

THE GHOST IN THE MACHINE: AN OVERVIEW AND ANALYSIS OF BRITISH MULTICULTURALISM

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As multiculturalism in the United Kingdom passes to a ‘post’ phase of existence, at least in academic and political discourse, it is important to consider the lingering impact of over fifty years of its presence in the form of Race Relations and integration measures. This article aims at a critical reassessment of the overarching strategies that have developed over the last half-century in relation to the integration of immigrants by putting the legacy of British multiculturalism into a firm historical and socio-political context; by marrying immigration and integration policies with normative models of integration in the hope of drawing a certain causality between them; and finally by highlighting the changes that have taken shape amidst the continuity of certain shared principles or frames of reference.

The first part of the article looks at immigration and integration policies in Britain through a historical perspective; the second section delves into the concept of integration itself and its complex manifestations in British politics and policies; finally, a critical review of the development of these policies and their 21st century manifestations and outcomes are discussed in the third section. The analysis shows that the United Kingdom has, over the last decade, seen an ever-stronger intertwining of immigration and integration policies towards a robust civic integration approach, made evident in the introduction of citizenship and language testing schemes and strict pre-conditions on entry. Meanwhile, the turn in anti-discrimination legislation has been rather subtler. It has extended its reach to other areas of inequality, focusing on more pressing, or less contentious minority group support, such as women and LGBT rights, whilst retaining a measure of ethnic and national minority protection.

Keywords: multiculturalism, integration, United Kingdom

INTRODUCTION

As the United Kingdom fumbles its way through a post-European *Brexit* fog, British citizens, Europeans and onlookers alike are struggling to make sense of the factors that have led to the current state. One of the axes of the debate has indisputably been the impact of immigration upon the Isles, particularly from the new Member States of the EU and with Polish plumbers, doctors and waiters to the fore. This discussion raises the issue of both migration and integration policies in the UK as well as a critical reassessment of the overarching strategies or models that have developed over the last half-century of large-scale immigration into the country. Whether the demise of multiculturalism as a model of integration led to *Brexit*, or was part and parcel of the problem that triggered the anti-immigrant sentiment, is a causal conundrum that does not have a simple or particularly useful set of answers.

What is evident in the current situation and ongoing debate on the ‘death of multiculti’ is the difficulty of grasping the concept of multiculturalism and the ways it has permeated every imaginable facet of British society, as have the series of Race Relations policies that were developed from the 1960s onwards. To hail the death of multiculturalism is, firstly, to reify it into something concrete that can be turned into a scapegoat, and secondly, something that can be easily detached from the society in which it was bred. There is thus a need to analyse British immigration and integration approaches and policies in their historical and socio-political complexity and to ascertain the causal relations between the normative approaches, their political and policy outcomes and the social reality it affects and is in turn affected by. This article intends to tackle these issues by putting the legacy of British multiculturalism into a firm historical and socio-political context; by marrying immigration and integration policies with normative models of integration in the hope of drawing a certain causality between them; and finally by highlighting the changes that have taken shape amidst the continuity of certain overarching principles or frames of reference.

The first part of the article looks at immigration and integration policies in Britain through a historical perspective, providing a necessary backdrop to the discourse and development of multiculturalism in Britain throughout the second half of the 20th century and opening decades of the 21st century. The second part of the article delves into the concept of integration itself and its complex manifestations in British politics and policies. The overarching approaches to integration are first framed through the idea of multiculturalism and Race Relations, developed from 1965 onwards, and then two competing, consecutive government strategies in the 21st century: community cohesion and

civic citizenship under the New Labour government, and the loosely framed and quickly abandoned idea of the ‘Big Society’ under the Conservatives. Particular focus is given to the civic integration testing scheme developed at the onset of the 21st century and the way that it has morphed with the change in government strategies. A critical review of the development of these policies and their 21st century manifestations and outcomes are discussed in the final section.

BRITISH IMMIGRATION AND INTEGRATION POLICIES IN HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE: 1948 TO THE PRESENT

In 1948, the *MV Empire Windrush* docked in Tilbury and 492 New Commonwealth passengers stepped out to start a new life in Britain. This symbolic event, now enshrined into the collective national memory¹, set the tone for sixty years of immigration on an unprecedented scale. While the numbers in the first two decades after the war are by no means overwhelming – 500,000 primary migrants, mostly from the Indian subcontinent and the Caribbean, came into the UK between 1948 and 1962² (as compared with a current net annual migration of about 300,000), the impact of this migration was clearly visible in the public and political reactions at that time.

The influx of immigration was the direct result of the 1948 British Nationality Act (BNA), which extended full and equal citizenship to all colonial subjects and provided for free movement between the colonies and the British mainland.³ Colonial subjects and British citizens were legally indistinguishable – they were both Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies (CUKCs) and full citizens with equal rights in the UK.⁴ This effectively spurred a fourteen-year unfettered, liberal policy of immigration, the reasons for which, according to Christian Joppke, were illusions of empire, a sense of obligation and even guilt, but most importantly, an absent-minded complacency that would only be shaken by an increasingly hostile public at the end of the 1950s.⁵

¹ A good example of this is the Opening Ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics, directed by Danny Boyle, which featured the *Empire Windrush* docking in Tilbury Station.

² Hansen R. (2000), *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-war Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 19.

³ *British Nationality Act 1948*. 1948 c. 56 11 and 12 Geo 6 from 30th July 1948. Available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/11-12/56>

⁴ Hansen, p. 17.

⁵ Joppke C. (1999), *Immigration and the Nation-State: The United States, Germany and Great Britain*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 101.

Admittedly, public opinion was continually and loudly opposed to immigration at that time, particularly to those from the New Commonwealth.⁶ The first vocal and violent manifestation of this discontent was in the 1958 Race Riots in London and Nottingham, commonly termed the Notting Hill riots. Tensions caused by economic depression, heightened competition for jobs, and, as popular opinion suggests, the intermingling of white women and coloured immigrant men, boiled over during these days of rioting and violence and set in motion a nation-wide debate on the presence of (non-white) immigrants.⁷ What ensued was a two-fold approach to policies: a revision and tightening of immigration controls which culminated in the Commonwealth Immigrants Act of 1962, and the liberal-minded Race Relations Act of 1965 to deal with the integration of those who were already on the inside of British society. Britain at this time became the ideal embodiment of Brubaker's 'externally exclusive, internally inclusive' nation-state, and has pursued this line ever since.⁸

The 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act placed controls on those Citizens of the United Kingdom and Colonies (CUKCs) who had not been born in the UK or did not hold a UK passport issued in the United Kingdom.⁹ However, the Act did grant dependents, including grandparents of primary migrants already living in the United Kingdom unconditional right of entry.¹⁰ This produced what is commonly known as the secondary wave of migration into the UK – that of family reunification. The 1968 Commonwealth Immigration Act followed suit, wherein the concept of 'patriality' entered into the Bill, meaning that only CUKCs that have formal ties to the United Kingdom, i.e., parents or grandparents who were British citizens, could retain the right to abode.¹¹ Immigration numbers declined significantly during the following two decades as a result: while the percentage growth of the foreign-born population soared above 20% in the 1950s and 1960s, it dropped to 7.5% by the end of the 1970s.¹² The 1968 Act effectively put a stop to laissez-faire immigration to the Isles.

