Differentiating multiculturalisms: A rejoinder

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Having read and engaged with the senior scholars of what I have called the Bristol School of Multiculturalism (BSM) over many years, I was periodically challenged to think about how their respective approaches to interpreting and defending multiculturalism differed from my own liberal approach. More recently, it became clear to me how their positions gravitated around a common set of ideas – methodological, theoretical and political – that marked them off from avowed liberal defenders of multiculturalism (Levey, 2019a). The stimulation of that exercise continues with the comments offered here on my essay and its subject. I am most grateful to the respondents.

Uberoi and Modood (2019) accept my core contention that their work along with that of Bhikhu Parekh and Nasar Meer (and a rising cadre of younger scholars mentored in Bristol) represent a distinctive approach to multiculturalism in more or less the ways I have suggested. They object to a few passing observations but otherwise devote their remarks to explaining the intellectual origins of the 'Bristol school's' positioning on multiculturalism and to restating their differences from liberal multiculturalists. As they note, I scarcely treated the BSM's engagement with the sociological study of cultural minorities. My purpose was more narrowly focused on describing and assessing the BSM's normative account of multiculturalism. Fittingly, Meer (2019) has now essayed the sociological side to the BSM's work. I will refrain from commenting here on this new statement.

Goodhart (2019) agrees that the BSM scholars defend a multiculturalism that is more radical or demanding than conventional liberal accounts. He finds the BSM's positions deeply problematic in the British context and 'fuzzy' on key issues and

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tensions. In contrast, Kymlicka (2019) views the BSM's positions as wholly within the ambit of liberal multiculturalism. He thinks that delineating multiculturalism into different schools of thought is mostly ill founded and potentially even dangerous in that it can undermine the multiculturalism project in liberal democracies. As Kymlicka challenges core aspects of my essay and argument, I will begin with his remarks. I will address some of Goodhart's and Uberoi and Modood's points in passing, before turning to their comments on multiculturalism and national identity and the majority culture.

Schools out?

Kymlicka does not much like talk of 'schools' of multiculturalism at all let alone of a Bristol school. Judging by his concluding reference to Ivan Illich and the importance of individual inquiry being unbound by institutional rules and loyalties, he seems to think of schools in this context as a kind of straightjacketing, a disciplined way of researching and thinking that denies free inquiry and 'mixing and matching' ideas. Clearly, this is not normally the case in the academic discussion of multiculturalism. The BSM scholars pursue their own individual research agendas and draw on and mix and match ideas as they see fit. One of them draws on Oakeshott, another adds Wittgenstein and Charles Taylor to the mix, a third draws on WEB Du Bois, and a fourth on Parekh, for example. If there is a school of thought to their work, it is discernible only after its production, it is not a rulebook for its production. Hegel's owl of Minerva flies at dusk; delineating schools of multicultural political thought occurs many moons after the fact. Moreover, as Kymlicka (1995a: 8–9) observed in relation to Jeremy Waldron's (1995) cosmopolitan alternative, that there is mixing and matching does not obviate that there can also be a coalescence of interests, identity and pursuits. In speaking of schools of multiculturalism, one is claiming no more than that there is a particular approach or line of argument discernible in the work of a group of scholars. In the BSM's case, there also happens to be a strong sociometry in play between its leading figures.

   The more pertinent question is whether there is anything to the claims of a distinctive approach or argument in the work of the BSM scholars or among 'mainstream' political theories of multiculturalism more generally. Kymlicka doubts the utility of such claims as well as the claims themselves regarding the BSM. I will come to the substance of the particular claims below. The question of utility goes to the purpose of classification. Differentiating positions helps to summarise and organise a field and thereby get one's bearings in relation to it. Kymlicka questions the utility of a classification where the differences within putative schools of thought are no less pronounced than the differences between the schools of thought. It is possible that variety simply mocks classification or typology. Still, we usually find it useful to speak of and contrast, say, 'libertarian' and 'egalitarian' theories of liberalism, 'classical' versus 'structural' and 'instrumental' schools of Marxism, and indeed 'left' and 'right' political positions all notwithstanding the enormous differences of opinion within each camp.

