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New intimacies and un/marked (hetero)sexuality: intersections of ethnicity and sexuality in new multiculturalist Britain

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Opening Remarks:

1) change of title, work in progress, etc..

2) Just to give you an idea of the background, this paper is based on a new study I am conducting on representations of multicultural Britain in the English/British media (press and TV) especially since January 2000. The literature on multiculturalism is strikingly silent on gender (with the notable exception of Susan Okin's *Is Multiculturalism Bad For Women*, and the responses it triggered; Okin et al.: 1999). It is even more so on sexuality (with the exception of the Chicago Cultural Studies Group 1992) This, in my view, stems for the widespread assumption about 'ethnic groups' as deeply heterosexual, and indeed homophobic. I will return to this point later. My point at this stage is that one of the aims of this study is to try to fill this gap, i.e. to consider the sexual politics of multiculturalism, which I have only *begun* to think about. More specifically, I am interested in *the role of emotions and intimacies in the formation of citizenship and the nation*.

Much of the critical work on relationships and the familial model within gay/lesbian and queer studies, have sought to bring to the fore the 'role played by the "gay community" in fostering new modes of relationship where love, sex and friendship could (and can) be rearticulated away from the normative, dyadic, exclusive couple-form.' (Bell and Binnie 2000: 131) Some of

this work seeks to de-centre the family from its foundational and normative status, without necessarily dismissing it altogether (although there is considerable debate about the extent to which 'alternative families' are subversive). It argues for much a more critical awareness of the limitations of the family model – with its associated notions of coupledom, romantic love, generational responsibility, home, and so on – by way of correcting the hegemony of familial love as the cornerstone of the nation (paraphrase from Bell and Binnie 2000: 136). But my aim is slightly different here: rather than seeking new modes of relationship within the gay and lesbian community, I want to examine how the heterosexuality *itself* might be conceived as a site of different modes of *'being together'*, as a site offering different promises. This stems from a concern not to reduce heterosexuality to issues of categories of sexual identity alone, but to link it with other categories such as ethnicity and 'race'. What does it mean when interracial love, for example, is no longer proscribed but rather prescribed?

3) *A few definitions*:

(A) So I use 'sexuality', here, not only in terms of desires (who wants whom) or sex acts (who has sex with whom and how), but in a more Foucauldian fashion of thinking about a series of practices and injunctions that are part of the wider discursive formation called 'sexuality': these include bodily dispositions that perform the genders of the 'heterosexual matrix', but also love, affections, and other feelings (e.g. tied to notions of romantic love) that are part of the discursive system of sexuality.

(B) multicultural*ist*: I follow Stuart Hall (2000) in his distinction between 'multiculture' – or 'the multicultural' – and 'multiculturalism'. The 'multi-cultural' describes 'the unsettled meanings of cultural differences' (Hesse 2000: 2) raised 'by any society in which different cultural communities live together and attempt to build a common life while retaining something of their "original" identity. By contrast, "multiculturalism" . . . references the strategies and policies adopted to *govern* or *manage* the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multi-cultural societies throw up.' (Hall 2000: 209; my emphasis). In other words, multiculturalism concerns the 'attempts to fix their meaning in national imaginaries.' (Hesse 2000: 2). I use the adjective 'multiculturalist' to qualify people, or systems of thought, who follow the managerial precepts of multiculturalism.

4) My reflections are organised around two 'events': the nail bombs, the new face of Britain. Each event raises particular issues, and I try to connect them through the modes of intimacies they suggest. They are part of *official narratives of the nation as a harmonious space of cultural diversity*.

But first, allow me to say a few words on the social and political backdrop surrounding the two examples.

1. Context

Something is happening to British nationalism under Blair: the new moral order of New Labour is intimately linked to the changing position of the UK within the global economy, and especially to anxieties linked to Europeanization, globalization, *and* multiculturalism. With respect to the latter, the recent publication of the controversial report on *The Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain* – also known as 'The Parekh Report' – in October 2000 (Runnymede Trust 2000), has moved the debate onto the new grounds of reimagining Britain as a multicultural nation. Hence the report was an important landmark in reviving the identity crisis that has been tormenting many Britons and English*men* for a number of years now.