⁶ Hansen, p. 14.

⁷ While the racial tensions were known at the time of the Riots, Metropolitan Police documents released in 2002 confirm that the violence during the riots was racially motivated. See: <http://www.theguardian.com/uk/2002/aug/24/artsandhumanities.nottinghillcarnival2002>

⁸ See Brubaker R. (1992), *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Harvard: Harvard University Press.

⁹ Hansen, p. 110.

¹⁰ Hansen, p. 119.

¹¹ Sales R. (2007), *Understanding Immigration and Refugee Policy. Contradictions and Continuities*, Bristol: Policy Press and Social Policy Press Association, p. 142.

¹² Rendall M., Salt J. (2005), *The Foreign-born Population*, "Focus on People and Migration", London: Office for National Statistics, p. 133.

Meanwhile, the concept of integration and anti-discrimination developed through a series of Race Relations Acts. The first Race Relations Bill of 1965 focused on the notion of integration, defined by the then Home Secretary, Roy Jenkins, as “not a flattening process of uniformity but cultural diversity, coupled with equal opportunity in an atmosphere of mutual tolerance.”¹³ What this meant in practice was the outlawing of discrimination on the grounds of race or colour, creating a new criminal offense of incitement to racial hatred, and providing financial support to immigrant communities for purposes of integration.¹⁴ A White Paper on “Immigration from the Commonwealth” in the same year focused on strict immigration control in conjunction with enhanced integration, through which the National Committee for Commonwealth Immigration (NCCI) was set up to promote ‘goodwill’ and the integration of immigrants through liaising with existing local communities, providing training, research, and information of particular problems.¹⁵ The Race Relations Board was set up in the same year, institutionalising the Act and charged with making inquiries into cases of discrimination.¹⁶

A second Race Relations Act came quickly in 1968, which replaced the NCCI with a new Community Relations Commission, with the remit of ‘promoting harmonious community relations.’¹⁷ It strengthened the previous legislation, extending non-discrimination rulings from places of public resort and into the arena of housing, employment, and public services.¹⁸

The Race Relations Act was meant to counter-balance the restrictionist immigration policies and serve as a response to growing anti-immigrant sentiment within public opinion, with the understanding that tough immigration controls in conjunction with liberal-minded integration measures would assure social cohesion and public appeasement. These policies were sorely needed – it was clear from the early 1960s that racism was becoming a potential threat and the issue could, as in the USA at the time, destabilise British politics and society.¹⁹

¹³ Cited in Joppke (1999), p. 225.

¹⁴ The National Archives, *Records of the Commission for Racial Equality and Predecessors*. Reference CK. Administrative/biographical background. Kew: UK. <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/details?Uri=C53> [date accessed: 25.02.2014].

¹⁵ *Ibid.*

¹⁶ *Ibid.*

¹⁷ On This Day November 26. 1968: Race discrimination law tightened. *BBC News*. http://news.bbc.co.uk/onthisday/hi/dates/stories/november/26/newsid_3220000/3220635.stm [retrieved 14.03.2014].

¹⁸ *Ibid.*

¹⁹ This is most often exemplified by the Smethwick case: a Midlands constituency that in 1962 saw the electoral victory of Conservative MP Peter Griffiths, who ran on a purely racist

In an infamous speech in 1968 by Enoch Powell, Conservative MP, ominously entitled the ‘Rivers of Blood’, he points to the ‘haunting tragedy’ of the United States, and warns that it would be reproduced in ‘England’s green and pleasant land’ if nothing were done to curtail (or, in his eyes, eliminate) immigration.²⁰ Powell succeeded in stirring up a heated public and political debate on the topic of immigration with this oft-quoted speech, alluding to immigrants (blacks) as invading hordes who will have ‘the whip hand over the white man’ in the near future if something is not done to stop the invasion.²¹ Powell was filled with foreboding; a bloody outcome would ensue if the situation was not dealt with swiftly and conclusively: repatriation was the only option.²²

The response to this debate expansion was, in Adrian Favell’s words, “the defence of the very public order he claimed was under threat.”²³ Powell was swiftly kicked out of the shadow cabinet and marginalized within his own party. Both Labour and Conservatives distanced themselves from his extreme views, not only because of his xenophobic tendencies, but also out of fear that his Anglo-centric nationalism would rile the three other nations within the Union, right in the midst of heated devolution and tensions on the peripheries of the UK. The Rose Report, published in 1969, was by all accounts an agenda-setting document, citing T.H. Marshall as a guiding light in the understanding of citizenship and the expansion of rights to all citizens, including the protection and integration of ethnic minorities.²⁴ This public debate succeeded in marginalising the racist elements from politics, and secured liberal ethnic relations within the framework of ‘internal inclusiveness’, while strengthening its ‘external exclusiveness’ in a bipartisan approach to strict immigration controls.

The 1971 Immigration Act further denied entry to CUKC passport holders, a notable exception being the Ugandan expulsion of Asians in 1972, which saw a swift reaction on the part of the British government, taking in 28,000 Asians that settled permanently in the UK.²⁵ A third Race Relations Bill in

agenda and won to Patrick Gordon Walker, incumbent, poised to be the Foreign Secretary (*see* Hansen, p. 132–138).

²⁰ Powell E. (April 20, 1968). *Rivers of Blood*. Speech delivered to a Conservative Association meeting in Birmingham. Full text available on *The Telegraph* website: <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/comment/3643823/Enoch-Powells-Rivers-of-Blood-speech.html> [accessed on 14.03.2014].

²¹ Powell (April 20, 1968).

²² *Ibid.*

²³ Favell A. (2001), *Philosophies of Integration. Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain*. 2nd Edition, New York: Palgrave, p. 105.

²⁴ Favell, p. 99.

²⁵ In the process of ‘Africanisation’ and what some would argue was an attempt at ethnic cleansing, Idi Amin had given Ugandan Asians with CUKC passports three months to leave the

1976 was a reaction to the persistent, now less ostentatious yet systemic racism and discrimination in society, extending the definition of discrimination also to indirect acts thereof²⁶ and introducing aspects of positive action²⁷, strengthening the previous legislation with stronger enforcement mechanisms. The underlying remit was the elimination of racial discrimination and promotion of equal opportunities for people of race and colour, as well as fostering good relations between racial groups; in a word, managing diversity. The Act also merged the Race Relations Board and the Community Relations Commission into the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE), which had as its mandate the elimination of racial discrimination, of assuring equal opportunities and good relations between racial groups²⁸ and pledged to work for a ‘just and integrated society, where diversity is valued.’²⁹ Practically, the CRE undertook national campaigns against discrimination, collected data and statistics on acts thereof, published an annual report on racism in Britain, funded local bodies to fight racism, gave legal advice to victims of discrimination, and undertook audits of industries or governmental departments suspected of discrimination.³⁰ While criticism of the CRE maintains that it had been more symbolic than proactive, and that it was

country and made it clear that it was a British responsibility. Britain reacted swiftly, turning to other countries for help in receiving the refugees but accepting full responsibility, finally taking in 28,000 Asians that settled permanently in the UK. The Conservative government learned from the mistakes of its Labour predecessors and the Kenyan Crisis of 1968 that mirrored the Ugandan situation and caused a stir in the liberal faction of the British government and public (in Hansen, p. 201.).

