

# MULTICULTURALISM AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION IN THE MODERN NATION STATE

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documentos



**Serie: Dinámicas interculturales**

Número 1. Multiculturalism and Political Integration in the Modern Nation State

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Edita: CIDOB edicions

Elisabets, 12

08001 Barcelona

Tel. 93 302 64 95

Fax. 93 302 21 18

E-mail: [publicaciones@cidob.org](mailto:publicaciones@cidob.org)

URL: <http://www.cidob.org>

Depósito legal: B-35.860-2004

Imprime: Cargraphics S.A.

Barcelona, julio de 2004

# **MULTICULTURALISM AND POLITICAL INTEGRATION IN THE MODERN NATION STATE**

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julio de 2004

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The question of multiculturalism has been a central one in the political concerns of European countries since 1945. It covers a number of different issues, however, and the predomination of one or another has varied with differing political circumstances. First, it reflected concern about immigration and the ways in which immigrants might settle in Western Europe in the 1950s and 1960s. After the break-up of Communism in 1989 and with the resurgence of ethnic nationalism in Eastern Europe, it centred around questions of devolution of power from central national governments to regionally-based sub-national groups and the possibilities of power-sharing at the centre. Thirdly, it has had to deal with the growing numbers of political refugees and asylum-seekers in Western Europe. Fourthly, and most recently, in the wake of the terrorist attacks on the United States and the subsequent assertion of American power in the world at large, it has been concerned with the dangers posed by unassimilated immigrant groups.

It is not the intention of this article to deal in detail with each of the structures and processes in all the different political situations to which reference will be made. Rather, it seeks to place these situations within an overall conceptual framework and, in doing so, to produce a general theory of multiculturalism.

## **Multiculturalism in Popular Discourse**

There are few terms used more widely in popular discourse, in the media, and in politics than *multiculturalism*. Until recently, it was discussed as a positive feature of national societies and cities. Politicians, and even monarchs, would boast that they were now multicultural or, sometimes, *cosmopolitan*. These usages we may refer to as soft versions of multiculturalism.

In recent times, following ethnic conflicts in which older societies broke up and what was called *ethnic cleansing* occurred (as in the former Yugoslavia), or in which there were violent ethnic conflicts within nations

and cities (such conflicts were almost universal), multiculturalism was seen in a very much more negative light. In the United Kingdom, for example, when there were disturbances involving violent conflict between Asians and native British citizens, such conflicts were diagnosed as being due to multiculturalism. Economic migrants or political migrants and refugees were seen as endangering the unity of society, and this unity was seen as having to be defended against multiculturalism.

### **Philosophical and Social Science Views of Multiculturalism**

During the past 25 years, multiculturalism has also been debated amongst philosophers and social scientists. In political philosophy, the question arose in attempts to define the nature of a good liberal society. Such a society, it had been thought, would involve the guarantee of the rights of individuals (see for instance Miller and Walzer, 1995). But, now the question was asked whether such rights should be extended to groups. *Prima facie*, it appeared that the very recognition of groups would involve a denial of individual rights. Charles Taylor, however, saw what he called *recognition* as being essential to the concept of rights, and individuals could be recognised as being members of groups (Taylor, 1994). Kymlicka raised similar issues in writing about multicultural citizenship (Kymlicka, 1995). Both of these writers, being Canadian, had to deal with the special problem of Quebec's claims to a separate political identity at the same time as they discussed the identity of disperse groups of immigrants and their descendants. A related question arose in Europe, where Baubock posited the idea of a transnational citizenship alongside that of national citizenship (Baubock, 1995).

