of Pakistani and Bangladeshi heritage.

Over this period, the focus of legislation had gradually shifted from the individual and from individual acts of discrimination, to tackling social and organisational forms, but was still based on controlling behaviour and making good the deficits faced by Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) communities. Progress had, nevertheless, been made though not yet had the desired effect of either delivering equal opportunities, nor of convincing BME communities that they were accepted and could attain an equal stake in their society (Modood *et al.*, 1994, p. 184). Relatively little attention had also been given to tackling the underlying causes of prejudice and discrimination.

The limitations of this approach soon became apparent. First, as the agenda was almost entirely focussed on people from black and minority backgrounds to enable them to compete on a more equal basis, it tended to perpetuate the very myths that the agenda sought to address, namely that disadvantaged individuals need special treatment to overcome their apparent inadequacies. The backlash against the 'affirmative action' programmes in the United States, which relies on positive discrimination, is a more obvious expression of this, reinforcing claims of preferential treatment and 'problematising' the black community. Legislation to prevent direct discriminatory rules and behaviours has, of course, been directed at the white community, but little attempt was made to influence the underlying attitudes and values upon which they were based. These measures did have

some success, but the justification for them had not been universally accepted and more covert and discriminatory behaviours began to emerge and the opportunity for a more open – and more difficult – debate was rarely encouraged. Anti-discrimination measures also depended upon quite invasive procedures to check and monitor potentially discriminatory actions, such as the use of employment targets by ethnic origin. This could allow organisational blockages to be identified and addressed, but also tended to create a focus on the black and minority communities as the ‘problem’.

Second, remedial measures were also focussed upon disadvantaged communities as a whole, providing resources to build their capacity and confidence, ensuring that they were consulted and involved, translating communications into minority languages, developing their understanding and providing ‘access pathways’ to social and economic goals. This again created the perception of preferential treatment – even though equality of opportunity had not yet even begun to be approached – and also largely ignored the white community who were experiencing as much, if not more, difficulty in coming to terms with the change and were often seeking to protect their own interests. ‘Separateness’ was also reinforced by focus on identifiable communities; many social programmes being based upon distinct housing areas or separate educational and employment initiatives.

Very little thought was given as to how the host community and the new minorities might actually relate to each other and how mutual respect and understanding might develop, let alone how the host community might begin to welcome the new diversity in their midst. This lack of attention to relationships was despite a statutory duty on both central and local agencies to ‘promote good race relations’ over several decades (this is also discussed further in Chapter 2). Consequently, though multicultural societies now have substantial minority communities, many of the predominantly white communities still do not accept the idea – let alone the reality – of multiculturalism and see it as a threat, rather than as an enrichment of their lives. The very terms ‘multicultural’ or ‘diversity’ do not necessarily resonate with them. And many of the ethnic minority youngsters that took part in the British riots in Bradford, Burnley and Oldham in the summer of 2001, as second and third generation British Asians, did not feel that they had an equal stake in their own land, nor did they believe that their ethnicity, faith and culture was accepted within the multicultural framework.

The 2001 riots, and the subsequent reports (Cantle, 2001; Clarke, 2001; Denham, 2001; Ritchie, 2001), together with a report into Bradford commissioned prior to the riots (Ouseley, 2001) brought about a major re-think of Government policy on race and community relations. The concept of ‘community cohesion’ was quickly developed to tackle the ‘parallel lives’ experienced by white and black communities and the resulting ignorance and lack of understanding and trust that pervaded so many of the relationships

between communities. This did not in any way imply the abandonment of the 'equality agenda'. Equality of opportunity and tackling racial discrimination are a central part of the community cohesion approach and the lack of any real sense of fairness in community relations would, in itself, threaten the 'common vision and sense of belonging' and undermine the idea that 'different backgrounds are appreciated and valued', set out in the definition of community cohesion (see Figure 2.1). It would also be difficult to imagine a successful and cohesive society where substantial differences between the rich and poor communities are juxtaposed. Severely disadvantaged communities will inevitably develop into disaffected communities if they believe that they have no real opportunities to grow and develop.

Black and minority ethnic communities, who believe that they are routinely discriminated against on the arbitrary basis of visible differences, may well choose to build a common bond of disaffection both within nation states and across national borders, embracing a transnational identity, rather than with their fellow citizens. This is of course in contrast to expectations that minorities will 'integrate' and see themselves as citizens of their host countries. But identity is not automatically defined by the nation state in which one happens to live, even where citizenship is given by birth, let alone subsequently granted through naturalisation. This will inevitably be more difficult for minorities that believe they are discriminated against, denied equal opportunities and made to feel generally unwelcome and especially if they have the option of retaining and reinforcing a diaspora affinity. In a modern world with advanced communications, cultural reinforcement through contact with people of the same heritage is relatively easy and those bonds will be all the stronger if the national common sense of belonging is limited. In such circumstances, minorities are likely to cling to their cultural, linguistic and religious symbols, rather than feel an affinity to, let alone integrate into, a society that appears hostile to them.

However, the notion of 'difference' is generally ill-defined in many of the debates about multiculturalism. What constitutes 'difference' may be visible, though often many of the differences that we regard as being significant have few if any such obvious distinctions. The significance of difference is socially constructed around a wide range of variables in both the private and public realms including social, economic and cultural factors. Multiculturalists have tended to regard all of these differences as being of equal value, to be defended as a means of protecting the heritage of each culture and as a means of avoiding any tendency towards assimilation. Given the history of racism, such a defence has been understandable.