A striking feature of the response to the report is the expression of a widely accepted notion that Britain and Britishness are inherently multicultural. Indeed, whilst the extreme right (such as the BNP) or ultra-conservatives (such as Norman Tebbitt) continue to circulate stock-in-trade clichés about the destructive and destabilising effect of multiculturalism on the coherence and stability of 'the nation', these stereotypes are increasingly incongruous when set against the more widespread discourse about the *inevitability* of multiculture, and its beneficial effects on the nation, strengthened and enriched by its inherent cultural diversity. In the face of the inescapable 'multicultural question', as Stuart Hall (2000) puts it[i], advocates

of the new right as well as the new left, now recognise that Britain is a multicultural society, and that, as a nation it must take stock and contend with the presence of the 'other' within 'our' midst. The great majority of commentators of the PR celebrated 'our' multiculturality and agreed that 'We're all a little Brit of everything', as one headline put it (*The Daily Mirror*, 20.10.00). Among this chorus of new multiculturalists, Tory and Labour politicians are singing to the same tune, making the usual statements about how '*every colour* is a good colour' (in Runnymede Trust 2000: 40), or how we cannot QUOTE 'separate out the Celtic, the Roman, the Saxon, the Norman, the Huguenot, the Jewish, the Asian and the Caribbean and all the other nations that have come and settled here[.] Why should we want to? It is precisely this rich mix that has made all of us what we are today.' (Blair 2000).

In a similar vain, the former Tory leader William Hague stated that 'Britain is a nation of immigrants' (*The Daily Telegraph* 13.10.00), and the once hard line Conservative Michael Portillo appealed for tolerance at the Tory Party conference, in October 2000:

We are a party for people, not against people. We are for all Britons: black Britons, British Asians, white Britons. Britain is a country of rich diversity... We are for people whatever their sexual orientation. The Conservative party isn't merely a party of tolerance: it's a party willing to accord every one of our citizens respect. (*The Guardian* 5 October 2000)

So within the new multicultural Britain, 'minority cultures' are not only let in, but redefined as integral to the nation itself. As Sara Ahmed suggests, 'the "we" of the nation is affirmed through the difference of the "stranger cultures" rather than against it' (Ahmed 2000: 95; see also Hage 1998). So the question then is: *how* are 'others' let in? What are the terms of their inclusion? What's more, who are the multicultural subjects? In the two examples that follow, I examine the kinds of connections, and disconnections that are produced within the imagined multiculturalist nation, and how emotions affect/effect the formation of different multicultural subjects/citizens.

2. Nail bombs [this is perhaps the less develop one]

In April 1999, three nail bombs exploded in three different areas of London: Brixton, south London, on April 17; the residents of this area are predominantly African and Caribbean; Brick Lane (Shoreditch), east London, on April 24, in the heart of a Bangladeshi community; and Soho, central London, on April 30, in a gay pub. The attacks were clearly racist and homophobic. In total, 3 people were killed (all in Soho) and over 110 were injured. A 22 year-old man, David Copeland, who had connections with the right-wing British National Party, was convicted for the attacks.

Tony Blair gave a speech at an international convention of Sikhs on May 2, in aftermath of the 3 attacks. This is an extract from the Guardian's report:

ACETATE 2

> *Tony Blair yesterday delivered a powerful condemnation of the three London nail bombs, declaring that any attack on a single community was an attack on Britain as a whole . . . 'When <u>one</u> section of our community is under attack, <u>we defend them</u> in the name of all the community. When bombs attack the black and Asian community in Britain, they attack the <u>whole of Britain</u>. When the gay community is attacked and innocent people are murdered, all the <u>good</u> people of Britain, whatever their race, their lifestyle, their class, unite in revulsion and determination to bring the <u>evil</u> people to justice.' Patriotism in Britain no longer excluded people because of their colour, religion or ethnic background, he said, but took pride in a diversity which 'enriches and unites' the country*.
>
> *'The <u>true outcasts</u> today, the true minorities, those truly excluded are not the different races and religions of Britain but the racists, the bombers, the violent criminals who hate that vision of Britain and try to destroy it,' he added. (<u>The Guardian</u> 03.05.99; my emphasis)*

There are 4 points I'd like to make about this.