All of these approaches implicitly involved a positive evaluation of multiculturalism. So, too, does that of the British-Indian political philosopher, Bhikhu Parekh. He raises the question of whether culturally distinct groups can coexist in a single society. He believes that they can, and that the multicultural nature of such a society should be welcomed

and celebrated. For him, societies with single, unitary cultures are no longer likely in the modern world, as a result of migration. Far more likely are societies in which multiple cultures coexist, and it is important for him that they should all be given equal respect (Parekh, 2000). Parekh coupled this theoretical work with his leadership of a Commission for a Multiracial Britain, which sought to spell out the policies and institutions necessary for creating a society in which racial discrimination, exploitation and oppression<sup>1</sup> were prevented (Runnymede Trust, 2000).

## **An Alternative Theory of Multiculturalism**

Barry has offered a sharp critique of the theories on multiculturalism discussed above (Barry, 1999). He sets out to defend the values of a liberal society, which he believes is opposed to what is advocated in these theories. He believes that they are wrong in seeing the various groups which they discussed as being only *culturally* different and wishes to insist upon their political relations. When they are thus understood, they present the real problem which liberal political theory has to address.

In discussing Barry's work, I have argued that there is a limited version of multiculturalism which can be sustained even if his basic criticism is accepted (Rex, 2001). I base this on Marshall's theory of citizenship (Marshall, 1951) and on a British definition of the term *integration* as it should appropriately be applied to immigrant ethnic minorities (see Rex and Tomlinson, 1979).

1. There are, of course, important reasons for rejecting the use of the term *racial* in this context, but, in documents addressed to a wider popular or political audience, terms like *ethnic* or *racial* are often used interchangeably. It would be entirely wrong, however, to accuse Parekh or his colleagues of not understanding the dangers of what may be called *biological racism*. (For a discussion of this question see Montagu's *Statement on Race*, in which he sets out the findings of four UNESCO statements on this question (Montagu, 1972).

## Social Citizenship and the Welfare State

Marshall's problem is not directly concerned with immigrant ethnic minorities. Rather, it seeks to show how class loyalties and class conflict have come to be transcended by the concept of citizenship. The first stage of this transcendence is in the legal sphere, in which all individuals, regardless of class, have equality before the law. The second is political. When a universal franchise is achieved, all individuals share in controlling the government. The third, gradually being achieved in the post-1945 world, is social. This involves: insurance which provides a minimum income in times of unemployment and ill health; free collective bargaining on the part of workers in dealing with employers over wages and conditions of work; minimum standards of housing and education; and health care free to all at the point of delivery. These ideas of Marshall's were based upon the work of Beveridge, as set out in his book *Full Employment in a Free Society* (Beveridge, 1944) and in the "Report on Social Insurance and Allied Services" (Beveridge, 1942). Together, Beveridge and Marshall laid the foundation of what came to be called the Welfare State.<sup>2</sup>

For my own part, I expressed some doubt as to whether citizenship would totally and permanently transcend class (Rex, 1961). I argued that it would, so long as there was a balance of class forces, but that, if this balance were destroyed, class conflict might well be resumed. This was an important issue in Britain during the period of the Labour government of 1964 and, later, during the Conservative administrations between 1979 and 1993. The Labour government had issued a White Paper entitled *In Place of Strife* (Department of Employment and Productivity, 1969), which envisaged co-operation between trade unions and employer organisations in government-sponsored institutions. The Conservative government of the 1980s subsequently weakened workers' rights a great

2. Of course, there are a number of alternative types of Welfare States, as Esping-Andersen has shown (Esping-Andersen, 1990), but the British version is the one which has been widely influential.

deal and envisaged a much more limited Welfare State, which involved little more than social insurance and a free health service. Nonetheless, a later Conservative government declared itself in favour of a *classless society*.

What has been discussed here is the evolution of social policy and political institutions in Britain, but very similar ideas were operative in most Western European countries. Radtke, for instance, speaks of the social-democratic Welfare State, in which a plurality of conflicting interests had led to a compromise after negotiation (Radtke, 1994).

All of the above discussion refers to the possibility of class conflict and class compromise. None of it refers to the position of ethnic groups, which are the centre of discussions about multicultural societies. To this question we must now turn.