The usefulness of the concept of 'multiculturalism' is now beginning to be questioned, however, in part because of the way in which it encompasses such a wide spectrum of difference and fails to reconcile them within a societal framework. Further, it has, for some commentators at least, actually become

the vehicle by which divisions and inequalities are reinforced:

Multiculturalism ... has not simply entrenched the divisions created by racism, but made cross-cultural interaction more difficult by encouraging people to assert their cultural differences. And in areas where there was both a sharp division between Asian and white communities, and where both communities suffered disproportionately from unemployment and social deprivation, the two groups began to view these problems through the lens of cultural and racial differences, blaming each other for their problems. The inevitable result was the riots. (Malik, 2002)

Community cohesion, then, became established on the basis of trying to create shared experiences and values, rather than continuing to entrench separation and to recognise and reinforce differences. Concern was, in particular, expressed about the role of the statutory agencies involved in regeneration and housing, but with increasing recognition of the role played by the voluntary sector in 'capacity building' differences rather than reinforcing similarities. This is explored in greater detail in Chapters 2 and 6.

Multiculturalism and difference

Most advanced industrialised nations are now 'multicultural' – if only in the sense that they have significant black and minority ethnic populations who have established themselves over several decades, with second and third generation descendants. The extent to which minority groups see themselves as full members of that society and whether they are accepted by the majority population as permanent and equal citizens is another matter. Progress, in multicultural terms, is generally only measured numerically, such as the number of black and minority ethnic recruits into the higher echelons of public service, a reduction in the number of racial attacks, or complaints regarding employment discrimination. Little has been done to provide a deeper understanding of the social processes involved, nor to clearly establish and promote the terms upon which minorities relate to society as a whole. There has also been a failure to clearly establish where each nation stands on the multicultural axis: from the 'assimilation' model, in which the identity and characteristics of minorities are simply merged into the prevailing culture, to the 'co-existence' model, in which different groups and the host community retain a high degree of separateness, and in which each community maintains distinct values and lifestyles.

However, even this 'axis of multiculturalism', provides only a limited approach to what, in reality, is a much more complex issue. Many aspects of difference have little or no impact upon societal cohesiveness and could be maintained as a means of supporting distinct cultures. Some differences are

structural, like those in the economic sphere, and can have a profound impact upon the success of individuals and their communities; others are generally confined to the private realm rather than in the public sphere. The 'degree of difference' set out in Chapter 3, therefore attempts to separate some of the components of 'cultural' difference. It is recognised that each of these domains are entwined with the others and, therefore, a perfect model is not possible. It is also recognised that the present discussion about 'multiculturalism' soon becomes entangled with wider political debates in which immigration and multiculturalism are defended, or opposed, because of the way in which they have become linked to racist and anti-racist theology.

Multicultural societies now need to come to terms with the different domains of difference and to develop a greater consensus, not only to agree upon the areas which should be rigorously defended, but also where the bond of nationality requires a greater sense of commonality. Further, more agreement about how to achieve such a consensus will also be required and it is suggested that this will depend upon breaking down the segregation or separateness between the minority and majority community and between the different minority communities themselves. Mutual trust and a common sense of belonging will only be created through constant interaction and shared experiences.

Whilst much of the pseudo science that underpinned racist ideology has been debunked (discussed in Chapter 4) there is a danger that the same robust approach has not yet been shown to new sociological and psychological theories which have developed the idea of 'people like us' as a primordial, or 'natural' affinity. Ethnic and faith divisions have now begun to replace those based upon ideas about 'race' but are also often presented as fixed and immutable, rather than socially and politically constructed. This allows the idea that solidarity is undermined by cultural diversity – people who are 'not like us' – to flourish and seems to be a new and particularly dangerous line of argument in support of a deterministic definition of 'culture'. This view also unfortunately appears to be shared by those who promote minority cultures, but do so as rigid conceptions, with unchanging values and behaviours.

Ethnic identities are also constantly changing (Cornell and Hartmann, 1998), even diasporic boundaries are not fixed (Soysal, 2000) and a homogeneous representation of minority cultures is no more justifiable than a selective and rigid idea of 'Britishness', or any other national culture. The idea of 'natural' affinity is also discussed further in Chapter 4 and is rejected, along with the view that ethnic differences and divisions (and those based on faith, class and other 'cultural' affinity) ever have any more significance than the social and political meaning that we ascribe to them.

This theme is taken up again in Chapter 5 where 'difference' is related to ideas about identity and citizenship and in which it is suggested that political unity, generally encompassed under the principles of nationality and

citizenship, should provide the key requirements of societal cohesiveness, rather than any attempt to agree on a national identity which embraces so many different subjective views in both the public and private realms. Establishing a clearer sense of political unity is, nevertheless, no easy option, especially as mainstream politicians have been reluctant to enter into such debate because of fears that it may either provide extremists with a platform or create uncertainties within the minority communities upon whose vote they may depend. It may however, also reflect the same ambivalence of political leaders on this issue, as is evident in the community as a whole.