Alluding to my previous work on Australian multiculturalism (Levey, 2008), Kymlicka reads my present essay as differentiating three schools of multiculturalism: an Australian school that is both liberal and nationalist; a Bristol school that is nationalist but not liberal; and a mainstream-cum-liberal school that is liberal but not nationalist. I did not actually use the word 'school' in characterising Australian multiculturalism. I was trying to explicate the normative assumptions and principles animating Australian multicultural policy and practice rather than assess a body of scholarship and systematic theorising. Kymlicka's schema is not quite the way I would frame it. I view Australian multiculturalism as a particular iteration of liberal nationalism (Levey, 2008, 2019b). And I view liberal nationalism as one of two broad liberal approaches to justifying multiculturalism (e.g. Kymlicka, 1995b; Tamir, 1993),[1] the other one comprising universalistic liberal arguments that discount or ignore national identity and the status of historic or foundational national cultures (e.g. Patten, 2014; Phillips, 2007).[2] One might also plausibly distinguish a third way of 'triangulating liberalism and nationalism' (as Kymlicka puts it), one that is pragmatic and much more case-based (e.g. Carens, 2000; Levy, 2000). I did not explicate these different liberal ways of defending multiculturalism (although I had more to say on the liberal nationalists) as the contrast that I sought to draw was between all these liberal multiculturalisms and a Bristol School of multiculturalism. So Kymlicka epigrammatically captures the three main triangulations of liberalism and nationalism but misses how I see liberal nationalism as very much a part of mainstream liberal views.

In any case, for Kymlicka, the 'shared premises and lines of argumentation' of all the aforementioned 'schools' are more compelling than their alleged differences. He identifies seven points to the 'shared multiculturalist project'. Now, multiculturalists are likely to share some premises and lines of argument, otherwise we would be hard pressed to identify them as multiculturalists. And Kymlicka's list is a good stab at identifying the shared premises. But it overgeneralises in at least one respect. Point #5 regarding the remedy being about reinterpreting core liberal values rather than rejecting them is not a premise or principle to which the BSM subscribes, even if its scholars do something similar in practice. In principle, the BSM argues for a more open, less liberal-centric or constrained dialogue between cultural minorities and the dominant majority. What is not on the list is also significant: whether national identity is valued and whether some majority cultural precedence beyond a *lingua franca* and public holidays is considered legitimate. These issues divide liberal multiculturalists. Liberal nationalists who value national identity whilst striving for a more even-handed deal for minorities tend to accept some majority cultural precedence as a matter of course. Liberal multiculturalists who reach for state neutrality, whether in its 'hands-on' (e.g. Patten, 2014) or 'hands-off' (e.g. Balint, 2017) varieties, are generally indifferent, if not opposed, to national identity and are even less accepting of majority cultural precedence.[3] These issues also animate much of the real-world public debate about multiculturalism in Western democracies and divide its supporters. Civic nationalists, liberal universalists and assorted post-nationalists and cosmopolitans attach little

importance to national identity and the established culture. Again, liberal nation-alists and more conservatively orientated supporters of multiculturalism are more open to these things.

So I am not persuaded that the points of convergence among multiculturalists negate or overwhelm their points of difference. It is important to take stock of both. I agree that theoretical differences can turn on the choice of cases and that the cases and their feasible resolution are often given by the national context. It is why I set out the British context in which the BSM was spawned and deemed it noteworthy that the BSM's leading figures are all from visible minorities in that country. Goodhart (2019) and Uberoi and Modood (2019) grant as much as well. I also agree that liberal values are open to reinterpretation in the face of changed circumstances and that this dynamism and agility help explain liberalism's longev-ity and success as a governing political philosophy (Levey, 2012). However, I do not believe these points mean that almost all – Kymlicka ventures a figure of 95% – theoretical differences can be attributed to case selection, as if focusing on the same cases or the same 'zone of the variable geometry' (Kymlicka, 2019: 4) will suddenly bring theorists of multiculturalism into fundamental agreement.[4] As noted by Kymlicka, both he and Charles Taylor were much concerned with the case of Quebec in their early work on multiculturalism. Same case, same national and subnational context. Yet, in Taylor's view, Kymlicka's national minority rights – in which protection against the decisions of outsiders is combined with protecting individual members' right to cultural choice within the national com-munity – fail to recognise the moral imperative of the Québecois's cultural survival (Taylor, 1992: 40, n.16; 2012). This strikes me as a pivotal difference in theorising the case (Levey, 2016). And this is between two Canadian liberal philosophers of cultural diversity who agree on so much else, including the in-principle legitimacy of the state reflecting established cultures. Is this just an instance of an exceptional 5% of theoretical disagreements? I think it is commonplace.