The first, perhaps most obvious point, is that an attack on *ethnic* community *is* attack on nation. Following from Ahmed (2001; paper on pain), we can consider that Blair is

appropriating the pain, fear, rage of the Asian population as 'ours'. 'Our' acknowledgment of *their* trauma and anger and fear, slides easily into the experience of the nation, into 'our' identity as a nation. The national body takes the place of individual bodies or the local 'smaller' collective bodies.

Yet at the same time, the movement from 'one [as in any] section of our community' to 'the black and Asian community' *aligns the victims of hate crime to specific communities, indeed to specific bodies, which 'we' will defend*. The work of emotions, here, is to *separate ethnic 'others' into bodies that must be defended in the name of diversity*. They constitute '*our'* diversity, which is what we are proud of which is what we will defend. In the name of pride, of outrage, of revulsion, we are defending 'them', the visible ethnic, the visible proof of our inclusive society.

The *second* point is about the position of gays and lesbians in this multicultural landscape. In contrast to attacks on blacks and Asians, an attack on the gay community is not an attack on the nation. It is, rather, an attack on *tolerance*, which is naturalised as an inherent virtue of Britishness. The rhetorical move here is significant: it is implying that *good* people unite in revulsion. This is an attack on *that which makes* good Britons; and the *good* citizens are those who are tolerant, open-minded people, outraged by such evil.

According to the Guardian report, this was the only reference to the gay community. In the rest of his speech, Blair seemingly reiterated the principles of multiculturalist thought, declaring 'they [the racists] shall not win. The great decent majority of British people will not let them. We will defeat them and then *we can build the tolerant, multiracial Britain the vast majority of us want to see.*' People should have '[t]he right to live in freedom from fear, whatever your race or religion', he said. (*The Guardian* 03.05.99) Sexuality is evacuated from the multiculturalist politics of pride, where the diversity that counts, is ethnic diversity. There is no room for class (Haylett 2001) or sexuality in Britain's multiculturalist project. [[With the exception perhaps of Portillo's new Tory party, which is, as cited earlier, 'for all Britons: black Britons, British Asians, white Britons. Britain is a country of rich diversity... We are for people whatever their sexual orientation.' (*The Guardian* 05.10.00). A comment that brought him scorn from ultra-conservative Lord Tebbitt, who contemptuously called his colleague 'touchy-feely pink Portillo' (The Times 24.11.00)]] The ethnic communities are at once singled out as different *and* 'with us'/'like us' within the multiculturalist national space. In contrast, lesbians and gay men '"*are granted the right to be tolerated*", as Diane Richardson argues, as long as they stay within the boundaries of that tolerance, whose borders are maintained through a heterosexist public/private divide.' (in Bell and Binnie 2000: 26). Hence, the limits of sexual citizenship are 'set by the coupling of tolerance with assimilation' (Bell and Binnie 2000: 25-26).

Ethnics are also assimilated, you might say, but it seems to me that the assimilation of gays and lesbians does not operate in the same way as that of the ethnic minorities. The former are not legitimate national subjects, that is, not called upon to speak of – that is, to represent – the pride in national diversity. In other words, the politics of recognition work differently here. Blair *is* recognising gays (and lesbians), however fleetingly, but he is simultaneously constructing them as 'other' by virtue of positioning 'them' *in relation to the one who has the right to be 'in place' and to be revolted*. The recognition of Blacks and Asians, for its part, constitutes them as *both* 'lawful subject[s], the one[s] who ha[ve] the right to dwell, *and* . . . stranger[s] at the very same time.' (Ahmed 2000: 23-24; my emphasis) [[I examine elsewhere the terms in which the ethnic subjects are included within the multiculturalist public sphere, and reveal how the multicultural 'we' of the nation still hails different bodies differently. I could return to that in the discussion.]]