In a multicultural country there must be a clear political will to reach a consensus on what level of 'difference' is accepted and which differences are acceptable. The practical arrangements also threaten to confound many of the theories, largely because 'multiculturalism' does not exist in any meaningful way in many of the communities that make up the so-called multicultural nations, with the same physical separation of minority communities established at the point of initial migration, continuing to a greater or lesser extent thereafter. This has helped to maintain the pretence in the eyes of the majority, that the minorities are separate and distinct, unwilling or unable to develop an affinity to a different culture and simply not part of the same society. It may also create a feeling, in the eyes of the minorities, that they are being denied access to the host society and must cling to their former identities and affinities. Whilst the initial separation often arises from a simple development of the historic divisions linked to the settlement patterns of successive waves of immigrants moving in to the most affordable – and worst – housing areas, it is closely linked to economic circumstances and social class. Nevertheless, from the majority population's point of view these enclaves represent almost separate states, limited to the margins and which do not change the overall nature of *their* society – except for the poorer white communities, who often compete for the same territory and who become the most fertile breeding ground for racism.

In Britain, the ethnic minority population remains surprisingly concentrated, with London accounting for around 50 per cent of the entire BME population and with most of the remainder heavily concentrated in a small number of areas. This also means that the white population is similarly 'concentrated' in other areas and that many youngsters attend either all-white schools or all-black schools and that they grow up in mono-cultural areas, with little or no real experience of multiculturalism. Whilst the BME population has grown significantly in recent years, most of that growth has been within those areas that already had an above average proportion of the BME population. The areas that were almost exclusively white, such as in the North East, the South West and Wales have seen an increase – and even a doubling in per centage terms – but from a very low base and still remain almost exclusively white, with the exception of a few urban enclaves. The geographic concentration of the BME community has therefore changed

little over the last 40 years or so and has actually been reinforced by the recent trends. This clearly has an impact on many areas of daily life, particularly schooling, employment and leisure patterns.

There is a very similar pattern in other multicultural countries; almost half the inhabitants of Toronto and Los Angeles are foreign born (UNDP, 2004) and immigrants to France, the Netherlands and other European countries still gravitate towards the major cities like Paris and Amsterdam where the BME community remains heavily concentrated.

Even within the multicultural cities, there is evidence of considerable levels of separation, to the extent that the relationship between communities might also be characterised as one of 'parallel lives'. The inner city 'ghettoes', mono-cultural schools, separate employment patterns and distinct faith and cultural associations, are simply seen as part of the natural fabric of many cities. But whilst it is the case that some of the segregation is due to purely economic factors (which, in itself is problematic), settlement patterns also reflect preferences of both a positive nature, such as people choosing to live in an area which is supportive of their culture and also, for negative reasons, for example, because people feel unsafe and insecure in different areas.

The experience of multiculturalism will therefore be very varied within what are essentially multicultural countries. A recent Commission for Racial Equality Report indicated that 94 per cent of whites in Britain had no friends from other ethnic groups (CRE, 2004b) and many people will have no experience of, nor meaningful contact with, other ethnic groups. For many people, interaction will therefore be limited to 'visible contact' through the shared experience of travelling, shopping or other mundane activities and will not amount to an activity in which the barriers might be expected to be broken down – some studies have actually shown a correlation between proximity and anti-black sentiment (Brown, 1995, p. 237), with differences being observed, but neither understood, nor tolerated and accepted. Again, this points to the need to reinforce the equalities agenda, so that equal opportunities can ensure integration in the working environment and other structural processes.

Settlement patterns are therefore important on a number of levels and the absence of Government information about trends has recently been criticised. The independent Panel on Community Cohesion recommended that the deficiency be rectified by routine monitoring by the Office of National Statistics, which could then be used to inform policy (Cantle, 2004). In Britain, there have also been very few studies, which seek to map and understand the segregation and integration of communities. Patterns are not routinely examined, let alone monitored and the Census and other records have failed to keep pace with the new categories of migrant communities. Settlement patterns can, however, indicate the nature of discrimination, the extent to which different groups feel able to move to other areas, either for reasons of safety and security, or because in a cultural sense, they

are perceived as 'not for them'. This also applies to the white community where, again, movement is neither properly mapped, nor understood – and is also ill-defined, especially in relation to new migrant communities.

In Britain there have been a few studies of the phenomenon of 'white flight', where white families leave areas with strong or growing migrant communities, because of the perceived negative impact of a growing number of black and ethnic minority people on the area. The anticipation of a fall in house prices has been one of the drivers, sometimes encouraged by local estate agents hoping to profit from the increased activity. The desire to exercise parental choice and to move into different catchment areas for schools, which are seen as more desirable and where the white intake is still predominant, is also an increasing consideration.

It is essential to develop a clearer understanding of the nature of 'segregation' and how the term is used. The literal meaning suggests a separation of particular groups, which is decreed by law and enforced by the state, or created by the presence of such significant barriers that the ability to move to other areas cannot be freely exercised and is 'involuntary'. However, 'segregation' has become more generally used to denote an area, which is dominated by one group and effectively mono-cultural. The term 'self-segregation' has also been employed to describe this process, where it is assumed that particular communities have preferred to live in separate areas – in other words, the segregation is 'voluntary' (although such assumptions often overstate the real constraints upon free choice). However, whatever the cause of 'segregation' the impact on inter-community relations is profound and the lack of contact between communities can lead to ignorance and irrational fears of each other, especially where extremists seek to capitalise upon that ignorance and to demonise one or more communities.