Of course, if two theorists can disagree on fundamental normative points, so can two or more groups of theorists. What seems of most concern to Kymlicka about talk of different schools of multiculturalism is the impression that they offer rival accounts rather than complementary insights and perspectives which might provide a fuller picture. Complementarity, I might note, presupposes difference. Moreover, Kymlicka (2019: 8) allows that not all positions seamlessly cohere and that some approaches may 'unavoidably compete and clash' with liberal approaches. Which rather begs the question of why all the fuss about 'deschooling' multiculturalism.

Three areas of contrast

The real bone of contention, therefore, must be that neither the BSM scholars themselves nor myself in giving them a collective name have made the case for the distinctiveness of their approach. There is no such discernible school of

thought; we have 'misdiagnosed differences' (Kymlicka, 2019: 5). I will follow Kymlicka's discussion of the issues: methodology, nationhood, liberalism.

Methodology: Kymlicka is exercised by my characterisation of the BSM as pursuing a 'bottom-up' approach in contrast to the 'top-down' procedure of liberal multiculturalists. He characterises this difference as involving a 'focus on actual multicultural claims-making by minority groups, rather than engaging in a top-down application of abstract liberal principles.' Interpreted this way, his complaint is justified. As he notes, while some liberal theorists proceed in an abstract fashion, many liberal multiculturalists deeply engage with real-life cases and minority claims. Kymlicka's own work is a model example in this respect.

Perhaps the language of 'bottom-up' versus 'top-down' did not help here. The contrast I was drawing was not between engagement with actual claims, on the one hand, and theoretical abstraction, on the other.[5] Rather, the contrast has to do with the way in which theorists respond to cases and claims-making. Liberals (among whom I count myself) respond by thinking through the prism of liberal principles and values. We explore the implications of respecting autonomy, of how cultures may be contexts of choice, or the limits of toleration, and so on. That exercise may be conducted abstractly or it may be conducted in close engagement with real-world examples and cases. Either way, the BSM theorists simply do not proceed in the same manner. They feel no need to respond to minority claims through an account of liberalism or liberal values. Instead, their focus is elsewhere: on studying particular minorities and their situation, on intercultural dialogue, on critiquing and remaking the national narrative.

Nationhood: Here, I confess not to recognising my own or Uberoi and Modood's positions at all in Kymlicka's opening rendition of them. According to him, we contend that Australia and Britain treat multiculturalism as an attribute of their national identity in contrast to Canada. This, despite Uberoi having notably shown and documented how Canada has made multiculturalism a defining feature of its national identity (Uberoi, 2008, 2009, 2016; Uberoi and Modood, 2019, 13 at n.2). And this despite my saying (as I always do) that Canada has gone much further than Australia in incorporating multiculturalism as a core aspect of its national identity (Levey, 2019a: 203, 211, 218). There are, I think, three points of confusion lurking here.

One is the misunderstanding I mentioned at the start that has me juxtaposing an Australian and a Bristol school of multiculturalism, both of which are 'nationalist,' and a mainstream school of liberal multiculturalism that is non-nationalist. Kymlicka appears to read Uberoi and Modood and myself as suggesting that federal Canada is characterised by this mainstream school of liberal multiculturalism that is non-nationalist. Not only do we not make that association but it is flatly wrong. There are political *theories* of multiculturalism that correspond to Kymlicka's three ways of triangulating liberalism and nationalism: liberal and nationalist, nationalist but not liberal, and liberal but not nationalist. But two of these are standard liberal approaches and only the first comes close to depicting the three national cases of multiculturalism mentioned.

