

The emergence of the Bristol School of Multiculturalism

Ethnicities

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Abstract

Geoffrey Brahm Levey plausibly describes how a group of scholars who he calls the ‘Bristol School of Multiculturalism’ (BSM) differ from scholars who are often called Liberal Multiculturalists (LMs). We expand Levey’s analysis by showing what in the history of the BSM’s thought made the liberalism and the multiculturalism of LMs unconvincing for BSM scholars. Hence, we show how certain thinkers influenced BSM scholars in ways that made them unwilling to offer liberal theories and how BSM scholars began their work with multiculturalist ideas that differ from the multiculturalist ideas of LMs.

Keywords

Multiculturalism, Bristol School, Liberal Multiculturalism, National Identity

‘Multiculturalist’ scholars often show how to reduce the exclusion and discrimination that cultural minorities suffer. They also often emphasise the liberal nature of their thought and thus are often called ‘liberal multiculturalists’ (LMs) (Carens, 2000; Kymlicka, 1995; Patten, 2014).¹ Yet Geoffrey Levey identifies a different group of multiculturalist scholars who share ideas and collaborate together, and which, he argues, we, the authors of this article, belong to. Levey calls these multiculturalists the ‘Bristol School of Multiculturalism’ (BSM). While he describes how

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BSM scholars differ from LMs, we examine in this article why BSM scholars became unwilling to articulate 'dominant' LM views (Crowder, 2013: 39). We do so by showing what in the history of the BSM's thought made the liberalism and multiculturalism of LMs unconvincing for BSM scholars. Thus, we show how certain thinkers influenced BSM scholars in ways that made them unwilling to offer liberal theories; and how BSM scholars began their work with multiculturalist ideas that differ from the multiculturalist ideas of LMs.

We thus accept Levey's claim that we are part of a distinct school of multicultural thought, as he uses ample textual evidence to show a consensus among BSM scholars that differs from the consensus that exists among LMs. Yet Levey says little about why BSM scholars became unwilling to become LMs and it is important to do so for at least two reasons. First, understanding why BSM scholars became unwilling to accept 'dominant' LM scholarly views helps us to understand the differences between multiculturalists that Levey identifies. Second, when we understand more about why BSM scholars became unwilling to articulate LM approaches, it also becomes easier to discern whether it was error or insight that prevented BSM scholars from discussing multiculturalism as LMs have done. But note the following.

Others specify whether they exhibit error or insight when discussing a school of thought of which they are a part (Pocock, 1971, 2006). But we will not do so as we want to avoid offering a self-serving account of why BSM scholars are right. Hence, while we examine the textual evidence of why BSM scholars were unconvinced by the liberal and multiculturalist nature of LMs we say nothing about whether BSM scholars were right or wrong.

Like Levey, the BSM scholars who we focus on are ourselves, Bhikhu Parekh and Nasar Meer. Kymlicka is the LM whom we refer to most, as other LMs often explicitly state that his way of thinking about multiculturalism guides them, even when they disagree with it (Carens, 2000: 73; Patten, 2014: 5). As the influences on BSM scholars and their multiculturalist ideas differ so markedly from the influences and thinking of LMs, a detailed exegesis of LM work is not necessary to show why BSM scholars became unwilling to be LMs.

We proceed in three stages. First, we show how certain thinkers influenced BSM scholars in ways that provided them with reasons to not offer liberal theories. Second, we show how BSM scholars began their work with multiculturalist ideas that differed from the multiculturalist ideas of LMs. Third, we conclude.

Intellectual influences on BSM scholars

Unlike LMs (Carens, 2000: 6, 87; Kymlicka, 1995: 75; Patten, 2014: 6), BSM scholars do not say that they offer a liberal theory of multiculturalism. Some might say that this is because BSM scholars explicitly criticise the ideas of certain liberal thinkers (Modood, 2007: 27; Parekh, 2000a: 14). However, this explains only why BSM scholars reject the ideas of *particular* liberals, not why they are unwilling to offer *any* explicitly liberal theory. This unwillingness can be

explained when we examine how Michael Oakeshott and other thinkers influenced the two most sophisticated BSM accounts of multiculturalism: Parekh's and Modood's. Consider first how Oakeshott's work on the nature of philosophy influenced Parekh in ways that made him unwilling to articulate a liberal theory of multiculturalism.