²⁶ Under British law, indirect discrimination is defined as “treatment that is equal in a formal sense, but discriminatory in its effect on one particular racial group” (in Bleich, p. 103).

²⁷ Bleich E. (2003), *Race Politics in Britain and France. Ideas and Policymaking since the 1960s*. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press, p. 89, p. 106. While Bleich affirms that the 1976 Bill included positive action, it is largely agreed that there has been no positive action until the recent 2011 legislation providing for it. This is largely due to the fact that positive action is an ill-defined notion, differing significantly from the American style affirmative action or positive discrimination. Under British law, it is illegal to place quotas for employment of certain racial groups or women, for instance. Rather, positive action provides provisions for under-represented groups for training resources or encouragement for members of these groups to take advantage of employment opportunities. These actions were indeed initiated in the 1976 Bill, wherein employers were permitted to act positively, although no incentives were offered to induce action (Bleich, p. 106).

²⁸ The National Archives, *Records of the Commission for Racial Equality and Predecessors*. Reference CK. Administrative/biographical background. Kew: UK. <http://discovery.nationalarchives.gov.uk/SearchUI/details?Uri=C53> [date accessed: 25.02.2014].

²⁹ Cited in: <http://www.runnymedetrust.org/histories/race-equality/58/commission-for-racial-equality-established.html>

³⁰ Bleich, p. 11.

“a highly centrist, only mildly progressive institution”, “mechanically limited” in the area of race relations management³¹, it served, until 2004, as the cornerstone of British integration politics, until it was dissolved and re-constituted as the Equality and Human Rights Commission in 2007.

With the 1973 Oil Crisis and economic downturn, the numbers of immigrants were kept at a record low, and when Britain joined the European Economic Community in 1972, it effectively shifted its focus to the European continent and the migration flows followed suit. The 1981 census showed only a 7.5 per cent increase in foreign-born from the 1971 census, 238,000 in absolute numbers, the lowest growth in the period from 1961 to 2001.³² While the immigration rates were kept consistently low, the society within was developing into a multicultural one, foreign-born fluctuating at around 6.2 per cent of the population³³, without taking into account the coming-of-age of the first generation of babies born to immigrant parents.

The end of the 1970s saw Margret Thatcher into office and her proclamation to end the era of ‘bipartisanship’ steered the Conservatives from the centre back to the right, effectively marginalizing the far-right National Front party, setting the agenda of ever-stricter immigration controls and embarking on a whole-scale re-conceptualisation of British citizenship. This was evidenced in the 1981 British Nationality Act (BNA), which overhauled the 1948 BNA, reconstituting British citizenship to include only the territory of mainland Britain and effectively eliminate the category of British overseas subjects. The 1988 Immigration Act further curtailed the rights of permanent residents to sponsor their families for immigration, proclaiming an end to the era of large-scale family reunification. The 1991 census showed that the foreign-born population had increased only by 400,000 from 1981, an 11.8 per cent increase, down from 24 per cent in the period from 1961–1971.³⁴ However, these numbers do not take into account the fact that almost half of Britain’s population whose origins lie in the New Commonwealth or Pakistan were born in Britain.³⁵

Meanwhile, the 1980s witnessed a growing consensus on the reality of multiculturalism and public as well as political acknowledgement thereof. As early as 1979, the British government described the British society as ‘both multicultural and culturally diverse’, and the Swann Committee, which produced a long-term research into the inequalities of children of ethnic minorities in the

³¹ Favell, pp. 107–108.

³² Rendall M., Salt J., p. 133.

³³ *Ibid.*

³⁴ *Ibid.*

³⁵ *Ibid.*

school system, affirmed this reality.³⁶ What is noteworthy here is the underlying philosophy of pluralism, or multiculturalism that dominated the approach and was defined as such:

[...] which enables, expects and encourages members of all ethnic groups, both minority and majority, to participate fully in shaping the society as a whole within a framework of commonly accepted values, practices and procedures, whilst also allowing and, where necessary, assisting the ethnic minority communities in maintaining their distinct ethnic identities within this common framework.³⁷

What the Swann Report of 1985 confirmed, however, was that there was a problem of persistent under-achievement of children of ethnic minorities, and concluded that this was due to institutionalized racism³⁸ and under-representation of ethnic minority teachers in the education sector. The recommendations of the Swann Committee on tackling under-achievement of ethnic minority pupils in schools were taken up by the Tory government of the time, and a White Paper entitled 'Better Schools' from 1985 outlined the government's commitment to draw more teachers of ethnic minority backgrounds without a reduction in qualification level.³⁹ Ethnic monitoring in the education sector was encouraged to collect data on the inequalities and underrepresentation of teachers of ethnic minority backgrounds in order to inform possible solutions to the problem, as was research into the under-achievement of ethnic minorities.

Then, the 1990s again saw many significant changes in immigration flows and integration measures, as well as a turn-around in the overall approach to the subject. Firstly, the percentage of foreign-born in the population went up by 27 per cent throughout the decade, increasing by an absolute total of almost 1.1 million people from 1991 to 2001, accounting for 8.3 per cent of

³⁶ Swann Report. (March 1985), *Education for All. Report of the Committee of Enquiry into the Education of Children from Ethnic Minority Groups*. Chairman: Lord Michael Swann FRSE. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for Education and Science by Command of Her Majesty in March 1985. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office.

³⁷ Swann Report, p. 5.

³⁸ Institutionalized racism was here defined as: "describing the way in which a range of long established systems, practices and procedures, both within education and the wider society, which were originally conceived and devised to meet the needs and aspirations of a relatively homogeneous society, can now be seen not only to fail to take account of the multi-racial nature of Britain today but may also ignore or even actively work against the interests of ethnic minority communities." This racism can best be understood by being not by intent, but in effect (The Swann Report, p. 28).

³⁹ *Better Schools – A Summary*. Department of Education and Science and Welsh Office. London: Her Majesty's Stationary Office. Crown Copyright 1985.

the population.⁴⁰ While the highest region of origin was still Europe (33 per cent), Ireland accounting for 11 per cent of the total foreign population, the second highest was South Asia, accounting for 21 per cent, and Africa at 17 per cent.⁴¹ Secondly, the immigration channels veered almost unilaterally towards asylum seekers, which saw the first peak in 1991–93 following the break-up of the Soviet Union, wherein asylum seekers accounted for 86 per cent and then 100 per cent of all net migration to the UK.⁴² Between the late 1980s and early 2000s, the differences are indeed staggering: 4,256 applicants in 1987 as compared to a peak of 84,130 in 2002.⁴³ The numbers rose in-between these dates, and then tapered off significantly after 2002 around the 20,000 mark. While the majority of applications were refused each year, the inflow of asylum seekers in the 1990s and into the 2000s had a major influence on immigration policy and public rhetoric on the matter, with the result that there were four Immigration and Asylum acts within seven years (1999, 2002, 2004, 2006). These Acts greatly restricted the inflow and saw the number of applicants drop significantly, and while applications dropped across Europe at this time as well, the trend was relatively steeper in the UK.⁴⁴