At one extreme, segregation has been described as 'parallel lives' a concept first established by the Independent Review Team which considered the significance of the disturbances in a number of British towns and cities in 2001 (Cantle, 2001). This demonstrated that the physical separation of BME households in distinct housing areas had become underpinned by a complete lack of contact between people from different communities. Social and economic ties had lessened, or ceased altogether and there was little or no contact of any sort between different groups, such that

separate educational arrangements, community and voluntary bodies, employment, places of worship, language, social and cultural networks, means that many communities operate on the basis of a series of parallel lives, (which) often do not seem to touch at any point, let alone promote any meaningful interchanges. (Ibid., p. 9)

However, it is possible to distinguish this 'exclusive' pattern of segregation from a more open 'critical mass' model, in which a given community is

clustered in a particular area, but do not occupy it exclusively. Their concentration is sufficient to support a range of distinct cultural facilities and a support network that helps to preserve cultural identity, but the presence of other groups within the same area means that contact and interaction can still be facilitated through shared local activities and by mixed intake schools and integrated employment and entrepreneurial arrangements. In these circumstances, the 'layers of separation' will not be cumulative and interaction will be able to take place at some level.

It is suggested, therefore, that in order to provide a better understanding of the dynamics of community relations and particularly the interaction between communities, the 'layers of separation' should be explored in each case (discussed in Chapter 3) to distinguish many different patterns of 'segregation' and to develop subsequent policy responses.

The causes of racism

Social policy has generally been framed on the basis that racism is a regrettable, but inevitable, part of multicultural life. The focus has been very much one of trying to prevent discrimination and to provide equal opportunities, with little by way of the examination of the root causes of tensions and conflicts. Strategies to reduce inter-ethnic tension and conflict, and the 'fear of difference', have been notable by their absence. The causes of most tensions are simply seen as 'historical', with the divisions between communities lost in the mists of time. In so far as the causes of racism have been addressed, it has generally been on the basis of controlling the actions and behaviours of individuals, rather than considering the social and psychological processes involved in inter-ethnic divisions and hostility. In the 1960s a small attempt was made in Britain to 'promote good race relations', but these measures were very limited, left largely to under-resourced voluntary agencies and not taken seriously and, in any event they only lasted for less than a decade, after which they were largely forgotten (even though both the CRE and local authorities retained a statutory duty in this respect).

The relations between ethnic and faith communities have been shaped of course, by historic patterns of development. The legacy of colonialism is still very evident and follows on from centuries dominated by a European view of the world, in which the white nations were regarded as 'civilisation' and other 'races' seen as genetically inferior. But whilst in general, the white nations had seen themselves as superior to black and Asian people, many complex divisions between nations, ethnicities and faiths have led to mistrust, prejudice and discrimination. All nations and ethnic groups, have their own 'pecking order', it seems, which puts themselves at the top and others below them – an order which is generally reversed and re-ordered by the 'others' involved. In this sense 'racism' is a relatively simple concept. It is based upon a shared belief that one group is congenitally inferior and that

the other is congenitally superior. The same dogma, however, is now beginning to be used by people who believe in superiority of their faith, their ethnicity or some other identifiable group characteristic.

In fact, these ethnocentric ideas are so prevalent that we sometimes lose sight of the fact that they are also part of the same unfounded and irrational belief systems. We can only look back with incredulity at some of the past ideas, for example, the Nazi belief in a superior Aryan 'race', or that South Africans could be divided by whether a pencil could be retained in their hair – though none of this prevents us from holding similarly irrational views today. At least the eugenicist theories and the debates linking intelligence to 'race' are now largely seen as being in the past. Proof, whether in the form of debunked pseudo-scientific research, or the evidence from our own eyes from working with people who were once condemned as inferior and are now performing at the highest levels, has clearly demonstrated that everyone, irrespective of ethnicity, faith and gender is capable of all levels of attainment.

The 'science of racism' conveniently provided justification to those individuals who might otherwise be accused of unjust and irrational behaviour. Racism and discrimination perpetrated by individuals, or by one community against another, however, may well have a rational, if unacceptable, basis. The denial of equal rights and opportunities by one community – generally the host or majority community – in order to safeguard their privileged and advantageous position is not unusual, particularly where they themselves feel insecure in social and economic terms. As such a position is clearly socially and morally unjust and indefensible, the dominant group will often seek to justify their privileged position by the creation and perpetuation of prejudicial views and myths – possibly backed by spurious scientific theory – about the subordinate community. The need to take socio-economic and structural measures to tackle the very real conflicts over resources is therefore clearly necessary.

Much of the legislation over the last 50 years or so has been founded on the principle of controlling the behaviour of individuals and is aimed at either ensuring equal opportunities, or preventing discrimination, in a wide range of social, economic and political activities, rather than changing attitudes and values. Of course, the introduction of legislation and the debate that surrounds it, can in itself, assist the process of change by drawing upon the respect for the force of the law. Conditioning behaviour over a period of time, will also begin to instil a renewed sense of right and wrong and the values inherent in the legislation may well be internalised. However, such legislation can also reinforce the idea that those apparently benefiting from the protection of the law are in need of it because of an innate inferiority. In any event, years of such legislation have also proved to be of limited effect in many areas, with racism and religious bigotry remaining evident, simply rising or falling depending on a range of political, economic and social factors.