Parekh (1982a: 231; 1991: 102) was taught by Oakeshott, and explicitly states that Oakeshott's *Experience and its Modes* (EM) influenced him. To understand how the influence of EM discouraged Parekh from offering a liberal theory, note what is argued in EM.

In EM, Oakeshott distinguishes philosophy from other scholarly inquiries, such as history or science, by noting that all such scholarly inquiries are 'worlds of ideas' that remain 'abstract' until we examine and relate the presuppositions on which they rest. Hence, we might, for example, examine how history presupposes conceptions of 'time' and 'change', or how science presupposes conceptions of 'regularity' and 'prediction'. Philosophy does just this, as it removes such abstraction by examining and relating *all* such presuppositions so as to present 'a unity of . . . *irreducible*' ideas (Oakeshott, 1933: 348 emphasis added). Of course, presuppositions that are examined and related are no longer presupposed, thus philosophy is ideally a presuppositionless inquiry. And 'political doctrines' such as 'liberalism' are not philosophy if they are too 'dependent' on unexamined presuppositions about, for example, what morality, principles, good, right and so on *are* (Oakeshott, 1933: 335; 1938: xi).

As we saw, EM influenced Parekh (2000a: 13, 44, 84–86, 339), who thus repeatedly claims that liberal theorists offer 'political', but not philosophical, 'doctrines', and he shows how they ignore their presuppositions. Such liberals are thus said to start, as Levey (2019a: 204) also claims, by stating and defining their liberal beliefs in, for example, individual freedom, and then they show what follows from these beliefs (Parekh, 2000b: 251). But such beliefs in individual freedom presuppose ideas about when, why and how to individuate people so as to think of them as individuals as we might want to think of them as, for example, dependent children or as parents instead. Parekh thought that philosophers examine, relate and thus defend such fundamental presuppositions on their way to 'arriving at' defensible versions of their political beliefs; and should not simply start with such liberal beliefs.

Liberals who ignore this encounter a problem: their liberal beliefs cannot be thought true until their presuppositions are examined, related and thus defended. Parekh could, of course, have examined and related the presuppositions of such liberal beliefs and then shown what follows from them for cultural groups. This would have resulted in a liberal theory that is philosophical in EM's sense, but a very different thinker discouraged this course of action.

Parekh (1982a: 15; 1982b: 187; 1986: 15; 2000b: 251) states that while writing extensively about Marx (1973: 265) he learned about where a thinker's presuppositions come from. Hence, Parekh notes that a thinker 'is . . . a member of a specific group, within a specific society', and the ideas of this specific group are 'taken for

granted' and thus presupposed. This led Parekh (2000a: 10, 14) to argue that liberal political theorists presuppose a 'way of life' in which their 'concepts, assumptions and answers' are plausible; but this way of life is one of many in a multicultural society. Thus, when using the concepts, assumptions and answers of one way of life, such theorists display a 'bias' towards that way of life; and their arguments may not 'carry conviction' with those in a multicultural society who have other ways of life.

Hence, if Parekh examined and related the presuppositions of liberal beliefs and showed what follows for cultural groups he would not escape this cultural bias. He would defend it. Instead, Parekh (2000a: 339) examines, relates and defends the presuppositions of intercultural dialogue among culturally diverse citizens as such dialogue can reveal the cultural specificity of their assumptions and conceptions. Such dialogue also helps to resolve disputes among citizens (Uberoi, 2015). Again, the idea of such dialogue came from a thinker whom Parekh (1990: 39) wrote books about: Gandhi. Parekh thus built his reputation writing about many thinkers, some of whom discouraged him from offering a liberal theory, while others showed him how to proceed in ways that differ from liberal theorists.

Similarly, Modood's (1984) doctorate focused at length on EM, but it was Oakeshott's later conception of ideology in *Rationalism in Politics* (RP) that gave him a reason to avoid a liberal theory. To understand how this happened, we need to examine certain statements in RP.