A second area of possible confusion concerns the different ways in which multiculturalism may relate to national identity. Canada is unusual in that, for its own strategic political purposes, it took multicultural*ism* – the ideology or philosophy along with the Canadian 'mosaic' of its people – and officially made it a defining feature of its national identity. This is inscribed in its Constitution and in its law. Because it sought to bridge the deep diversity presented by French, English and Aboriginal Canadians, the *official* position is that there is no dominant culture to Canadian national identity. Multiculturalism itself fills that role. Superficially, this may have the appearance of state neutrality, akin to the 'hands-on' state neutrality arguments of some liberal theorists. But it is 'liberal nationalist' and not merely liberal because national identity figures so centrally in how Canada deploys multiculturalism. (And it is *liberal* nationalist rather than 'multicultural nationalist' because Canadian multiculturalism is expressly wedded to liberal principles and values, which, of course, signify a kind of culture in themselves.) There is also a more conventional sense in which Canada is liberal nationalist. Despite its official multiculturalism rhetoric, 'English Canada' still dominates the country outside Quebec. A majority cultural pattern and sometime privileging continue to prevail. Canadian multiculturalism functions within that reality, always seeking to check it.

Australia's official adoption of multiculturalism broadened its national self-understanding and opened its institutions up to greater diversity. But it did not dislodge 'Anglo-Australia' as the default and accepted public culture. This is true not just in practice but also in the official multicultural policy statements (Levey, 2019b). Australian federal governments have consistently declined to embed a commitment to multiculturalism in a legislative Act, let alone the Constitution. There is reference to Australia as a 'multicultural nation' but this is only an acknowledgement of the diversity of its people, not a statement about its public institutions and culture. The broad expectation is that Australian national identity (institutions, symbols, and cultural patterns) will evolve over time in line with the changing composition of the Australian population.

Britain's less statist, more laissez-faire form of multiculturalism has been slower than Canada's and perhaps even Australia's in reshaping its national identity. Doubtless complicated by being an Old World state and former empire and by its four nations, such reshaping has nevertheless occurred. In contrast to the public shellacking that the Parekh Report (CMEB, 2000) received in calling for a revised British national identity, Uberoi and Modood (2013) document how British politicians from the major parties now routinely acknowledge the diversity of British society and use more inclusive language regarding British identity. Uberoi and Modood choose to view these shifts as confirmation of their preferred model of 'multicultural nationalism.' However, not even they claim that the politicians they interviewed were disavowing the governing centrality of liberal values.

In sum, here we have three liberal democracies, each with its own multiculturalism experience impinging on and reshaping its respective national identity. And each is recognisably liberal nationalist in so doing.

A third possible confusion is more theoretical. Kymlicka points out that his own work construes multiculturalism as a response to state nation-building and that nationhood and a broadened national identity figure centrally in his theory of minority rights. It would indeed be odd for a liberal nationalist (which Kymlicka has long acknowledged he is) to not attach importance to national culture and identity. I claimed that the BSM's multicultural nationalism nevertheless differs from liberal nationalist multiculturalism in relation to national identity. Let me try to restate that difference more sharply this time. In Kymlicka's (1995b) liberal theory of minority rights, nation-building proceeds and a more inclusive national identity is achieved through developing the liberal infrastructure. Sets of cultural rights (*polyethnic*: exemptions, public subsidies, symbolic recognition, representation; *national*: land and language rights, representation, self-government) are justified and assigned to particular kinds of minorities (immigrant and national/Indigenous). The hope and expectation are that this infrastructure will build a 'more multicultural conception of national identity' (Kymlicka, 2019: 7).

The BSM's 'multicultural nationalism' grasps the other end of the stick. It focuses on remaking the national narrative through inclusive public rhetoric, symbolic recognition, and institutional accommodation that is grounded in national inclusion itself rather than in notions of individual autonomy and an expanded set of rights. The logic, as I read it, is that by broadening the national story, residual areas of institutional and social marginalisation will lose their sanction and so reform. Liberal nationalist multiculturalists and the BSM thus arrive at a similar result via different routes. And on national identity, I suggested, it is the BSM that pursues a more 'top-down' approach. Nationhood is one area where the two approaches are definitely complementary. Is liberalism another?

Liberalism: Unsurprisingly, I am more in agreement than not with Kymlicka on the matter of liberalism and the BSM. I also think that there is need to tread carefully here to unpack the issues. However, I would unpack them a bit differently than he does.