Meanwhile, the multicultural social reality of the 1990s was shaken early on with the murder of Stephen Lawrence. The MacPherson Inquiry produced a damning report of the institutionalised racism within the policing service, and paved the way for the Race Relations Amendment Act of 2000, which extended Race Relations legislation to the police and other public authorities.⁴⁵

With the change in government in 1997, New Labour under Tony Blair also changed the tone of political rhetoric, launching a decade-long debate on citizenship, social cohesion, and national identity, not only on immigration and asylum issues, but also within society at large: citizenship education was implemented into the National Curriculum, following the work on the Advisory Group on Citizenship, chaired by Bernard Crick and managed by

⁴⁰ Rendall M., Salt J., p. 133.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*

⁴² Blinder S. (13 February 2013), *Migration to the UK: Asylum. 2nd Revision*. Migration Observatory Briefing, COMPAS, University of Oxford, p. 4.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁴⁵ MacPherson of Cluny W. (February 1999), *The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry*. Report of an Inquiry. Advised by Tom Cook, the Right Reverend Dr. John Sentamu, Dr. Richard Stone. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Office Department by Command of Her Majesty. Cm 4262-I. https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/277111/4262.pdf [accessed on 14.03.2014].

the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.⁴⁶ The Citizenship Curriculum was implemented into schools in 2002 (but disappplied as of September 2013 by the Conservative-led coalition government), and further developed by Bernard Crick into the handbook on citizenship for newcomers to Britain, entitled *Life in the United Kingdom: A Journey to Citizenship*, based on a final report of the “Life in the United Kingdom” Advisory Group.⁴⁷ A citizenship test based on the handbook and benchmarked at a level of B1 English (or Welsh or Scottish Gaelic) for those who wanted to settle in the UK was first implemented in November 2005, along with major government support for English language courses with ‘civics’ content based on the Life in the United Kingdom handbook. A more robust sense of Britishness and integration was taking shape.

In the meantime, the year 2004 saw the opening up of UK borders to nationals of the A8 accession countries to the EU, and an unprecedented (and largely unexpected) number of EU migrants came to work and live in the UK, Poles by far the most numerous amongst them.⁴⁸ More than thirty years of strict immigration controls were suddenly unravelled at one stroke by EU freedom of movement, prompting debate on ‘Europe’ and the perceived drain on the welfare system. Then, the London Underground bombings of 7 July 2005 sent another shock through society, revealing the real threat of home-grown terrorism after the global shock of 9/11, and again issues of immigration and the negative side-effects of multiculturalism came to the fore. By the second round of EU expansion to Romanian and Bulgaria in 2007, the UK had imposed the strictest transitory rules which barred these new EU nationals from freely moving and working in the UK until January 2014. A points-based system of immigration, modelled on the Canadian and Australian policies, was introduced in 2008, and the 2009 Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act further strengthened border controls, and reinforced the concept of ‘earned’ citizenship through the Knowledge of Language and Life (KoLL) citizenship testing, now applicable to all those who apply for settlement.⁴⁹

⁴⁶ See: *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools*. Final Report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship, 22 September 1998. London: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

⁴⁷ See: *The New and the Old. The Report of the “Life in the United Kingdom” Advisory Group*. Home Office Communication Directorate, Crown Copyright 2003.

⁴⁸ Blinder S. (20 June 2013), *Immigration by Category: Workers, Students, Family Members, Asylum Applicants*. 2nd Edition. Migration Observatory Briefing, COMPAS, University of Oxford, p. 3–4; Rienzo C. (17 December 2013), *Migrants in the UK: An Overview*, Migration Observatory Briefing, COMPAS, University of Oxford, p. 1.

⁴⁹ *Borders, Citizenship and Immigration Act 2009* (c. 11). Part 2 – Citizenship.

By the end of the first decade of the new millennium, Britain had become irrevocably ‘post-multicultural’, and new solutions to the problems of diversity were being sought.⁵⁰ The term ‘race’, which first denoted ‘black’ (whether from the West Indies or Indian subcontinent), had been largely outgrown by a myriad of group identities that did not fit the definition first inscribed into legislation: the reality of ‘super-diversity’ soon outstripped the simple mould of ‘race’, and legislation stretched itself thin in trying to incorporate the definition where it did not fit. In 2010, Race Relations legislation disappeared in name, replaced by the Equality Act, which incorporated all of the existing anti-discrimination legislation under one umbrella.⁵¹

Then, in December 2016, a damning review of integration by Dame Louise Casey⁵² pointed to the ethnic segregation in British society and pockets of concentrated ethnic groups that have very low levels of integration, where English language skills are poor, women are not integrated into the labour market and ‘British values’ are under threat. While discrimination of ethnic minorities still persists, and hate crime towards ethnic minorities is on the rise, so too is Islamic extremism and intolerance, pitting the two extremes in what seems to be ever-growing tension within British society.

What is clear is that the ‘internally inclusive, externally exclusive’ mechanism instituted in the mid 1960s, wherein integration policies and politics were often more liberal than mainstream society, and Britain controlled its border more rigidly, radically changed from 2004 onwards. Not only the practice, but the perception of migration control was dismantled, and mainstream society did not take kindly to it. Added to a context of growing globalisation, super-diversity and economic insecurity, together with ominous extremist threats, politics and policies have scrambled to keep up, frantically discarding multiculturalism discourse and in the absence of a comprehensive strategy, giving the voice to a fearful, disgruntled people. Or rather a divided people, half of whom had so deeply integrated internal inclusiveness and the softening of external borders for it to become a social fact, the other actively resisting, deeply discontent and ultimately, with a stronger voice. The next section focuses on the intricacies of integration in the British context, highlighting the changes that have occurred in the process.

⁵⁰ See, for example: Vertovec S. (2010), Towards Post-Multiculturalism? Changing Communities, Conditions and Contexts of Diversity, “International Social Science Journal”, Volume 61, Number 199, pp. 83–95.

⁵¹ *Equality Act 2006*. 2006 c. 3, available at: <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2006/3/contents>

⁵² Casey, Louise (2016), *The Casey Review: A review into opportunity and integration*. Independent report commissioned by the Department for Communities and Local Government. Crown Copyright.

INTEGRATION IN THE CONTEXT OF BRITISH MULTICULTURALISM

Integration is a notoriously polyvalent term that is here strictly defined through the prism of immigration. Generally speaking, we can take the outcome of immigrant integration to be the successful participation of migrants across a range of spheres in the host society: in the labour market, in the socio-cultural sphere, through civic participation, and the normative sphere of belonging and identification on the local and national level.⁵³ However, the way in which the host society determines, defines and supports ‘successful’ integration in these spheres can vary markedly from state to state.