The establishment of a fair and cohesive society will need to underpin any development of the 'rights agenda' with a much more effective approach to attitudinal change, ensuring that the 'fear of difference' is constantly assuaged by regular and positive interaction between different communities. Many of the social psychological theories now support the view that whilst we categorise 'others' and create groups based on stereotypes and a perception of difference, regular and positive contact between communities can create a shared understanding and remove much of the anxiety that such differences represent any real threat. This is discussed further in Chapter 4.

We also need to look beyond the immediate confines of the race debate and the 'fear of difference' is by no means confined to ethnic and faith divisions. Gays and lesbians, travellers and people characterised as 'disabled' face issues which are similar, with pre-conceived notions and stereotypes creating barriers and allowing discriminatory behaviour to be justified on the basis of an imagined inequality. There is much good practice in other fields that is now enshrined in social policy. For example, children with special needs are increasingly being taught within mainstream schools, and mentally ill people are now often cared for in community settings. These developments have not been without controversy and proposals to move people out of institutional care still meet with concern, and even hostility, in many areas. However, once provision has been established in the community, everyday contact generally results in the removal of fears and allows the differences that people have to be seen in a more rational and reasoned way. Interaction allows them to be seen for what they are, rather than what the popular misconceptions might suggest. This interaction will not be successful, however, if it is superficial and simply allows the myths and prejudices to be reinforced. A number of pre-conditions for contact are therefore necessary. (The theory and practice of interaction and cross-cultural contact is discussed in Chapters 4 and 6.)

In Britain community cohesion work has been developing over the last three or four years and whilst the practice is still developing, there is some evidence that the new approaches have had some success. These are also discussed in Chapter 6, where links are made to the work in other countries which appear to be developing programmes based on similar principles, such as the work in Frankfurt to reduce the host community's fear of the 'other' by developing shared experiences and mutual trust (Sandercock, 2004, p. 259). In other cases the circumstances may be very different, for example, the work on inter-ethnic conflict in India, the reconciliation of ethnic groups in Rwanda and the bringing together of Jews and Arabs in parts of Israel, where the experiences are no less relevant. Also, at a much more mundane level, work has been undertaken in several countries, to settle asylum seekers in hostile environments, by working with the host community to 'buddy' new arrivals, such as in the Canadian 'host programme', which enables cross-cultural contact to be established in the first

instance. Similarly the work in local schools to explain why asylum seekers have come to live in their area and to make sure their culture and background is understood, has also had some success in ensuring greater understanding and reducing the ignorance about different groups.

Further, the South African approach to 'truth and reconciliation', following the ending of apartheid, was a testament to a much more radical approach of building bridges between communities. Given that this has not yet been fully supported by work to close the social and economic gaps between the communities, it remains to be seen whether cohesion is possible with such differences in lifestyle and life opportunities reinforcing ethnic or religious boundaries.

The impact of immigration

Modern democracies have failed as yet, to create truly harmonious and just societies in which opportunities are equal and majority and minority communities tolerate and respect each other's differences. As multiculturalism continues – and accelerates – so the need to respond to what is already a difficult and challenging agenda will require new impetus. Community cohesion cannot claim to be the complete answer to this challenge but does represent an attempt to both understand the basis of prejudice and the resulting discriminatory behaviour and to confront their causes. Past attempts to tackle discrimination and promote equalities has had some success, but this has relied upon the introduction of systems and processes to control behaviour rather than tackle underlying attitudes and values.

Most controversy still revolves around the subject of immigration, which appears to constantly renew the idea of 'difference' and continually re-open the basis upon which longer standing migrants are settled. Immigration is, therefore, rarely debated in relation to the real practical and present issues and inevitably draws upon preconceived ideas based upon past controversies. Moreover, the debate has become polarised: to support inward migration is to be a supporter of multiculturalism, a liberal anti-racist; to oppose migration, is to be racist and illiberal. With debate constrained in such limited terms, however, it is not possible to address more significant and real questions about the sort of multicultural country that we want to become and the nature and extent of 'multiculturalism' that we wish to see, given that it covers such a wide range of difference and is underpinned by many layers of structural and cultural separation. Political leaders have also attempted to avoid debate altogether – preferring to tiptoe around issues which are seen as simply too sensitive. Indeed, very often it is only the extreme right wing groups that are willing to talk about race issues. And they have had some success. In a number of European countries, they continue to make substantial inroads into mainstream politics. Jean-Marie Le Pen's National Front party achieved nearly 18 per cent of the vote in the French

Presidential elections in 2003 and in Belgium the far right Vlaams Blok party achieved 11.6 per cent of the vote in general elections in the same year. More recently, similar parties in Austria have topped 20 per cent and in Italy the extreme right have gained places in ruling coalitions. Meanwhile in Britain, the British National Party has proved to be the most successful extreme right party for many years, although it commands much lower support than in similar parties in other parts of Europe.

The CRE took heart from a survey which found that 86 per cent of Britons disagree with the suggestion that 'you have to be white to be British' (CRE, 2002) and there are some features of the British 'model', which appear to have had greater success. However, race and immigration remains very volatile and with the rise in international tensions and the recent concerns about asylum seekers in the press and media, opinion polls now suggest that the proportion of British people seeing it as a major issue has risen to 30 per cent in 2004 – at the top of the list of 'most important issues facing the country', alongside the health service and education. A new sense of urgency therefore seems more than justifiable.