The BSM rejects appealing to liberal foundations in its defence of multiculturalism. An important reason for that rejection (although only one) is a concern about liberalism being inhospitable to other ways of thinking and living. Kymlicka rightly points out that there are more open and capacious modes of liberal thought and practice available, although, for some, even these are too demanding. This is pretty much where he leaves his claim that the BSM has failed to identify any points of 'principled disagreement' with liberal multiculturalism even regarding liberalism (Kymlicka, 2019: 8). Yet in its programmatic statements, the BSM and now Uberoi and Modood (2019: 6–7) highlight how they do not accept that the individual is the ultimate unit of moral worth, that, in their view, groups may sometimes be more important. That does seem like a fundamental departure from liberal political morality. It is a departure that Goodhart (2019) picks up on and presses against the BSM: the valorisation of groups puts in jeopardy the interests and wellbeing of the individual. It is a complaint all too often, though wrongly, levelled against even liberal versions of multiculturalism.

But perhaps Kymlicka was meaning to refer only to the BSM scholars's policy positions rather than to their proclaimed principles. For he also says that they have not 'identified a single case of a multiculturalist claim' where their position does not comfortably accord with liberal multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2019: 8). As with the nationhood issue, it is important to recognise that it is possible to arrive at the same policy position from different premises. Liberals might liken this to an over-lapping consensus. Kymlicka himself makes the point in discussing Alan Patten's (2014) book, *Equal Recognition*. There he says that he is in full agreement with Patten's answers on the issues but thinks Patten asked the wrong theoretical question (Kymlicka, 2018: 82). It isn't necessarily luck that explains how one can arrive at the right answers from the 'wrong' question. Different points of departure can lead to the same destination.

Where then does the BSM stand on policy questions? Uberoi and Modood (2009: 9) acknowledge that the BSM's policy positions are likely to resemble those of liberal multiculturalists. They offer polygamy as an example of how intercultural dialogue *might* bequeath a more accommodating result than liberal law. Goodhart is prepared to accept that suggestion as a self-indictment. Liberal qualms about the criminalisation of polygamy are not hard to come by, however. One account even contrasts liberal permissiveness on the issue with democratic intolerance (Rosenblum, 1998). Goodhart notes how Parekh finds the UN Declaration of Human Rights too supportive of free speech and too hostile towards arranged marriages. Again, there is a wide range of views among liberals on the appropriate limits of free speech, many accepting that racial and religious group vilification breach those limits. There is also diversity in liberal thinking on arranged marriages. However, even the most searching and subtle analyses tend to agree that the determinative issues are whether coercion is involved and how to assess the emotional pressure brought to bear on young people who may not wish to marry (e.g. see Deveaux, 2006: 179–180). These also appear to be the decisive issues for the BSM (Parekh, 2000: 275).

None of this apparent convergence or lack of contrast on policy issues would much matter if the BSM had simply outlined an alternative philosophical defence of multiculturalism. If they had said, for example, we prefer Oakeshott to Mill or that with our roots in South Asia, we prefer not to start out from Western political norms in thinking about diversity but from a different set of norms. However, the BSM does not 'merely' offer an alternative philosophical or aesthetic defence of multiculturalism. It advances that alternative on the claimed pitfalls and limita-tions of liberal thinking and practice. And then it lands alongside liberals, among a variety of liberal views, on most practical issues. On the liberalism question, and with the possible exception of Parekh, the BSM's bark is more intimidating than its bite. Indeed, even Parekh's (2000: 272–273) intercultural dialogue based on a society's 'operative public values' grants the dominant cultural majority the authority to decide the matter if the parties cannot agree.

Parekh's (2019) complaint about the ethnocentricity and false universalisms of a good deal of western political theory is, in my view, justified. However, there are

two answers to this tendency as far as liberalism is concerned. One is to remember that liberalism is not only a body of thought in classic texts, debated and refined in philosophy departments. As Kymlicka and Goodhart remind us, it is also a living tradition embedded and enacted by particular societies in their own fashion. The societies we are discussing in relation to multiculturalism have a liberal character and identifiably liberal intimations courtesy of their histories. The second answer checks the ethnocentricity that comes with embeddedness. Due to the force of history and culture, liberal values are often interpreted or applied to suit those from the established culture. To dominant cultural majorities, freedom, for example, just appears to be how *they* have conventionally lived, dressed, and played. As Kymlicka observes, multiculturalism in liberal democracies begins with the recognition of this cultural bias in how governing liberal values are understood and applied, and the need to rethink them in light of a diverse citizenry. There is a dialectic at work between liberalism's national formations and its generalising (rather than universalistic), self-critical impulse. Liberal values are thus a kind of grist in a society's operative public values; they provide a basis for rethinking settled arrangements. Multiculturalism is just another chapter in the story of liberalism's capacity to adapt.