The evacuation of lesbians and gay men from the multiculturalist landscape, in my view, stems from the widespread tendency to separate ethnic and gay spaces and lives, a separation that is sustained, as Dana Takagi writes, "with our folk knowledge about the family-centeredness and supra-homophobic beliefs of ethnic communities." (1996: 247) In the context of the nail bombs, the ethnic spaces were the streets of Brixton and Brick Lane, filled with shoppers on a Saturday morning. These are iconic public spaces within the 21st century multiculturalist British landscape; places where multicultural tourists regularly venture to gaze and taste delectably at the exotic and creative foods of the migrants (see Marr 2000).

It's no accident that Blair made this declaration while addressing an international convention of Sikhs. Stuart Hall has pointed out how, within the new social landscape of multicultural Britain, ethnic minorities, *especially* South Asians, 'are simultaneously invoked as representing that "*sense of community*" that liberal society is supposed to have lost, and as the most advanced signifiers of the urban postmodern metropolitan experience!' (2000: 220) What is striking, in my view, is that the same 'sense of community' that 'ethnic communities' (especially South Asians) were formerly accused of because it was perceived as a refusal to assimilate, that same 'sense of community' is now celebrated as a model for strong yet fluid communities that allow for integration without undermining the sense of social responsibility that community already fosters. To put it differently, the same South Asian culture once ossified into unassimilable 'traditions' – which were marked in terms of family life (see Lawrence 1982a, b) – is now seen as fluid, changing and leading the nation into the 21st century, whilst *retaining* the core values of community and family. (Although forced marriage is deemed unacceptable and the subject of a home office commission of regulation). [[I think that the romanticisation of Asian culture as a model of community/family is a legacy of the wider conception of ethnic minorities as staunchly traditionalist when it comes to family values. It is on the grounds of such unspoken assumptions that homosexuality is evacuated from any debate on British multiculturalism.]]

The *third point* is about the effect of 'hate' and 'pride' on the separation of bodies. On the one hand, Blair is evacuating history by enclosing 'hate' and 'evil' into singular, although amorphous, bodies. The shameful subject, the bad citizens, the racists and homophobes are held solely accountable for hate crimes. *'The true outcasts today'*, Blair said, 'the *true* minorities, those *truly excluded* are not the different races and religions of Britain but the racists, the bombers, the violent criminals who hate that vision of Britain and try to destroy it'. By searching for subjects to prosecute, subjects who might be held accountable for the legacies of a racist, heterosexist and homophobic history, by locating hate in these bodies, the problem of a fundamentally unprosecutable history is temporarily resolved and removed from the bodies of the good citizens. But more than that, also enclosed are the figures who cause this hate: the *different* races, religions (and sexualities), those who constitute that 'vision of Britain', are the causes of hate.

On the other hand, this speech is part of what I view as a wider politics of pride that was particularly resonant in the debates surrounding the Parekh Report in October 2000. This politics of pride seeks precisely to *eradicate* shame: pride in 'our' history, in 'our' country, in 'our' diversity, is repeatedly rehearsed by way of *sanitising Britishness under a veneer of tolerance*, to paraphrase Elspeth Probyn (2000: 128).

Probyn suggests that the repelling of shame and affirmation of pride

reproduces an antagonism between 'us', the shamed, and 'them', the guilty. . . Such tactics . . . produce cultures where shame is absent, but where disgust, blame, resentment seethe under the surface of a sanitised veneer of acceptance. (Probyn 2000: 128)

[[Probyn is interested in the distinction between the inside/outside of one's body; hence she is thinking about shame from the point of view of those that are ashamed. Her main aim is to expand 'the body' and explore the multiple bodies it can encompass. In contrast, and following from Ahmed, I would argue that the work of emotions such as shame, is to separate 'others' and 'us' into bodies (that feel). Rather than emotions as determining our reactions to changing categories, the circulation of emotions takes place 'between bodies, and it is this circulation which affects/effects the very distinction between inside and outside in the first place.' (Ahmed on hate: 6). In short, Probyn's centring on the body falls short of interrogating 'categories' – and their embodiments – altogether. I am rather interested in the distinction between bodies, from the point of view of those that are the shame, or pride, of the country.]]