Adrian Favell outlines ‘philosophies of integration’ as both the overarching normative framework present within a political system, but also the political responses designed to deal with dilemmas posed by immigrant integration, meaning political rhetoric and policies.⁵⁴ As normative models, philosophies of integration stretch beyond particularistic political parties and individual viewpoints, marking certain continuity throughout history and across political spectrums within one country. Political responses, on the other hand, while influenced by philosophies of integration and shaped by their general frameworks, are susceptible to political influences that differ from one political party to another, from one era to the next and are typified not by their continuity, but by their constantly changing nature. Political responses can range from, amongst others, anti-discrimination legislation, to language provision, to civic education, to reception policies for newcomers (to help in finding employment, housing), or further to accommodate certain cultural needs, to promote immigrant cultures and support ethno-cultural activities, or, equally, an explicit lack of the above.

These two dimensions of philosophies of integration have, in the second half of the 20th century, forged a model typically labelled as multiculturalism in the UK. While the term multiculturalism is fraught with inconsistencies, multiple definitions and approaches, the basic philosophy behind it takes humans to be both natural and cultural beings, sharing a common human identity but in a culturally mediated manner.⁵⁵ Equality is grounded not in the uniformity

⁵³ For a good discussion on the term integration, see: Spencer S (2014), *Integration* [online video]. This is a short 6-minute interview with Sarah Spencer, deputy Director of the Centre on Migration Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford. Accessible at: <http://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/node/856> [accessed on 20.03.2014].

⁵⁴ Favell, p. 2.

⁵⁵ Parekh B. (2006), *Rethinking Multiculturalism. Cultural Diversity and Political Theory*. 2nd Edition, New York: Palgrave MacMillan, p. 240.

of human nature, but in the interplay of uniformity and difference, building difference into the concept of equality.⁵⁶ This framework should be placed in the historical context of group inequalities and hierarchical power relations within societies that started breaking down in the after-war period, first through decolonization, then through civil rights movements, and then minority and multicultural rights struggles, coupled with strong individual human rights legislation.⁵⁷ Previously oppressed, underrepresented or underprivileged groups sought to change the power structure within these societies, turning towards liberal-democratic forms of citizenship to do so.

Multiculturalism as a set of political policies focuses on ethno-cultural groups and their relation with the state, and their differential claims to gain recognition on economic, socio-cultural and political levels.⁵⁸ Their relations with the state are then institutionalized through the application for official group status. Multiculturalism policies go beyond anti-discrimination legislation present in most liberal-democratic nation-state and focus on underlying, often ostensibly invisible inequalities, prejudices and forms of stigmatization of certain groups in society, seeking instead to support, celebrate and encourage ethno-cultural diversity in the public sphere.⁵⁹ Policies aim at economic redistribution through measures such as affirmative action, political participation and representation, and cultural recognition through funding and support for ethno-cultural group activities and recognition of multiculturalism on a state level. The philosophy behind British multiculturalism policies has thus been to allow for plurality in the public sphere; to acknowledge ethnic diversity and support it, trying at the same time to break down the underlying discriminatory barriers in society experienced by ethno-cultural minorities through race-relations policies. The state should not intervene in the cultural identity of its citizens and must be careful not to impose one from top-down.

In practice, British Race Relations policies were a series of anti-discrimination measures that first outlawed ostentatious forms of exclusion based on race, and then by the end of the 1990s, included tacit, informal forms of discrimination against racial groups, wherein a racial group is “a group of persons defined by reference to colour, race, nationality or ethnic or national origins, and references

⁵⁶ *Ibid.*

⁵⁷ Kymlicka W. (2010), *The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism? New Debates on Inclusion and Accommodation in Diverse Societies*. In: Vertovec S., Wessendorf S. (eds), *The Multiculturalism Backlash*, London: Routledge, pp. 35–36.

⁵⁸ Kymlicka, pp. 35–40.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*

to a person's racial group refer to any racial group into which he falls."⁶⁰ This overarching framework has shaped the relations of the state towards its citizens and migrants on its territory, in the form of a clear national approach to the issue of diversity that permeates – through practical policies – to all areas of life: from access to citizenship, to education, to health care and employment, the list goes on. This approach is characterised by cultural sensitivity towards ethno-cultural minority groups and an effort to reasonably accommodate the needs of these groups in different areas of life through recognition, support, encouragement and affirmative action.

While this model of integration was born out of immigration into the country, it is not restricted only to immigration and immigrants. In fact, it is difficult to pinpoint one concrete policy framework of immigrant integration *per se* into the UK. Instead, what has been termed multiculturalism or Race Relations is present in all areas of life within Britain, evidenced in the approach to diversity at all levels of government and encouraged, supported and recognised in the wider national community. While the term multiculturalism has gone out of fashion, the infiltration of this approach and policies at all levels of public and private life have made a strong and lasting imprint on the British society. This infiltration is the direct result of strong anti-discrimination policies, termed Race Relations (now the Equality Act).

Since the early years of the 21st century, however, multiculturalism has experienced a severe blow, and parties on both sides of the political spectrum are hailing its demise.⁶¹ What has come about in the wake of the turmoil, in a three-way deadlock of immigration, integration and national identity, is a turn away from 'multiculturalism' and, in the first decade of the new millennium, towards 'social and community cohesion' and, since 2010, towards 'big society'. As the normative framework shifts, so too have the actual policies of integration, or lack thereof. It is important to analyse how these changes have come about, and to do so we need to step back to view its progress on the normative, political and policy levels.

In Britain, issues of integration have, from the 1960s to the late 1990s, centred on two interconnected terms: Race Relations and multiculturalism, which were a direct response to the overt racism within society due to an influx of migrants particularly from the New Commonwealth. However, growing

⁶⁰ *Race Relations Act 1976*. 1976 c. 74, Part 1, point 3, "Meaning of «racial grounds», «racial group» etc." <http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1976/74/enacted> [accessed 10.02.2014].

⁶¹ See: Back L., Keith M., Khan A., Shukra K., Solomos J. (2002), *New Labour's White Heart: Politics, Multiculturalism and the Return of Assimilation*, "The Political Quarterly", Volume 73, Issue 4, pp. 445–454.

criticism of multiculturalism since the late 1990s changed the political rhetoric to focus more on ‘civic integration’ and ‘community cohesion’ and a sense of shared citizenship.⁶² While Race Relations and multiculturalism were known for their support of ethnic group rights and group identity, civic integration and cohesion were meant to underline the importance of common shared values and feelings of unified belonging, while underlining the importance of individuals and individual rights.

This shift away from the rhetoric of multiculturalism and towards social or community cohesion came at a time when cohesion and national identity was at an historic low point, highlighted by the urban race riots in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley 2001, just ahead of the World Trade Center attacks of September 11th in the USA. The Cantle Report of 2001, an independent review of community cohesion in Oldham commissioned after the riots, highlighted that people from different groups were segregated, in education, employment, communities, language, social and cultural networks, places of worship, thus leading “parallel lives.”⁶³ The recommendation was to promote community cohesion, “based upon a greater knowledge of, contact between, and respect for, the various cultures,” but also a “greater sense of citizenship based on a few common principles.”⁶⁴

In a similar vein, the 2002 Home Office White Paper entitled “Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain” placed the integration of migrants and its effect on citizenship and national identity on top of the agenda.⁶⁵ The White Paper overtly admits that in certain respects British citizens are in a crisis of belonging, because the state has failed in its attempt to integrate its diverse society. It cites the disturbances in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley as a sign of this disintegration and blames it on the lack of “a sense of common values or shared civic identity to unite around.”⁶⁶ According to the White Paper, the government plans to address this disintegration by initiating “an open and constructive debate about citizenship, civic identity and shared values.”⁶⁷ This White Paper paved the way for the work of the Life in the UK

⁶² See for example: Cantle T. (2008), *Community Cohesion. A New Framework for Race and Diversity*, Revised and Updated Edition. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.