### **The Integration of Immigrant Ethnic Minorities**

There have been three basic European responses to the arrival of immigrant ethnic minorities in the post-1945 period. The first is that of assimilationism, which is most strongly affirmed in France. The second is that of the *gastarbeiter* system of the German-speaking countries, under which immigrant workers are denied political citizenship. The third is one or another sort of multiculturalism commonly thought to be exemplified by Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom.

In the Swedish case, provision for ethnic minorities was conceived as part of the provision of the Welfare State. The problem which the Swedish government faced, however, was that of who was to be chosen to represent the immigrant minorities. They were accused of choosing traditional leaders, usually elderly men. Their critics, such as Schierup and Alund, argued that, in fact, younger members of these communities were not represented. They also argued that, in any case, they tended to form cross-ethnic alliances and alliances with dissident Swedish youth, creating new syncretic cultures (Schierup and Alund, 1990).

The historic Dutch response to cultural diversity had been what came to be called *pillarisation*. This was the establishment of separate

educational systems, separate trade unions and separate media for Catholics and Protestants, and this policy was extended to deal with ethnic minorities. One important critic of this policy, Jan Rath, suggested, however, that the policy of *minorisation* by no means necessarily implied that minorities would be subject to equal treatment. As he saw it, minorisation could mean the singling out of those who were called minorities for unequal treatment (Rath, 1991).

In the United Kingdom, after a brief acceptance of a policy of assimilation in education in 1964, the government accepted the notion of *integration*. This was defined by the Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, as “not a flattening process of uniformity but cultural diversity, coupled with equal opportunity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance” (Rex and Tomlinson, 1979). What is significant about this definition is that it dissociates itself from any form of multiculturalism which would permit the unequal treatment of minorities. In fact, it relates the notion of integration to Marshall’s notion of social citizenship.

I have suggested that Jenkins’ definition also hints at the existence of two cultural or institutional domains. On the one hand, there is a public political culture centred around the idea of a Welfare State in which all have a minimal degree of equality. On the other hand, there are the separate cultures of the different ethnic communities, including the host community. These separate cultures involve the members of each community speaking their own language amongst themselves, following their own religion and having their own family practices.

This, however, is only a general starting point for the definition of an egalitarian, multicultural society. In practice, it raises many difficult questions, and it is contested by a number of different groups.

A first question is that of why separate communal cultures should continue to exist. There are three elements involved in answering this. The first is that they are allowed to exist, in the belief that they may have value in themselves. Accepting this is implied by the notion of mutual tolerance. The second is that they provide individuals with a moral and

emotional home, which is essential for their personal psychological stability. Durkheim, in his classic work, *The Division of Labour* (Durkheim, 1933), had argued that such stability was only possible under conditions of organic solidarity if there was some grouping between the individual family and the state. He thought that this might be achieved through the development of occupational guilds. This is obviously unlikely in modern times but, clearly, ethnic minority groups can perform a similar role. This is also true for the members of the host society. Quite apart from their participation in the public political institutions of the Welfare State, they too have their culture and organisations in which they feel at home. The third reason for perserving these groups is that they make possible collective action to protect their members in political life.

### **Problems of the Two Domains Thesis**

Everything said thus far provides only a starting point for the analysis of multiculturalism. We must now consider some of the problems in the two domains thesis. These include: problems within the educational system; the attempt to extend the values of the public political culture into the private communal sphere and, per contra, the claim that the values of the private communal cultures should be extended into the public realm; and, finally, the different problem of the degree of commitment or lack thereof on the part of immigrant groups living in a host society.

### **The Problem of Multicultural Education**

The one institution which clearly straddles both the private and public spheres is the educational system. Here we can distinguish, with some oversimplification, between primary and secondary schools.

Primary schools have amongst their functions one which they share with families. Unsocalised babies are the barbarian invaders of the social system. They have to learn and accept a complex set of norms if they are to become full social beings. These their parents teach them and so do their primary schools. As for immigrant children, in the primary schools

they also have to become bilingual. Ideally, they start to learn in their home language, but they also have to learn the language of the host society and, for school purposes, to use it as their main means of communication.