So the repelling of shame, here, is not so much about self-affirmation whereby the once shamed body is now declaring its self-pride (such as the gay pride movements; see Probyn 2000: chapter 6). The resentment here is against 'them' who are ashamed of 'us'-the-nation, or against 'them' who shame 'us'-the-nation. The antagonism operates through the deligitimisation of the subjects of shame – those who are 'our' shame – against the repeated

declarations and displays of the subjects of pride – the 'proud' subjects *and* the subjects of 'our' collective pride in 'our' inclusive multiculturality (the blacks and Asians).

The underlying assumption, and this is *my final point*, is that the national community is a moral community, a community that cares. One which is modelled on the family. In contemporary Britain, as you are probably aware of, the definition and politics of nation and community are intimately linked to definition (and politics) of the family. This is undoubtedly the basis of the present Labour government's version of communitarianism. For Blair, the 'family' is the corner stone of the community and the nation, and the three are placed in a continuum. In 1996, Tony Blair wrote: ACETATE 1

> *"It is in the family that we first learn to negotiate the boundaries of acceptable conduct and to recognise that we owe responsibilities to others as well as to ourselves. We then build out from that family base to the community, and beyond it to society as a whole. The values of a decent society are in many ways the values of the family unit, which is why helping to re-establish good family and community life should be a central objective of government policy." (Blair 1996, p. 247, in Bell and Binnie 2000: 111; my emphasis)*

[[What interests me here is not so much to the naturalisation of heterosexuality and gender roles in discourses of the family as the necessary site for the elevation of the nation. Rather, I am interested the models of intimacy fostered by discourses of the family and, by extension, home. Here, ideas of 'acceptable conduct', 'decent society', 'good family' all circumscribe what Blair understands as modes of being together that will foster a good society. This lies at the basis of a conception of the national community as a moral community; that is, not only a community that cares (I return to this later), but one where the good citizen is the responsible citizen, whose actions will reverberate onto the nation as a whole. Hence the responsible citizen is also a reflexive one. This could lead us into a discussion the Labour government's neo-liberal agenda based on the construction of the voluntaristic, individual, and individuated self.]]

The family is the primary ground of citizenship, it where 'we first learn to negotiate the boundaries of *acceptable conduct'*, and the 'values of a decent society are the values of the family unit'. The family is conceived as necessarily harmonious, conflict-free, hubs of care and decency (let's forget that 80% of children murders occur in the home). The repelling of shame, of *any* conflict, strikes me as a desire to maintain the fantasy of family/community as sites of consensual, happy modes of 'being together', spaces of closeness, intimacy and bonding. As such, the family offers the promise (or the threat) of the achievement of a fully multicultural nation.

3. The new face of Britain

ACETATE 3

'Meet the population of Britain' (*The Guardian* 30.03.01), '[t]he face of Britain' (*Daily* Mail, 30.03.01). This photograph was produced by photographer Chris Dorley-Brown from the photographic portraits of 1 900 residents of Haverhill, Suffolk, male and female, aged six months to eighty years old, *allegedly* from fifty different ethnic groups.[ii] The 1 900 photographs were digitally merged to create what has been perceived as the 'average 21st century Briton' ('The Editor', *The Guardian* 6.04.01: 3). 'Although it is taken from a snapshot of people in the town of Haverhill', said Dorley-Brown, 'it could really represent the face of the *average* person in Britain' (quoted in *Daily Mail* 30.03.01; my emphasis). The question that interests me is: what does making this composite photograph of 1 900 residents of a small town in Suffolk into a national fantasy, tell us about the ways in which national identity is imagined?[iii]