⁶³ *Cantle Report. Community Cohesion: A Report of the Independent Review Team Chaired by Ted Cantle*, Home Office 2001, p. 9.

⁶⁴ *Cantle Report*, p. 10.

⁶⁵ *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain*. Presented to Parliament by the Secretary of State for the Home Department by Command of Her Majesty, February 2002, Crown Copyright.

⁶⁶ *Secure Borders, Safe Haven*, p. 10.

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 11.

Advisory Group, chaired by Bernard Crick, which led to the creation of the Life in the UK handbook and citizenship testing materials.

Then, in 2006, the then Communities and Local Government Secretary Ruth Kelly announced the formation of the Committee on Integration and Cohesion, which through public consultations, case studies and research across England, was to advise the government on how to build a ‘cohesive society’ and set the tone for a national strategy and new definition of integration and cohesion. According to the report, an integrated and cohesive community is one where, amongst others, “there is a clearly defined and widely shared sense of the *contribution* of different individuals and different communities to a future vision for a neighbourhood, city, region or country; There is a strong *recognition of the contribution* of both those who have newly arrived and those who already have deep attachments to a particular place, with a focus on what they have in common; there are strong and *positive relationships between people from different backgrounds* in the workplace, in schools and other institutions within neighbourhoods (*emphasis author’s own*).⁶⁸

The lessons that run through the findings are that integration is a complex, multi-layered process, but it happens primarily at a local level, and that it involves everyone, from settled communities to new arrivals, and the positive interactions amongst them. The Department for Communities and Local Government was to be in charge of developing and implementing the national strategy.

Then, the financial crisis hit in 2008 and the government changed hands in 2010, largely undoing what had been initiated by the Labour government in the first decade of the new millennium. The next agenda-setting document was delivered by the Department for Communities and Local Government in 2012 under the Conservative-led government. In the report entitled “Creating the Conditions for Integration”, the Communities and Local Government broadly outlines the approach to integration in England, defining integration as “creating the conditions for everyone to play a full part in national and local life”, wherein the focus is on locally-led action and the idea of Big Society.⁶⁹ The latter was a controversial policy strategy launched by the Conservative party in 2010 which was meant to be a shift of power from the national to the local governments, as well as from the public to the voluntary and private sectors, in order to give greater power to citizens.⁷⁰ While the Commission on Integration and Cohesion

⁶⁸ *Our Shared Future*, p. 42.

⁶⁹ *Creating the Conditions for Integration*. Communities and Local Government, February 2012, Crown Copyright.

⁷⁰ See David Cameron’s speech delivered in Liverpool on 19 July, 2010. <https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/big-society-speech>

of 2007 also focused on locally-led initiatives, the tone of the 2012 is much more hands-off: “government must not, as happens all too often, stand in the way by dictating general solutions to complex local issues...”⁷¹ It seeks to create the conditions for integration primarily by funding private and voluntary services and is not meant as an overarching national strategy, but a modest document (a 23-page paper issued by the DCLG without any public consultation) that has as its remit a major issue: integration in England.

While the main task of the government is thus to act only ‘exceptionally’, the report outlines five key factors that contribute to integration, which can be seen as the basis for government actions and funding. These are: *common ground* – a clear sense of shared aspirations and values; *responsibility* – a strong sense of mutual commitments and obligations; *social mobility* – for people to realise their potential and ‘get on in life’; *participation and empowerment* – for people of all backgrounds to take part in local and national life; and *tackling intolerance and extremism* – for a robust response to threats in the form of discrimination, extremism or disorder.⁷² Some of these factors are in fact quite similar to the principles outlined by the Commission on Integration and Cohesion in 2007 – particularly ‘shared futures’ (like common ground) and ‘rights and responsibilities’ – while the ethics of hospitality and mutual respect have been replaced with more active social mobility, and likewise, equality, fairness and trust between communities with a stronger sense of participation and empowerment. The added element in 2012 is certainly tackling extremism, spurred in part by the 2011 riots in several London boroughs and cities in England.⁷³

Thus the major difference in policy-making lies in the concerted effort of the Conservative-led government to retreat from a national strategy on integration, leaving it largely in the hands of the voluntary and private sectors whilst cutting much funding in these areas. What remains of government support is covered in piece-meal ways, but outlined through the approach to integration set out in the government paper of 2012.

Thus instead of a national strategy, research and public consultations, the government has indeed ‘let localism loose’, by creating the conditions for ‘Big Society’ in which public institutions are increasingly dismantled and the onus is placed on the voluntary and private sectors. While there have been successful programmes such as the NCS (National Citizen Service), or initiatives such as the ‘Big Lunch’, the provision for integrating immigrants, and particularly the most vulnerable, is effectively non-existent on the state level. Efforts here to

⁷¹ *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, p. 6.

⁷² *Creating the Conditions for Integration*, pp. 4–5.

⁷³ See media articles on the subject: <http://www.bbc.com/news/uk-14452097>

pinpoint integration policies, particularly for immigrants, thus stretch the limits, which on one hand may point to an era that is beyond immigrant integration, in which immigration is not a new phenomenon and in which the tools for integration have long been ingrained into the society through anti-discrimination policies, whilst on the other pointing in the direction of closed borders, anti-immigration sentiment and decreased will to integrate those who permeate the borders. In terms of immigrant integration policies, it has been noted that the UK does not in fact have policies of immigrant integration; this somewhat controversial statement is taken out of the mouth of Sarah Spencer, deputy director of COMPAS at Oxford University. While she acknowledges the strong anti-discrimination legislation present in the UK, as well as some ‘ad hoc service provision’, and an expansion (until recently) of English language tuition, she is clear to point out that there is no one national strategy on immigrant integration, no leadership to motivate, encourage people, through employers, to trade unions, to civil society, to participate in the process of integration, which, she amongst others points out, is a two-way street.⁷⁴

One set of policies still remains, however, in the form of the civic integration testing scheme, the *Knowledge of Language and Life in the UK (KoLL)*, that has shifted and morphed under the two periods of community cohesion and ‘Big Society’ outlined above. While the current citizenship policies now fall within the framework of immigration policies, they were originally quite clearly also intended as a measure of a two-way process of integration of newcomers into British society. The report of the Advisory Group on ‘Life in the UK’, entitled “The New and the Old”, chaired by the late Lord Bernard Crick, stressed “the mutual responsibility and civic duty of both the new and the old to learn about each other’s ways.”⁷⁵ Citizenship was meant to be a meaningful, significant life event, a rite of passage that entailed the learning of the language as well as some cultural tools in living within the new society.⁷⁶ The citizenship ceremony was put in place as a celebration of this passage, and the focus, at least in theory, was on active participation and a greater sense of community cohesion. “The new requirements are to be seen not as a new hurdle but as a much needed

⁷⁴ Spencer S (2014), *Integration* [online video]. This is a short 6-minute interview with Sarah Spencer, deputy Director of the Centre on Migration Policy and Society (COMPAS) at the University of Oxford. Accessible at: <http://migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk/node/856> [accessed on 20.03.2014].