In secondary education, students may be seen as being prepared for entering a wider world governed by norms of a different kind. These norms involve individualism and competition, even though these may be contained within some conception of common citizenship. They are being prepared for the world of work, and as well as learning relevant norms, they must acquire skills.<sup>3</sup> One should now ask whether there is any place within schools for the perpetuation of different languages and cultures.

One view which has considerable currency in many countries is that the maintenance of these languages in schools increases students' self-esteem and enhances their performance. This view was robustly criticised by a West Indian schoolteacher, Maureen Stone, in England. She argued that the relationship between low self-esteem and poor performance had never been proved. She therefore believed that any supplementary education should be devoted to basic skills and not to education in different cultures (Stone, 1985). In saying this, she was recognising that schools are concerned with the wider world and participation in the public realm. Another author, Jennifer Williams, pointed out that where multicultural education was taught in schools, it was taught in the low-status, uncertificated parts of the syllabus (Williams, 1967). Despite these criticisms, or taking account of them, there have been some attempts in Britain to foster the study of minority languages and cultures in the high-status, certificated parts of the syllabus. Those who support such developments clearly have in mind the creation of a multicultural society in which a variety of cultural traditions are respected.

3. Secondary schools clearly also prepare their students for a socially stratified world, and they themselves may be stratified. In England, there has been prolonged debate about whether there should be a tripartite system of schools or whether all children should study in the same comprehensive schools. Similar arguments occur in other European countries, although they may be resolved in different ways in those places.

### The Public and Private Domains Reconsidered

The sharp distinction between public and private domains which was our starting point is disputed from both sides. It is disputed by some who believe that there are certain values in the public sphere which also apply in the private, and some who believe that private communal values also apply in the public domain. It is also the case that some immigrant ethnic communities may be transnational in character and have commitments elsewhere.

Those who argue for extending the values of the public domain into the private sphere often do so in the name of human rights. This is a notion which includes more than the commitment to the values of the Welfare State and suggests that our definition of the public sphere must itself be revised. This is particularly true of feminist claims. Host society feminists usually claim that the private family practices of immigrant communities are unacceptable. They suggest that the women of these communities are oppressed by their male counterparts and that these customs involve arranged and forced marriages. To this, those who speak for immigrant communities may reply on each point. They indicate that the oppression of women is the product not of their culture as such, but of the village practices which they bring with them. These, they agree, should be altered and they are prepared to join in with this process of change. Further, they say that what they are doing is protecting their women and children from a society which is sexually promiscuous and whose symbols are the pornographic magazine and the sex shop. This could be, and sometimes is, a basis for dialogue with more sophisticated host society feminists who may recognise these problems from a feminist point of view. So far as arranged marriages are concerned, they would argue that these need not and should not be forced, and that the normal, random mating practices of Western Europe are not necessarily preferable to arrangements in which the family of a bride frequently ensure that she is supported with a significant dowry. In modern conditions, this might involve a contribution to the cost of a house or a

motor car. The notion of being in love, which Westerners claim is essential to marriage, is something which may be longer and more lasting in arranged marriages than it commonly is in the West.

The opposite objection to the notion of two domains comes from immigrant communities. Some would say that their culture is simply not for the private sphere. This is what many Muslims are claiming when they say that Islam is a whole way of life. Thus they would see if the values of the Welfare State or those advocated in the name of human rights are integral to their own beliefs. If this is so, then we cannot simply regard the political culture of the public domain as secular. It may be shared between different communities.

The real revision of the two domains thesis which is required is that it should leave open a space for dialogue.