I discuss this image in more detail elsewhere. But I want to consider more closely the sexual politics of national reproduction that support this national fantasy. Given it's alleged mix of people from fifty different ethnic groups, Dorley-Brown's morphing could be read as refuting roots and essences and as seeking to establish connections between human beings outside of a racial economy of reproduction. When visiting the website that traces the image's genealogy, one is hard pressed to 'recognise' fifty different ethnic groupings from the

photographs of the generations of morphs that precede this one. In this respect, Dorley-Brown's genealogy resists any form of phenotypic indexation.[iv] Dorley-Brown does not engage in disaggregating, categorizing or managing the circulation of the contemporary 'ethnic'. On the contrary, the impetus, it seems, is not so much to defend the integrity of cultural difference, but, rather, to preserve the sanctity of the universal. Indeed, the face was hailed for its 'beautifully proportioned features' (*Daily Mail* 30.03.01; also *The Times* 30.03.01) which, for its creator, are a testimony to his 'belief in the attractiveness of the human race' (Dorley-Brown cited in *The Guardian* and *The Times* 30.03.01). To be sure, this universal is deeply wedded to the power of an unmarked whiteness.

But if the morph results from the connection of human beings that have no necessary connection within a racial economy of difference, there remains, however, a *necessary* connection that operates through sexuality. A distinctive feature of the 'face of Britain' is how it was said to be 'spooky, gender-free' (*The Guardian* 30.03.01), its gender undecidable. Yet in the website that tells the story of the image's creation, while the alleged ethnic diversity at the origin of the face of Britain is unmarked, the sexual differentiation is clearly demarcated. Visitors to the website can navigate between the different 'generations' [sic] of morphings, leading to the 'final morphs' which are organised in a recognisable genealogical arborescent structure. (ACETATE 4) Moving from top to bottom, males and females are gradually coupled to produce the 'parents' of the final morph. The genealogy of the morph reveals that it has been bred through virtual heterosexual reproductive acts.

The connections of (hetero)sexual love are a key site, in today's Britain, where both the limits and potential of multiculturality are embattled. Indeed, heterosexual love and marriage are emblems of both the threatening and emancipating pathways towards the achievement of a fully multicultural nation. One the one hand, the BNP's recent appeal to ethnic minorities in their magazine *Identity* (July 2001), clearly frames the new relationship as 'Friends not family, cooperation not membership' (cited in Back 2001; emphasis original), reaffirming the rigidity of ethnic and racial boundaries by clearly tracing the blood lines of acceptable affiliation. On the other hand, centre-left thinkers resort to marriage as the ultimate symbol of achieved multiculturalism. In October 2000, Lady Gavron, a member of the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain, reportedly declared: 'It would have been great if Prince Charles had been told to marry someone black. Imagine what message that would have sent out' (cited in *The Telegraph* 17.10.00). In a perhaps less extravagant example, Andrew Marr, in his book *The Day Britain Died* (2000), uses the rate of intermarriage as the *best* indicator of the mingling of 'today's new British . . . with the old British' (2000: 155; my emphasis).

In a similar vein, according to a recent article in *The Observer*, mixed race children are emblems of new mixed Britain. Meet Genevieve, whose mother is Italian and father, West Indian. Genevieve (ACETATE 5)

> *Has the enviable quality of looking as though she would be at home anywhere in the world. [like the face of Britain, she is unlocatable] And her look is one that will become increasingly familiar, and – in the worlds of fashion and beauty – increasingly sought after. … Genevieve is the new English rose. … At the turn of the twenty-first century … England's rose has become more of a bronzed, burnished, sunflower, equally at home in the Arabian Gulf, the Caribbean or the South China Sea. She is a hybrid, as likely to be part-Indian, Jamaican, Greek, Ethiopian, Japanese or Chinese as the old-fashioned blend of English and Irish. (Tamsin Blanchard 'Model of a modern Briton', The Observer 25.11.01, p. 10 in the Race in Britain supplement)*