⁷⁵ *The New and the Old. The Report of the “Life in the United Kingdom” Advisory Group.* Home Office Communication Directorate, Crown Copyright 2003, p. 4.

⁷⁶ *The New and the Old*, p. 8.

entitlement,” reads the report.⁷⁷ It was the process, the “Journey to Citizenship”, rather than the test that was meant to ensure one’s integration into British society.

At the launch of the *Life in the UK: A Journey to Citizenship* handbook and test in 2005 Tony McNulty, then immigration minister, explicitly stated: “This is not a test of someone’s ability to be British or a test of their Britishness. It is a test of their preparedness to become citizens.”⁷⁸ This position was strongly backed by policy-makers involved with the making of the citizenship materials. In an interview from 2003, Sir Bernard Crick, chair of the *Life in the UK* Advisory Group, stated: “We didn’t deal with national identity and that was quite deliberate. I said we’re not dealing with nationality, we’re dealing with a skill, a knowledge, an attitude for citizenship.”⁷⁹ These statements came largely in response to criticisms that the new integration policies were a test of Britishness, a ‘cricket-test’⁸⁰ of sorts that Brits themselves could not pass.⁸¹

The term Britishness was a buzzword at the time the first citizenship test was launched, taken up by politics and academia alike and evidenced in the discourse surrounding the new citizenship policies.⁸² The report of the *Life in the UK* Advisory Group explicitly asks: ‘Who are we British’ and ‘What are our values?’ And answers with key words like: respect for equal rights, mutual tolerance, and understanding of differences.⁸³ The Report also highlighted what Britishness, in their perspective, is *not*: as conforming to a supposed characteristic or as a British history that should be memorised and tested.⁸⁴ The Advisory Group strongly advocated a process towards citizenship that is ‘educative and

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*

⁷⁸ Quoted in Kiwan D. (2008), *A Journey to Citizenship in the United Kingdom*, “International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS)”, Vol. 10, No. 1, 2008, “Citizenship Tests in a Post-National Era”: UNESCO, p. 69.

⁷⁹ Kiwan, p. 62.

⁸⁰ The ‘cricket test’ refers to Norman Tebitt’s remark in 1990 that a good indicator of integration is when immigrants and their children show their loyalty to the British (or rather English) cricket team.

⁸¹ See BBC’s ‘own version’ of the Britishness test that was meant to highlight the fact that Brits themselves would find it difficult to pass: http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/magazine/4099770.stm

⁸² Key examples are: Parekh B. (2000), *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain. The Parekh Report*. The Runnymede Trust; *Citizenship and Belonging: What is Britishness?* Research Study commissioned from ETHNOS Research and Consultancy by the Commission for Racial Equality (CRE) in 2005; Brown G. (2006), *Who do we want to be? The future of Britishness*, Speech made at the Fabian New Year Conference on 14 January 2006. Imperial College, London. <http://fabians.org.uk/events/new-year-conference-06/brown-britishness/speech>

⁸³ *The New and the Old*, p. 10.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 14.

integrative', in which an applicant's progress, especially in terms of language competencies, be weighed in favour of a 'one size fits all' test benchmarked at a particular level.⁸⁵ This sense of progress from one level to the next was indeed reflected by the language criteria, as mentioned in section two: a candidate who was below the set B1 level could participate in a language-with-civics-content ESOL course and the progression of one level to the next would satisfy the citizenship test requirement.

The idea that newcomers should be given tools to integrate and actively participate in the society was thus the underlying philosophy of the first Life in the UK handbook, which made it more practical in nature, focused on the initial introduction to the British civic society and its institutions, the encouragement of people to actively and voluntarily participate in the society, which will then lead to contact with settled inhabitants and other new citizens that makes for a deeper sense of national identity. Thus at the inception of the KoLL, the aim – at least in theory – was to support newcomers in their 'journey' to British citizenship, through language and civics education focused on active participation and community cohesion, wherein the test was only meant to provide closure and where the citizenship ceremony celebrated this rite of passage. However, testing integration is at best an imprecise exercise, at worst missing the point altogether. From the onset, the citizenship test has proven to be costly, cumbersome and susceptible to changes in government.

With the changes in the handbook (March 2013) and accompanying test, there has been a clear shift away from the integrative aim of practical 'citizenship education' and towards testing of British history and culture. Further changes in funding have phased out the Citizenship Curriculum in schools as of September 2013, implemented in 2002 by the Labour government in conjunction with the Advisory Group on Citizenship that later developed the handbook for newcomers, but meant to be a guide for all citizens.⁸⁶

A CRITICAL REVIEW OF INTEGRATION POLICIES IN THE UK

The United Kingdom has, over the last decade, seen an ever-stronger intertwining of immigration and integration policies, made evident in the introduction of citizenship and language testing schemes and strict pre-conditions

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 20.

⁸⁶ *Education for Citizenship and the Teaching of Democracy in Schools*. Final Report of the Advisory Group on Citizenship, 22 September 1998. London: Qualifications and Curriculum Authority.

on entry. This is a trend that is developing across other European nation-states, and is subject of heated academic, political and public debate, ranging from its purportedly illiberal character, to the fact that ‘home bred’ citizens wouldn’t be able to pass it, to its malleable, subjective nature. These ‘civic integration’ testing schemes are now in fact the focal point of immigrant integration policies in the UK and the subject of most of the critical review below, together with the legacy of multiculturalism in the UK through the prism of Race Relations and the recent backlash to the concept.

CIVIC INTEGRATION TESTING SCHEMES

While this new trend in citizenship policies across Europe has been the source of much discussion in the last decade,⁸⁷ it is in fact much older than it appears. In Canada and the United States, citizenship testing, oaths of allegiance, language and civic education have been in place for the last half-century, in more or less standardized forms. Australia also practices this approach to immigrant integration. Even on the European continent, there are examples of testing schemes for foreigners that date back to the 19th century: in Bismark’s Germany, Polish priests were ordered to use the German language and pass an exam in German literature and culture.⁸⁸ However, it was only in the onset of the 21st century that concerted efforts by various European countries, the United Kingdom at the forefront, focused on ‘civic integration education schemes’ and ‘citizenship testing’ requirements for immigrants in the acquisition of citizenship or permanent residence.

The philosophy behind these schemes is connected to the term “civic citizenship”, defined on the EU level as: “a concept to enhance solidarity and a shared sense of belonging among nationals, EU citizens and legally resident third-country nationals.”⁸⁹ Solidarity is then presumably enhanced by the rite of passage that are the civic integration and testing schemes and the responsibility to learn the language, culture and history of the State and its embedded nature

⁸⁷ For a good overview of testing schemes around Europe see: *Citizenship Tests in a Post-National Era*, “International Journal on Multicultural Societies (IJMS)”, UNESCO, Vol 10, No. 1, 2008. This issue was wholly dedicated to citizenship testing in select European countries.