National identity and majority cultural precedence

This brings me to Goodhart's and Uberoi and Modood's comments on multiculturalism and national identity and culture. I share Goodhart's view that multiculturalists have generally done a poor job of including the cultural majority and its interests as anything other than a measure of alleged injustices visited on minorities. I noted that Parekh stands out from the BSM in accepting some majority cultural precedence without a quid pro quo (see Parekh, 2000: 235, 259). Among multiculturalists, liberal nationalists have taken the status of historic or established cultures the most seriously, although less concertedly than have Québecois interculturalists (Bouchard, 2011; Taylor, 2012). In my view, much more work needs to be done on (re)assessing the legitimacy or otherwise of *particular* cases of majority cultural precedence. I expect the result of such an inquiry to reveal a picture rather different from the BSM's vision.

Still, if the BSM's muscular multiculturalism presses too far in one direction, Goodhart travels too far in the opposite direction. He not only criticises the BSM, he also dismisses 'academic multiculturalism' in general as irrelevant and implies that multiculturalism policy has been unhelpful. 'Conventional, colour-blind liberalism,' he says, is what secured the 'great advances of recent decades in minority rights and antidiscrimination legislation' (Goodhart, 2019). The outlawing of direct and invidious forms of discrimination is unquestionably a major achievement of the colour-blind state. However, it is only part of the story. As with women's rights and feminism, it took an intellectual and political movement – an 'ism' – before established liberal democratic institutions began systematically to reform in more inclusive directions. Multiculturalism as a public philosophy,

policy, movement, and general sensibility helped show how colour-blindness and the neutral state could sometimes be part of the problem in masking the indirect or unintentional disadvantaging of minority groups. In English law, 'indirect discrimination' was first formally recognised in the *Race Relations Act 1976*. Even then the Courts interpreted the provision as setting a high bar to meet. The leading case (with a favourable result for the plaintiffs) is *Mandla v Dowell Lee* [1983], regarding a private school's denial of admission to a Sikh boy who wished to wear a turban in non-compliance with the school's uniform rules (see Poulter, 1986: 184–186). All this is plumb in the 'multicultural era.' In the United States, it was the failure of colour-blind liberalism to deliver equality to all its citizens that launched the black pride movement and an incipient grassroots multiculturalism in the 1960s (Glazer, 1997: 8–10; Kivisto, 2002: 65). These developments reverberated around the globe.

The 'all sorts of anti-majoritarian checks and balances in a modern liberal state' that Goodhart champions owe a fair deal to multiculturalism, broadly construed. Of course, the political accommodation of cultural minorities was not unknown in earlier times and this cannot be credited to latter-twentieth century multiculturalism. But neither can it be credited to colour-blind liberalism. Surveying the record of English law, Sebastian Poulter (1986: v) suggests that legal recognition of minority customs turned variously on 'practicality, commonsense, individual liberty, religious tolerance and the promotion of racial harmony.' It is hard to read Poulter's chapters though and not notice another motivation running through such cases as exemptions for ritual slaughtering, burial practices, Sunday (Sabbath) closing and the like. There is an implicit recognition that the established laws and institutions, which suit the dominant culture, plainly disadvantage certain groups. In this respect, the historical accommodation of minority customs was often a kind of proto-multiculturalism (Levey, 2017). The difference between it and multiculturalism proper is that the earlier accommodations mainly concerned religious minorities and were sporadic, ad hoc, and often hard-won. In contrast, multiculturalism (and here I include the BSM) speaks for all the citizens, seeking to better realise liberal values and/or democratic citizenship.

What impact academic multiculturalism has had on the course of events would make for an interesting study in itself. Certainly, it was mainly scholars and immigrant intellectuals that prodded Australian governments into accepting multiculturalism as state policy, and it was an immigrant Polish sociologist who largely formulated its terms and conditions (Lopez, 2000; Zubrzycki, 1995). At the very least, academic multiculturalism has helped to clarify what is at stake in the debates. Judging by the citations in parliamentary reports and by United Nations bodies and influential NGOs, by the invitations to academics to make submissions to government hearings and parliamentary inquiries, the quoting of particular scholars in parliamentary debates, and policymakers' written acknowledgement of scholars' impact on policy thinking, the academic literature on multiculturalism seems to have played a vital role in informing, if not guiding policy

treating cultural diversity. That is different from saying that a particular theoretical model has won the day.