Of course, the recognition of 'mixed race' children can be read as a rebuke to BNP's order not to mix. Still, the genealogy of the 'average Briton' comforts the nationalist ideology of the family as the corner stone of society. It returns us to a model of human bonding through kinship and 'the family', to the 'ties of blood', to, as Lauren Berlant (1997: 209) states

> *heterosocial marriage as a model of assimilation . . . where sexual . . . "difference" is obscured through an ideology/ethics of consensual "melding" that involves channelling one's world-making desires and energy into a family institution through which the future of one's personhood is supposed to unfold effortlessly.*

If mixed race children are *destabilising* because they reveal the fluidity of *visible* racial bodily difference, they are also reassuring because their very existence *re-stabilises* anxieties about the fluidity and *invisibility* – hence unintelligibility – of sexual difference. To put it simply, the potential anxieties over the queerness of the new face of Britain – either its gender queerness or its racial queerness – are deflected through her genealogy steeped in heterosexuality, and in the reassertion of heteronormativity as a condition to social membership.

Hence the bond to the nation gets figured as heterosexual and the product of this bond, the *legitimate* offspring of this bond, is the promise of the future. 'Enter Genevieve', concludes Tamsin Blanchard in the Observer article, 'the new girl next door. *The world is yours*.'

The role of generations is worth noting here. Generations are typically used in immigration and ethnic studies to periodize the settlement and adaptation of a population within the 'country of adoption'. Changes in the cultural life of migrant communities abroad are typically expressed in terms of generations: you are probably familiar with the canonical three-generational version of assimilation or integration. Indeed, the process of estrangement from the 'original culture' is portrayed by the succession of generations of emigrants and their descendants. Generations, in this discourse, punctuate the gradual degeneration of an imagined 'original' culture. Likewise, it is in the name of the preservation of this original culture that emigrant leaders seek to formalize cultural links between 'younger generations' and the past, for example by providing language and culture classes.

Werner Sollors suggests that generations are also used as a metaphor that works 'as a community-building device' (Sollors 1986: 223). That is to say that generations provide a particular way of speaking of changes within a collectivity, in this case a national collectivity as a whole. Generations become emblems of common concerns. Put differently, rather than being a fragmentation device, generational differences serve to create and unify the national community. The new English Rose moves beyond the problematic of generations caught between two cultures. Rather, she embodies the creative potential of 'culture's in between' (Bhabha 1993), that contact zone where two cultures/races meet, each of which, however, is conceived, in the above account, as an enclosed and inalterable entity.

This is a celebration of consensual melding and of consensual *melting* of difference. This chic notion of hybridity is premised upon a pleasure seeking idea of cross-cultural encounter that hides the power relations constitutive of the very conditions surrounding the presence of different ethnic groups. As Sara Ahmed suggests, this narrative involves 'modes of encounter that suggest the proximity of [blacks and whites] in different spaces within a globalized economy of difference. *But being "in it" clearly does not mean we are "in it" in the same way*.' (Ahmed 2000: 171; emphasis added).

The model of modern Britain is female, the offspring of heterosexual love, and part white. Indeed, new hybridised Britain always has a white element. Genevieve's mother is presumably white. Genevieve is part Indian, Jamaican, Greek, Chinese, etc. In the 'mixed' category of the census question on ethnic identity, English is mixed with Jamaican, Caribbean, Asian, and so on. Other mixings are all bundled under the indeterminate 'Other-other' category. One image that comes to mind is that of 'colours that run'. Within the maelstrom of new English hybridity that many long for, whiteness remains 'white', it is a colour that does not run. The celebration of miscegenation is one which strengthens whiteness and dilutes the darker side of Britishness. Mightn't the celebration of interracial love between whites and 'others' be another way of deflecting the 'queer' consequences of their 'queer' ways? Might'n the mixing of white with others be celebrated as a way to render 'others' more 'like use', to create them in our own image? Heterosexual love becomes a central device in assimilation in the full sense of the word: the disappearance of impurities and rendering others more and more familiar.