In estimating the possibilities of integration of minority communities, we should also avoid the essentialist view that the cultures which we are seeking to integrate are unchanging and rigid. In fact, I have suggested they have three points of reference. The first is to a homeland which is itself undergoing change; the second is to the land of present settlement; and the third to possible countries of onward migration. This raises the whole problem of the nature of transnational migrant communities, which I have discussed elsewhere (Rex, 1996). So far as their position in the land of first migrant settlement is concerned, immigrant communities may well have a modernising perspective, since it is in their interest to fight for equality and equal treatment, even while being bound together by the use of their mother tongue amongst themselves and dealing with the life crises of birth, marriage and death in their own religious ceremonies. In addition to all these factors, some of the second, third, and later generations in immigrant families may well defect from their communities and culture and become assimilated. All of these factors suggest that the problem of integrating immigrant communities may be a more temporary and simple one than many of the advocates and opponents of multiculturalism believe.

We have already seen that the culture and institutions of the public domain consist of more than those related to equality in the Welfare State. They include concepts of human rights, as we have seen, but they also include all that is involved in participating in a modern economy and polity and accepting its criminal and civil law.<sup>4</sup> This is something which immigrants accept because it is essential to the migrant enterprise.

Next, under this heading dealing with the difficulties of the two domains thesis, there is the question of whether there are not some new, emergent, shared areas of life. The most obvious of these concern cuisine. It is often remarked in Britain that Chicken Tikka Masala is the most purchased packed meal in supermarkets, and it is true in all modern societies that there does develop a shared interest in a new range of dishes of international origin. The other rather different shared area concerns literature in particular, but probably most of the creative arts. The most important literature reviewed in prestigious magazines deals with many immigrant and multicultural problems, while music also, of course, crosses borders. Obviously, there is a case for allowing for a domain of shared culture between those we have discussed, but this does not necessarily mean that the two separate domains which we have talked about do not exist or that shared cuisine and shared creative arts necessarily foreshadow a shared new culture overall.

Finally, we should notice that this emergence of some shared intermediate institutions in certain societies goes along with a process of the globalisation of culture, at least among elites.

4. There are, of course, minorities, especially in Muslim communities, who would support schools preparing their students for living in a separate society, and there are even those who would wish to find ways of applying Sharia law in domestic matters. It is to be doubted, however, whether even those who live in communities with these aims do not also adjust to living in a modern economy and polity for most of their lives.

We have so far considered the various forms of multiculturalism in European societies, particularly in the Netherlands, Sweden and the United Kingdom. To complete the picture, however, it is necessary to consider the cases of the old British Commonwealth countries of Australia and Canada, which, although first settled by British and British and French colonists, respectively, sought to develop multicultural policies which would indicate the position of various later groups of settlers as well as that of the aboriginal or native people.

## **Sub-National Societies and the Possibility of Devolution**

### **Sub-Nationalisms and the Process of Peaceful Devolution**

Arguments about multiculturalism usually confuse the problems which we have been discussing (those of the integration of immigrants) with problems of a different kind. These are the debates on the place of sub-national units, such as the Welsh, Scots and Irish in Britain or the Catalans and Basques in Spain. Separately from these cases are those of bi-national states, such as Belgium and Canada. In each of these cases, the claims of nationality may be based upon linguistic, religious or cultural unity, or they may simply be based upon residence in the region of the sub-nation. Catalan nationality is attributed to all those who live in the sub-national area, and Scottish nationality and the right to vote for a Scottish Parliament is attributed to all those who live in Scotland. Slightly different situations occur in Belgium and France. In Belgium, Walloon is French-speaking and Flanders Flemish- or Dutch-speaking, while Brussels is bilingual. Government at a national level is shared by the two groups, but it is in the hands of the French-speakers in Walloon and the Flemish/Dutch-speakers in Flanders. In Canada, the claims of nationalism are made on behalf of Quebec, led by a French-speaking majority, and not on behalf of other Francophones in Manitoba and other provinces.

Devolution may involve the concession of more or less power to the sub-nations. The greatest degree of devolution in the United Kingdom is accorded to Scotland, with its Scottish Parliament, while the Welsh Assembly has far more limited powers. The situation in Catalonia is similar to that of Scotland, but in both of these cases, the sub-national government is subordinate to that in Madrid or London. In both cases, and in cases where devolution is more restricted, there are minority parties aiming at secession (for a discussion of these cases, see Guibernau and Rex, 1997).