Economic considerations have largely driven immigration, although the more general effects of globalisation and the rise in inter-ethnic conflicts are now also significant factors. Relatively little thought was given to the impact that population movement will have, either on the host community, or how the new migrant minority populations will themselves cope with the change in their new social and economic circumstances. There has also been little appreciation that migrants would quickly begin to put down roots and that the subsequent generations of migrant families would come to see the host country as their home – indeed, their only home. Further, it was not anticipated that new generations would aspire, not only to have an equal stake in their homeland, but that they would be less willing than their parents to accept anything other than equal treatment. It is a little difficult to understand why these apparently predictable responses were not anticipated at the time, with little done by way of planning and preparation for the inevitable demands for citizenship and equal rights. But this is not a matter of past history – the same tensions are apparent in the approach to the present wave of immigration, whether in respect of refugees or economic migrants. They are generally 'accommodated' in much the same way as migrants were before them, often with the same pattern of geographical, social and economic separation, with little thought about the social and psychological needs of host and migrant communities.

Even the physical needs of the migrant and host communities have taken time to address and conflicts have often arisen as a result of pressure on hard-pressed local services. In Britain, for example, it has been suggested, though hopefully not too seriously, that in order for a particular community, or area, to attract additional resources to alleviate the pressure on housing, health and educational facilities 'you have to have a riot'. Those countries

which set out to build a nation from a majority immigrant population, such as Canada, have been more willing to properly plan resources and create a strategy which promotes a sense of belonging for all. More generally, however, nations where immigrants form minorities, often visible by their race, ethnicity and culture, have muddled along with a mixture of pragmatism and special programmes to respond to conflict and discrimination. The need for a more pro-active and purposeful approach was stressed by the Community Cohesion Panel (Cantle, 2004), which proposed a programme of 'managing settlement' so that at least as much attention would be paid to addressing the social and psychological needs of communities, as to the economic considerations of 'managed migration'.

Clear leadership has often also been lacking, reflecting the uncertainties and ambivalence of the political mood at the time. Black and ethnic minorities have often found that, for them, the continuing reality has been one of racism and discrimination, as evidenced by disadvantage on just about every social and economic indicator. But, also, at a basic and human level there has also been a failure to make immigrants feel truly valued and to give them an equal social standing. Race and community relations have always been vulnerable to the routine 'playing of the race card' by those, usually on the extreme right of the political spectrum, to whip up fear and hatred of minorities and to secure the support of the majority voting population. There is, however, a more collective national hypocrisy in which the indigenous population (or their governments) encourage immigration whenever it suits their economic circumstances and at the same time, do little or nothing to create an equal place for those immigrants that inevitably become, or aspire to become, longer-term residents and citizens. This is not in any way confined to the host white population and there is increasing recognition that established BME people are also beginning to express opposition to new migrants, despite their communities having experienced a similar level of prejudice just a generation or so ago. Racism is certainly not limited to the relationship between the, predominantly, host white communities and the, mainly, black minority communities and there is now also recognition that conflicts between BME groups are growing, despite having in some ways, shared a common bond within an inherently 'racist' society.

Deriding the concerns of the host community (both black and white citizens) is not sufficient. True, such concerns have often been used to underpin racist sentiment, but if change is to occur, difficult areas need to be tackled, rather than simply avoided. The liberal response has been to maintain the idea of 'cultural pluralism' or a 'community of communities', and this has certainly been helpful in the past as a means of emphasising the need to respect differences and avoid assimilation. However, these models are no longer adequate and have become a justification for a continual separation and coexistence, which has militated against the development of mutual trust and co-development. These models also do not address the multicultural

variation now emerging and which are re-shaping our towns and cities. For example, in London there are now over 300 languages spoken and in many of the larger and principal cities of Europe and North America, we now see the development of an 'international culture'. These cities may ultimately have more in common with each other than with the country in which they are situated. In this sense they may become homogenising, in the way that global brands like McDonalds and Coca Cola have become (and are generally disparaged as a result). In the meantime, many of the smaller towns, suburbs and rural areas that surround these cities have remained largely mono-cultural.

Such changes are largely driven by economic requirements rather than the result of any planned policy, which is a response to a particular conception of cultural identity. However, 'planning cultural change' immediately smacks of Soviet style centralism and, in any case, could any fixed conception of culture really survive in such a dynamic situation? But the alternative seems equally unattractive, with a tacit acceptance that the pattern of migration will simply continue to be driven by economic and market considerations (especially as there is the prospect of even greater levels of immigration to restore a more favourable balance of a working population to retired people) rather than by the desire to build a mixed and vibrant community, which is based on values and a behavioural consensus.