⁸⁸ Scheffer P. (2011), *Immigrant Nations*. Cambridge: Polity Press, p. 150. This is somewhat unsurprising, as Poland was partially under German control at that time and there was a strong movement at ‘Germanisation’ of the Polish population living within its borders, fearsome of Polish nationalism.

⁸⁹ Niessen J., Huddleston T. (April 2010), *Handbook on Integration for Policy-Makers and Practitioners. Third Edition*. Directorate General for Justice, Freedom and Security, European Communities, p. 105.

within the European Union, in return for greater rights. In a similar vein, the underlying aim of the making of the first Life in the UK handbook was to encourage active citizenship amongst newcomers as well as to promote a stronger sense of belonging to the national community.

While integration measures that encourage ‘civic citizenship’ – language instruction and civic education in the form of information about the state, political institutions, culture and history – are largely accepted by migrants and NGOs in support of them alike (especially in terms of language provision)⁹⁰ and even encouraged by the EU Handbook on Integration⁹¹, there has been a great deal of criticism about the form and content of civic integration schemes and certainly about citizenship testing.⁹²

The first major criticism is that these schemes expect *apriori* integration, sometimes before the migrant even sets foot on the soil of the host society, mixing the concept of integration with the policies of immigration.⁹³ This is thought to be exclusionary instead of inclusive, making the barriers to entry dissuasively high instead of providing positive incentives to integration. The second criticism lies in the content and is at the heart of the dilemma of the nation-state – how should a country transmit its national sense of self to newcomers and what should the substance of this national identity be? The concept of national identity is necessarily complex, dynamic and ever-changing, and to try to pin it down is to reify it, to essentialise it and run the risk of the Disneyfication of national history, culture and traditions, and necessarily omitting voices and histories that do not match the official story.

Lastly, the idea of ‘testing’ integration is at best an approximation that even ‘natives’ struggle with⁹⁴, at worst a methodological nightmare (what is the threshold of ‘passing’ integration, what should be tested and how?). The problems with civic integration and language testing schemes thus range from them being potentially exclusionary where they aim to be inclusive, to shaping

⁹⁰ Shaggar S., Somerville W., p. 16.

⁹¹ Niessen J., Huddleston T., p. 125.

⁹² See for example: Orgad L. (2010), *Illiberal Liberalism. Cultural Restrictions on Migration and Access to Citizenship in Europe*, “The American Journal of Comparative Law”, Vol 58, 53.

⁹³ Carrera S. (2006), *A Comparison of Integration Programmes in the EU. Trends and Weaknesses*, Challenge Papers, No. 1/March 2006, an integrated project financed by the 6th EU Framework Programme. Available at: <http://www.ceps.eu/book/comparison-integration-programmes-eu-trends-and-weaknesses>

⁹⁴ There was much discussion about the British handbook and test when it came out in 2005 and again in 2013, prompting media sources like the BBC and the Guardian to write their own rival ‘Britishness tests’ that found that a majority of British respondents would fail. See for example: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/4099770.stm>

national histories and culture to suit a particular political party or dominant voices, to being absurd in their very essence.

However, a change in political parties, as well as a general turn towards right-wing and sometimes extreme elements in national politics across the board in Europe at the onset of the 21st century, may very quickly twist the content and purpose of the handbooks and tests to suit narrow political interests. The decisive turn towards a historical and patriotic, rather than a practical and integrative test in the UK is a case in point.⁹⁵ While the test may be passed as many times as an applicant needs, and the statistics reveal that only 2 per cent of rejected cases for naturalisation are because of failing the KoLL requirements, it is difficult to know how many and what kinds of people have been dissuaded from applying because of it.⁹⁶ The high fees are certainly a dissuasive factor, as well as the dwindling provision for English language courses as well as civics education.

THE LEGACY OF MULTICULTURALISM

Public attitudes towards people of other races have changed significantly in Britain since the adoption of Race Relations policies in 1965. Data from the British Social Attitudes Surveys reveals the erosion of hostility amongst indigenous White Brits towards visible minorities, especially amongst the younger generation, white-collar workers and those with higher education.⁹⁷ A report by British Future reveals that only 15% of British people are concerned by mix race relationships (as compared to 50% in 1980s and 40% in the 1990s).⁹⁸ A mixed Britain is becoming a normal part of life, where curry has become a national dish and inter-ethnic relations commonplace. However, segregation is on the rise, with the ghettoization of certain ethnic communities and, at worst, the breeding of extremist factions within them. While one in four Black Caribbean men are married to whites, only one in twenty Indian men can claim the same.⁹⁹ The statistics on economic output vary considerably as well: while the foreign-born population has consistently experienced lower employment rates for the last 15 years, there are huge variations in different immigrant groups.¹⁰⁰ Ethnicity

⁹⁵ Wray H. (April 2013), *Naturalisation Procedures for Immigrants: United Kingdom*. EUDO Citizenship Observatory, Florence: European University Institute, p. 2.

⁹⁶ Blinder S. (30 August 2013), p. 8.

⁹⁷ Shaggar S., Somerville W., p. 9.

⁹⁸ Ford R., Jolley R., Katwala S., and Mehta B. (2012), *The Melting Pot Generation. How Britain became more relaxed on race*, "British Future", London.

⁹⁹ Shaggar S., Somerville W., p. 8.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid.*

and education achievement were a source of concern in the 1980s, but reports show that children in the London area that have English as their second language continually outperform native English speakers.¹⁰¹

The discourse on multiculturalism and its failure are rampant in the UK, even though there has not been one official policy of multiculturalism in the UK, but a series of Race Relations Acts that have outlawed discrimination and promoted inter-ethnic relations. Events in the first decade of the 21st century, starting from the 2001 urban ‘disturbances’ in Oldham and other areas, the 2005 London bombings, and in large part, the influx of Eastern European migrants starting from 2004, have triggered a knee-jerk response and growing anti-immigrant attitudes in Britain, and the local scapegoat has become multiculturalism. While the case of Brexit opens up a Pandora’s box, it has been the culmination of many of the above factors, with immigration playing the key role.

At the same time, while race still ‘matters’, it has moved away from the limelight and made room for other inequalities to come to the forefront, the most recent amongst them being the inequalities faced by same-sex partners, with legislation acting to legalise same-sex marriage.¹⁰² Women’s rights, disability rights, and old-age rights, such as the right to stay in employment after the age of 65, have also topped the agenda in recent years. This holistic turn in legislation is a sure reflection of the multi-faceted issues that face modern British society, and perhaps that racial diversity has been relegated to a ‘normal’ part of British society and deeply ingrained in the national history.¹⁰³ Undoubtedly, however, immigrants and their descendants still face a host of barriers to integration in British society, and the negative press that immigration is seeing, supported in large part by government measures, may place those hard-earned rights and celebration of diversity again in a more precarious situation.

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¹⁰¹ Goodhart D. (2013), *The British Dream. Successes and Failures of Post-war Immigration*, London: Atlantic Books, p. 57.

¹⁰² <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/same-sex-marriage-becomes-law>

¹⁰³ See for example: Ford R., Jolley R., Katwala S., and Mehta B. (2012). *The Melting Pot Generation. How Britain became more relaxed on race. British Future*. London.

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