Similar problems are to be found in other parts of the European Union. France, for example, has a problem of devolution in Corsica. Italy has such a problem both in dealing with its regions and with its island dependencies in Sicily and Sardinia. Greece has a problem with its island dependencies in Corfu and Crete and on its northern border, with Macedonia and Thrace.

Again, there are problems of devolution in the countries which have recently entered the enlarged Union, some of which also have border problems. This is true of the Czech Republic, Slovakia and Hungary, all of which have had to deal with the question of devolution. It is even more true of the countries that might be later entrants, such as Romania and Bulgaria. Among those that have just entered, moreover, there are some which have very special difficulties, such as the Baltic Republics and Cyprus. In the case of the Baltic Republics, there are large Russian minorities who were previously ruling minorities, while in the case of Cyprus, the recognised Greek territory was required to negotiate at least a loose federation with the unrecognised Turkish part of the island.

### The Problem of Incorporation into Supranational Units

A new situation arises with the emergence of supranational units, like the European Union, because this raises the possibility of the regions dealing with the supranational government directly. True ultimate power in the EU lies with the Council of Ministers, drawn from the central

governments of nation-states, but there are many forms of development in which the EU deals directly with the regions. This raises the possibility that radical groups in the sub-national units may not simply seek secession from their own nation-states, but may seek to turn the EU into a Union of regions rather than of nation-states.

The problem of devolution was also dealt with in the former Soviet Union. Although the Communist Party controlled the whole society, Stalin's policy allowed varying degrees of autonomy within particular departments in different kinds of autonomous regions (Connor, 1993). Tartarstan represented a case in which a very workable type of co-operation was achieved between the regional and central Soviet governments (Yemelianova, 1999). As in the West, however, there were a variety of political and religious groups who sought greater independence, and some of them had international connections outside of the Soviet Union.

### **Cases of Armed Ethnic Conflict**

In the cases discussed thus far, we have been assuming that some degree of peaceful devolution is possible and that there will be very few extremists seeking to bring about change by violent means. This, however, has not been the case with the Basques in Spain nor with the Republicans in Northern Ireland. There, political parties have emerged which engage in violent armed struggle, participants within which are seen as terrorists by the central governments of Spain and the United Kingdom. There is something in common between these two cases, and it is not surprising that there have been contacts between the Basque separatist organisation, ETA, and the Provisional IRA. Nonetheless, there are differences between the two. In Spain, the conflict is between one ethnic group and the Spanish state. In Northern Ireland, there are two ethnic groups in conflict with each other, one seeking ultimate unification of Northern Ireland and the Irish Republic, the other professing loyalty to, and demanding continuing union with, a United Kingdom.

What the two groups have in common is their use of violence. In both cases, moreover, there is a problem of their relationship with parties who share their aims but oppose the use of violence. This is a complex relationship in which the moderate parties give some protection to the more radical and violent ones. In the case of Spain, the response of the government has been to take strong measures against violence, but also to offer some degree of devolution. In Northern Ireland, the British government has had to use its own army to oppose two groups of paramilitaries, even though one fights in the name of loyalism, and the British army is often accused of devoting its energies to fighting the Republicans. In this case, there is also an offer of ultimate devolution, but this has to follow a delicately and carefully constructed Peace Process.