The future of multiculturalism is inevitably entwined in the much bigger issue of population strategy, which is seldom part of any formal government policy, in the West at least, as it again would create overtones of central planning and be at odds with all liberal and libertarian principles. However, such strategies are now being seriously discussed in the context of environmental sustainability, which, as Sir David King, the Government's Chief Scientist suggests, presents a greater threat to the world than international terrorism. The Western world's consumption of resources is presently hugely disproportionate to their population and continuously depends upon the consumption of resources originating in other countries. Britain, alongside the Netherlands, is one of the most densely populated countries in the world and yet has one of the highest projected levels of population growth in Europe, most of which is because of the predicted level of inward migration. Genuine concerns about environmental sustainability are profound and some authoritative commentators suggest that major *reductions* in population will be necessary. The Optimum Population Trust (OPT, 2004), for example, whose patrons include Jonathon Porritt, Chairman of the UK Sustainable Development Commission and Sir Crispin Tickell, a Government advisor on the environment, believe that the United Kingdom's sustainable population level may have to be as low as 30 million in the twenty-second century, compared to a present Government projection of nearly 67 million by 2050. Whilst Malthusian projections of sustainable population levels are unlikely to be taken seriously, there is now a real probability that climate

change will begin to test the limits and also generate even more population movement. There is also every likelihood that 'identity politics' will continue to grow, adding to that movement and making it more complex and difficult. All of this will inevitably require new and more sophisticated responses.

Given the nature of debates to date, however, it is difficult enough to de-couple race issues from immigration, let alone from wider population and sustainable development strategies. The origin of such questions is often, in itself, enough to determine the character of the ensuing debate. For example, when Michael Howard, the leader of the Conservative Opposition, raised the possibility of an annual target for immigration in 2004 (which was incorporated into the Conservative Manifesto for the 2005 general election) it was attacked as a racist agenda, whereas when a very similar proposal was made, almost coincidentally, in *Prospect* Magazine (Sriskandarajah, 2004) it barely drew any adverse comment. Context therefore matters and, given the history of immigration debates, raising generalised concerns about migration means that motivation for doing so will inevitably be questioned and is almost certain to invite charges of racism. Raising genuine concerns is of course essential, but will only be seen as genuine if they are part of a process of identifying and solving the problems, rather than heightening concerns and casting doubts on the value of immigration – and, thereby, on past and present migrants. The failure to discuss such issues is potentially equally problematic and will mean that a consensus, or shared 'vision', will be difficult to achieve and that misgivings will continue to be harboured and constantly open to exploitation.

The migration debate must be put into a broader context of economic and demographic change. But this is only likely to be an open and honest debate and relatively free from racist overtones, if it follows on from a much clearer acceptance of difference and diversity and a positive vision of a future multicultural society. If our starting point is that we are now, and for all time, multicultural and that our diversity is valued and celebrated, then perhaps the balance and relationship between different cultures can not only be discussed in a more mature way, but also in the context of even wider social, economic and environmental concerns.

Citizenship in a multicultural society

The terms 'citizenship', 'nationality' and 'national identity' are not well defined and they have often been conflated. There is also a lack of clarity about the way in which these concepts are underpinned by 'values' and whether other forms of identity are likely to reinforce or undermine national solidarity and allegiance. Chapter 5 attempts to establish a few common principles, but also recognises that societies are dynamic and constantly changing and adapting.

'Nationality' does little more than express, in contractual terms, the relationship between an individual and the state in which they were born or of which they have become a member. 'Citizenship' is increasingly being used to describe that relationship and has developed into a more value-laden concept, and assumes a level of allegiance to the state, which creates some semblance of national identity. For those people who view it in its most limited and contractual form, nationality will nevertheless have a considerable impact on our identity over time, if only because of the subtle and continuous processes of socialisation, which are hardly apparent but nevertheless constantly 'flag' our daily lives (Billig, 2002). Some people will, of course, wish to see their identity defined by their nationality, however homogenising this may appear. For others, the picture is more complex, with national identity supplemented, or even supplanted, by other identities. For example, people may describe themselves as British and Catholic, Irish and gay, or Black and American. Such loyalties and affinities may well transcend national boundaries and mean that, whilst they respect the contract with their nation state, they have other allegiances which can be at odds with the prevailing norms of that state, for some or all of the time. There is no general coincidence of nationality and national identity as they express two quite different concepts, one based on an objective relationship and the other, on a wide variety of subjective and emotional views about the public and private dimensions of identity.

Some commentators suggest that the requirements of nationality – and the membership of a *political* entity, which being a citizen entails – are sometimes at odds with the membership of an identifiable *cultural* group and it becomes the 'acid test' of the tolerance of diversity. However, such differences are inherent within a democratic society and are in no way confined to minority ethnic and faith groups. For example political groups, on either the extreme left or right of the spectrum, will generally hold views which are not part of the comfortable majority consensus and, so too, will special interest groups, such as militant animal welfare activists. However, the views of minority ethnic and faith groups are often presented as an alternative set of 'values', which underpin and define a way of life which has sufficient coherence to be recognised as an entity.

Leaving aside the question of whether either, the majority group or minority group, really does have a level of internal coherence to counter-pose them as groups, it is claimed that a 'clash of cultures' can be avoided by assuming that each nation has a core set of values, which all must share, and that each group adopts a sub-set of values which nests within the core. The Communitarians, for example, talk about 'over-arching' values (The Communitarian Network, 2002) and the British Government now demands that fundamental democratic values be upheld (Crick, 2003). The Parekh Report (2000), on the other hand, illustrated the real difficulty of such an approach and whilst supporting the Communitarian concept of 'diversity

within unity' arguing that cohesion depends upon a set of common values, also asserted that each community should be allowed to live by their separate values. Parekh's model of multiculturalism, is presented as a 'community of communities', a form of liberal pluralism which is regarded by others as one in which the common bonds envisaged are far too elastic (Wolfe, 2002).