Goodhart (2019) accepts that multiculturalism represents a form of integration but suggests that an integration policy regarding minorities is superfluous. Some migrant groups arrive with the 'internal' resources that equip them to integrate without assistance, while others lack them, which an integration policy cannot alleviate. Different groups undoubtedly possess varying capacities to adapt to life in Western democracies. However, while the sociological and political aspects of integration intersect, it is important not to conflate them. Multiculturalism addresses the political question of the fair terms of membership, not whether groups can or cannot get by regardless. If only the sociological question were pursued, then some groups would have no claim on political accommodation of their difference. Just about every iniquity has been visited on the Jews, for example, and yet they persist and even thrive, such is their psychological and cultural resilience. No state accommodation for them! Or rather any such accommodation would have to be won through the group's political sagacity. The trouble is that not all groups possess those skills and resources, which makes for a rather uneven scoreboard.

Likening integration to a motorway slip road, where members of the majority need only adjust their speed to allow in newcomers, has a superficial appeal. Goodhart prefers Louise Casey's slip road metaphor to the BSM's idea of integration as a 'two-way street' as this asks too much of the established majority. In truth, both metaphors are too vague to signify what integration into a liberal democracy actually requires. A 'two-way street' has the virtue of connoting that integration is a shared responsibility between the host society and newcomers. This partnership could be cashed out in equal dollops but it needn't be. It might rather mean that government undertakes to reform its institutions and its rhetoric in response to a diverse citizenry, while newcomers undergo the greater burden of adjusting to the laws, governing norms, social mores and language of a new society. The point is that while much of the host society's adjustment to minorities will be a 'long-term and largely unconscious process,' as Goodhart suggests, it cannot solely be that if the liberty, equality and inclusion of all citizens are to be honoured. A slip road onto a motorway also entails a kind of shared responsibility, of course, but 'adjusting speed to allow entry' requires unpacking before it makes any sense in relation to immigrant integration.

Finally, let me turn to Uberoi and Modood's two minor objections. The first concerns the BSM's differentiation of two ways of thinking about national identity, namely Britain's identity (polity) and British identity (personal). They understand my remark that this distinction 'won't quite do' as suggesting that they fail to appreciate how these two ways of thinking about national identity are related. This is almost the opposite of my point. The BSM frames both these identities in terms of 'aspects of the polity that individuals share and identify with (e.g. laws, taxes, welfare, state symbols. . .pride and shame at what government has done in their name)' (Levey, 2019: 215–216). The two identities are intimately

related. My point was that neither part of their differentiation captures a national identity in a broader, cultural sense. I argued that in addressing national identity, the BSM often slides between political and more cultural constructions and dimensions without due attention to the shift and the different political implications of these respective aspects of national identity.

In their response, Uberoi and Modood (2019: 11) set out a number of areas, similar to my own, in which they think it is legitimate for politicians to intervene on national identity. These mainly relate to combatting exclusionary definitions of the national identity based on race or faith. Elsewhere, however, they seem to charge political leaders with a more expansive role in shaping the national culture and identity. As I noted, they applaud, for example, when a foreign secretary declares that an Indian cuisine has become a true British dish. And they quarrel with one of their own (Parekh) for suggesting that national identity should be defined narrowly in 'politico-institutional' terms rather than more broadly, taking in culture as well. Uberoi and Modood protest that they reject governments stipulating exactly what the national identity should contain and that the content should be 'woven in debate and discussion and not reduced to a list.' A national identity will perforce reflect the ongoing conversation, in the broadest sense of interaction, of members of the nation. However, there is an edge to the way in which the BSM (Parekh, excepted) includes culture in defining national identity while declining to give it any content. In effect, national identity as a debating club or a question mark. It is a bit like saying to the Islamic Academy (1985), after it protested against the Swann Committee's recommendation of an autonomy-based, multicultural school education in the UK, that teaching pupils to question tradition and authority is not an attack on Muslims' faith and community but only an encouragement of debate and the raising of questions. Challenging, questioning and critiquing an extant culture will produce cultural loss as well as cultural gain. That loss may be welcome or it may be regretted. Or it may be both regarding different people or different aspects. Whichever the case, the loss should be acknowledged and reckoned with and not sugarcoated with the idea that everything is just a discussion or an inclusive 'levelling up.'