'[I]f whites must be racialized in the new national order [as they are] racial identity must be turned into a national family value. … [T]he national archive … is here organized around a future race of cyborgs, or mixed-race but still white-enough children.' (Berlant 1997: 207)

Concluding remarks:

In this paper, I have tried to unpack the sexual politics of multiculturalism, and how sexuality intersects with ethnicity. More specifically, I am interested *in the role of emotions and intimacies in the formation of citizenship and the nation*. To put it another, I am trying to decipher the connections and dis\connections within diversity, and how these connections are figured differently, and simultaneously produce different subjects.

I discuss what happens to the definition of 'national culture' when 'minority cultures' are not only let in, but redefined as *integral* to the nation itself? I also seek to unpack the kinds of subjects of inhabitance produced in this new national landscape. I am partly informed by Lauren Berlant's, and others', argument about the privatisation of citizenship and about 'the expulsion of embodied public spheres from the national future/present involves' a process she describes 'as an orchestrated politics of nostalgia and sentimentality' (Berlant 1997: 209) However, I find that there remains an uninterrogated assumption that *any* body, insofar as they 'enter into the bargain of intelligibility' (Berlant 2001: 49-50) [such as heteronormativy], has unproblematic access to citizenship and legal/legitimate personhood. This fails to account for the ascription of identities, and indeed of bodies, to some citizens rather than others. What happens, then, when 'decency', 'pride', and other forms of patriotic love or passionate citizenship, is not separated from the body, but rather connected to particular bodies? One of the things I am trying to argue is that in the *multiculturalist* public sphere, expressions of political love, or bonds to the nation, are more legitimate as they become more attached to some bodies and detached from others.

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[i] I follow Stuart Hall in his distinction between 'multiculture' – or 'the multicultural' – and 'multiculturalism', where the 'multi-cultural is used adjectivally. It describes the social characteristics and problems of governance posed by any society in which different cultural communities live together and attempt to build a common life while retaining something of their "original" identity. By contrast, "multiculturalism" is substantive. It references the strategies and policies adopted to govern or manage the problems of diversity and multiplicity which multi-cultural societies throw up.' (Hall 2000: 209). In other words, 'The multicultural is a signifier of the unsettled meanings of cultural differences in relation to multiculturalism as the signified of attempts to fix their meaning in national imaginaries.' (Hesse 2000: 2). I also use the adjective 'multiculturalist' to qualify people, or systems of thought, who follow the managerial precepts of multiculturalism.

[ii] This is a claim made by the press, not by Dorley-Brown or representatives from Haverhill. Nick Keeble, from Haverhill Town Council, says that Haverhill's population includes only 2 to 2.5 percent of ethnic minorities (personal conversation, November 2001).

[iii] Lauren Berlant (1997) and Donna Haraway (1997) have both written about a similar national figure produced by *Time*, in 1993. The 'New Face of America' was also the result of morphing technology, and was released in a similar context of assessing a new future in relation to a multicultural present. The issue at stake in the imagining of both figures as national faces was explicitely stated in the US version, while it is implicit, I suggest, in the UK one. That is: 'the necessary adaptation all white Americans [and Britons] must make to the new multicultural citizenship norm' (Berlant 1997: 200). Berlant's and Haraway's analyses have provided a model for my reading of 'the face of Britain'.

[iv] This contrasts clearly from the 'face of America' (see note 8), which is explicitly described on the Time front cover as the creation 'by computer of a mix of several races' (in Berlant 1997: 200). Inside the magazine, a series of photographs are organised into a seven-by-seven square according to ethnic types: 'Middle Eastern', 'Italian', 'African', 'Vietnamese', 'Anglo-Saxon', 'Chinese', 'Hispanic'. In a manner akin to multiplication tables, with female faces in the horizontal axis, and male face in the vertical one, the reader can 'morph' the images together to produce different offsprings. (in Berlant 1997: 204).

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