Alibhai-Brown (2000) has also cast doubt on the usefulness of the whole concept of multiculturalism and this view has gained support recently from Trevor Phillips, the influential Chairman of the CRE, who dramatically called for the 'scrapping of multiculturalism' and its replacement by 'integration' (Phillips, 2004a). Both Parekh and Phillips, however, have argued against 'assimilation' and both support some form of cultural distinctiveness, but the question of how much and in what form, is still open. The term multiculturalism certainly has a limited usefulness in this context as it embraces all forms of interface between minorities and between minorities and majority groups.

Whilst it seems that most advocates of some form of multiculturalism can agree that diversity is something that should be protected, there has been little attempt to codify these 'common values' nor to agree upon the limits of separate values and how to reconcile any conflicts between the two. A theoretical debate, conducted by a range of groups, at a distance from each other, may only succeed in reinforcing stereotypes and compounding ignorance. Diversity is not an end in itself; it allows us to expend our own horizons by contrasting our beliefs and values with those of others. We come to define our own identity by reference to that of others. Mutual understanding and a shared set of values are much more likely to result from a real interchange and from shared experiences at all levels (Malik, 2002a).

This not only lends support to 'community cohesion' but also to the approach in Britain which is beginning to turn the theoretical conception of 'citizenship' into more practical action, echoing some of the developments in Canada, Australia and the United States. These include the new programme of citizenship education in schools and the Government's new 'civil renewal' agenda, which aims to encourage more active forms of engagement, the introduction of citizenship ceremonies and a new citizenship 'handbook', although these are still very much in their infancy and have not been without their problems. This is discussed in Chapter 5.

The practice of community cohesion

The practice of community cohesion is set out in Chapter 6 and includes the emerging work to 'create a vision and sense of belonging', 'value diversity', 'ensure equality of opportunity' and 'develop cross-cultural interaction' (for full definition of community cohesion, see Figure 2.1). In the last few years, much more guidance has been made available at both the strategic level and

at the practitioner level. Central and local government collaborated on the first guide in 2002 (LGA *et al.*, 2002) and this has recently been updated and expanded (LGA *et al.*, 2004) and new 'strategic guidance' is expected from the same source in 2005. The CRE are also likely to publish their somewhat belated guidance on 'promoting good race relations' in the same year. Further, the Government published their new Community Cohesion and Race Equality Strategy in 2005 (Home Office, 2005) following up on a consultation paper entitled 'Strength in Diversity' (Home Office, 2004). Many local authorities, national agencies and voluntary and community organisations have now also developed cohesion programmes in a wide variety of settings and this is gradually being evaluated and published. Fortunately, a considerable amount of good practice on equal opportunities already exists (and is described in Chapter 6); having been established and documented over the years and this can easily be integrated with the community cohesion programme.

Community cohesion, however, is fundamentally concerned with changing underlying attitudes and values and represents a very different approach to the work presently done under the equal opportunities banner, which emphasises the use of systems and processes to constrain and change behaviour as a means of delivering equality and fairness. A different set of skills will therefore be required, as well as the development of new techniques and approaches. It is also likely that new agencies will be required to develop this agenda in a more consistent and committed manner or, at least, that the accountabilities of existing agencies will need to be much clearer. More action research, to robustly test 'what works' is also clearly necessary and both the theoretical framework and the skills of practitioners will require more investment. It is also not yet clear which agencies will be accountable, at both national and local levels, for taking forward the community cohesion programme. Further, the process of 'mainstreaming' the programme is still at an early stage, with many government departments appearing to prefer that under-resourced voluntary agencies and community organisations remain responsible for delivery, rather than change their own practices – possibly repeating the mistakes of the 'promoting good race relations' legislation in the 1960s.

The concept of 'social capital' is also discussed in Chapter 6, as it can complement both the theory and practice of community cohesion. Robert Putnam's notion of 'bridging capital' (Putnam, 2000), in particular, closely relates to 'cross-cultural' contact and some further ideas about how this might be built and the various forms that it can take, are developed in this chapter. Three key areas are distinguished (see Table 6.1); associational, social and structural cross-cultural contact. Key policy areas are also discussed, notably education, housing and regeneration programmes.

However, the future of community cohesion is far from secure and there is still relatively little attention given to the social and psychological needs,

especially in respect of the host community, to help them to come to terms with change. There is also little by way of general education to enable people to relate to 'others', and, more importantly, to create and build commonalities between groups, rather than to reinforce and emphasise differences. Relatively little has also been done to explain the role and nature of inward migration (whether in economic terms, or on a compassionate basis in respect of asylum seekers escaping persecution) and to tackle some of the corrosive myths and stereotypes. The process of helping immigrants to settle and to adjust to their new circumstances is also often fairly minimal. Moreover, the ability of key agencies to provide a realistic level of local resources to reduce the competing demands between newcomers and longer-term residents is still far from adequate. Further, these hugely complex issues require both strong and committed leadership and an investment in skills development at all levels, which has not yet been forthcoming (and have generally been left to voluntary organisations that often seem to survive by dedication and commitment alone).

Despite the difficulties, the practice is beginning to grow and is now being developed with greater confidence, as the successes become more and more evident. It is hoped that this book will contribute to that development and growth – and, moreover, to the building of strong and positive relationships between communities, based on shared experiences and meaningful interaction.

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