The second point of concern is my suggestion that Parekh is more cautious than other BSM scholars about political leaders fashioning the national identity from above. Uberoi and Modood (2019: 11) note that as Parekh and Modood both helped to draft the Parekh Report and its call for political leaders to reimagine Britain in a more inclusive direction (CMEB, 2000: 229), I exaggerate the differences between them regarding the role of government. However, as I cited Parekh's caution on the issue many years later (Parekh, 2009: 36), it might be the case that he changed or at least finessed his position. (Having changed one's position is Uberoi's defence in regard to my associating his work with supporting the political engineering of national identity.) I suspect though that we may again be talking at cross purposes, confusing 'negative' and 'positive' ways of being inclusive. It seems clear that Parekh would still endorse the sentiments expressed in the 2000 Report that bears his name about the need for political leaders to let go of traditional

accounts of British identity based on race or ethnicity. I take his later caution to refer to political efforts to go beyond those exclusionary definitions and stipulate, if not legislate, what the 'positive' content of the national identity should be. Perhaps reflecting Oakeshott's influence, I read in Parekh's work a deep appreciation of how a national-cultural identity develops at ground level up, not the other way around. That appreciation does seem to be at variance with the concerted 'multicultural nationalism' of other BSM scholars and their focus on remaking the national identity.

Conclusion

The BSM differs theoretically from liberal multiculturalism in key respects, even if its scholars converge with liberal multiculturalists (and sometimes liberals more generally) on policy matters. One need only take Kymlicka's (2019: 7) suggestion and 'engage in the task of comparing and contrasting [it] with liberal approaches' – on method, on liberalism, on national identity – in order to see this. Kymlicka's concern that conceding the BSM's non-liberal differences could undermine the liberal multiculturalist project in liberal democracies is unwarranted. The BSM's distinctive theoretical approach does not mean that it has its ear closer to the ground than do liberal multiculturalists, or that it more faithfully expresses the wishes of minorities, or that the claims of cultural minorities lie beyond the scope of liberal values. It means one thing only, that the BSM's way of thinking about and defending multiculturalism differs from that of liberal multiculturalists. Instead of denying the BSM's claimed differences (an odd posture, after all, for multiculturalists), we should focus on assessing their worth. Do they offer new and perhaps complementary insights? Or are they flawed, unsuitable or too demanding?

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Notes

1. Again, not all liberal nationalists arrive at multiculturalism (e.g. Miller, 1995, 2016).
2. In my essay, I (mis)cited Bader (2007) as another exemplar here. In fact, Bader's probing analysis considers national identity at length, which he sensitively negotiates in accordance with his associational governance model.

3. Kukathas's (2003) distinctive libertarian multiculturalism does accept a type of majority cultural precedence insofar as group members either acquiesce with the prevailing situation or leave and form their own self-governing community. Kukathas's group archipelago is, however, far removed from majority cultural precedence associated with nation-states or subnational states, as we know them.

4. I read Modood's notion of a 'variable geometry' of relationships with groups as being more encompassing than either Taylor's (1993) account of 'deep diversity' or Kymlicka's (1995b) account of 'group-differentiated citizenship.' 'Deep diversity' concerned how discrete national communities – English Canadians, Québecois, and Aboriginal communities – should be able to belong to Canada in different ways (Blattberg, forthcoming; Redhead, 2003), while 'group differentiated citizenship' was applied to ethnocultural groups as well as to national minorities. Modood's vision of a variable geometry goes further in also entitling subgroups and splinter groups of post-immigrant minorities to their own way of interacting with and being accommodated by the state.

5. Modood has on occasion distinguished his approach from liberal approaches in terms of the latter's philosophical abstraction. In such cases, he usually cites Rawls and his followers (e.g. Favell and Modood, 2003; Modood, 2017). For a critical assessment of this claimed contrast, see Lægaard (2015).

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