### **Armed Conflict in Post-Communist Societies**

The title of this article refers to the modern nation-state. Thus far, however, we have only discussed multiculturalism and political integration in only one type of nation-state, namely that based upon private economic enterprise or a mixture of private and public enterprise, parliamentary democracy, and a tendency to move towards some kind of welfare state. The other kind of modern nation-state is that based on Communism. As we have seen, such states had dealt with the potentiality of ethnic conflict relatively successfully until Communism as an economic and social system began to collapse in 1989. At this point, many groups sought secession from the state and engaged in violent conflict with the successor states and with one another. The experience of the former Yugoslavia in this respect has been central to the study of ethnic conflict and the prospects of multiculturalism. Under Tito, Serbs, Croats, Bosnians, Montenegrins, Herzegovinians, Slovenians and Macedonians were held together by a national Communist government, albeit through a subtle balancing of ethnic forces at a local level. With the collapse of Communism,

however, ethnic groups separated themselves from one another, and there were brutal wars between them and ethnic cleansing within the territory each one claimed. The Bosnian and Kosovan wars led to outside intervention by the international community, which sought to promote new constitutions based on some notion of multicultural balance. These new constitutions depended on outside force, but the outside powers aimed at being able to withdraw. It was easy enough to suggest new multicultural constitutions but harder to realise them in practice. The various ethnic groups who were required to implement the new constitutions entered into discussion with their still-smoking guns on the conference table. Some of the problems that were involved were made explicit in “The Kosovo Report” (Independent International Commission on Kosovo, 2000), which recommended independence for Kosovo on condition that it became fully multicultural.

Less well-known are the problems which successively faced the Soviet Union, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the remaining Russian Federation. There, the various ethnic, political and religious groups which had always resisted central government were now able to pursue secessionist liberation struggles and were inevitably dubbed as terrorist by the central governments involved. The war in Chechnya is the best known of these conflicts, but there are many others in the Caucasus, in Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia, and in the former Central Asian territories, involving complex alliances between religious sects and political parties, coupled with intervention from allies in neighbouring states (Yemelianova, 2001).

## **The Prospects of Multiculturalism after the American-Led War against Terrorism**

After the attacks on New York and Washington in September, 2001, a new political climate emerged which was fearful of multiculturalism.

The diversity of cultures appeared as providing a base for more terrorist attacks, and Islam in particular was perceived in this way. An attempt was made by the United States to establish a coalition of nations against terrorism, an alliance that would destroy terrorist bases across the world. On the other hand, there was little chance for those opposing this coalition to seek a multicultural solution. Rather, they established their own international networks of opposition and regarded any party, sect, or nation not joining these networks as allies of the United States-led coalition. The war against terrorism continued in 2002 making multiculturalism an impossible and unrealisable ideal, except in the limited sense in which the coalition or the international network of resistance used it to strengthen their own respective unity.

Within this framework, the United Kingdom's commitment to multiculturalism was weakened when it faced more local but violent conflicts between white natives and Asians in some northern cities, and between local people and asylum-seekers in Glasgow and other places. At the beginning of the year 2002, there was considerable confused debate amongst politicians and the press about the dangers of multiculturalism, which was identified with segregated forms of housing and education. There was a new emphasis upon the importance of immigrants and their children learning English as rapidly as possible and learning about the duties of a unitary British citizenship. Thus, whereas the United Kingdom had been a place where multiculturalism could be sympathetically discussed and shown to be compatible with a modern society and a welfare state, it was now seen as a danger. The predominant view now was one which was far more like the assimilationist French approach. In this new climate, any residual multiculturalism will have to be shown to be compatible with an essentially unitary society. The sort of multiculturalism which has been defended in this article is, of course, compatible but even such a policy outline will find that it is difficult for it to get a hearing.

## Conclusion

This article has ranged widely over a number of topics, including nationalism and devolution in Western Europe, Southeastern Europe and the countries of the former Soviet Union, at the same time as it has dealt with the settlement of immigrant minorities, who do not make the claims which sub-nationalities do. It has been necessary to do this because that is how the issue appears in public debate, whether the discussion is sympathetic or hostile to the multiculturalist idea. Throughout, moreover, the article has recognised that national and immigrant minorities cannot be simply the objects of policy thought out and imposed from above. A viable multicultural policy will be one which recognises conflicts of ideas and interests between different groups and considers the way in which such conflict can lead to negotiation and compromise.

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