Oakeshott (1993a: 26; 1993b: 51, 53, 55) states that an ideology is 'a system of ideas abstracted from the manner in which people have been accustomed to go about the business of attending to their collective affairs', and is used to guide political practice. For example, Locke's *Second Treatise of Government* is said by Oakeshott to be 'a brief conspectus of the manner in which Englishmen were accustomed to go about the business of attending to their arrangements', and was read in America and France as a text to 'put into practice'. Yet, Oakeshott states that it is political behaviour in a polity that is 'potent', not ideology which merely describes it. What can and does guide political life is the 'pursuit of intimations'. By this, Oakeshott meant that traditions of political behaviour emerge in a polity to regulate it. These traditions indicate political changes thus, for example, traditions of treating citizens equally indicated to many in Britain in the 1960s why discrimination should be illegal.

Modood (2007: 129) explicitly uses Oakeshott's conception of ideology when claiming that ideologies 'are not a good basis for the diagnosis of problems and strategies for reform because they are too abstract and disconnected from a specific society' and 'its institutions'. Modood (1996: 178) also claims that LMs such as Kymlicka, despite 'their general language', have conceptions, concerns and examples that emerge and make sense in places such as Canada but are of limited use in other contexts such as Britain. Generalising in a manner that obscures contextual roots is exactly what Oakeshott in RP called ideology and Modood, following Oakeshott, wanted to offer an approach that is explicitly based on Britain and that is primarily for Britain.

Modood's (1996: 178) time at the Commission for Racial Equality and working on social science projects made him want to be more 'concrete' than LMs by focusing in detail on the policies and norms that comprise the British approach to multiculturalism in four ways. First, he examined whether such practices in Britain address the concerns of cultural minorities and whether they desired them. Second, he examined whether such practices are justifiable (Modood, 1988). Third, he examined what these practices 'intimate' about how they can be expanded to address the religious groups that they initially excluded (Modood, 1994). Fourth, he examined the conceptions of secularism, integration and citizenship that such practices are inspired by, and he considered whether these conceptions are defensible (Modood, 2007).

Modood (2007: 9) is not being ideological in the sense described in RP, as he is not simply abstracting a system of ideas from Britain. Instead he is developing knowledge, in four ways, of the British tradition of multiculturalism that has evolved since the race relations legislation of the 1960s. In doing so, he has come to understand the worth of this tradition and shows why it should expand to address the concerns and desires of religious minorities. Modood is thus also engaged in 'political activity', which Oakeshott (1993b: 57) conceives as a 'sympathy' for a political tradition of behaviour. In recognition of this, Modood (2007: 7) states that he offers neither philosophy nor ideology, but 'a political perspective' in which he sees why the British tradition of multiculturalism should be defended from the criticism that it often receives and why it is still 'fit for the twenty first century'.

Similarly, Parekh (2000a: 337) offers a 'perspective' from which he sees why human beings are influenced by internally plural cultures and why they benefit from intercultural dialogue. As Parekh defends at length what he presupposes (Uberoi, 2015), his perspective on multiculturalism attempts to be philosophical in the sense that is discussed in EM. Hence, whereas RP provided Modood with reasons to avoid a liberal multiculturalism such as Kymlicka's and to offer a political perspective, EM gave Parekh reasons to avoid a liberal theory and to offer, instead, what he conceived as a philosophical perspective of multiculturalism.

In time, Uberoi (2015) came to endorse the philosophical perspective of multiculturalism that Parekh articulated and to learn much from Modood's political perspective. And Meer (2010: 2, 46) came to learn much from Parekh's philosophical perspective and to endorse Modood's political perspective of a 'British tradition of multiculturalism'. Oakeshott thus indirectly influenced both Uberoi and Meer, as the philosophical and political perspectives of Parekh and Modood influenced them.

Yet, a perspective is literally a point of view, a place from which we see something. So far, little has been said about what BSM scholars saw about multiculturalism and from where. In the next section, we identify several ideas that were initially used by BSM scholars in their work on multiculturalism. Each idea differs from those of LMs in the following ways.

How BSM scholars approached the topic of multiculturalism

The first idea is political urgency. All BSM scholars began their work by contributing to politically urgent debates about, for example, Enoch Powell (Parekh, 1974b: 223), the Rushdie Affair (Modood, 1993: 69), 9/11 and the 2001 riots in Oldham, Burnley and Bradford (Meer, 2006; Uberoi, 2007). This is because, unlike an earlier and illustrious generation of scholars of immigrant descent in Britain such as Isaiah Berlin and John Plamenatz, BSM scholars wanted not only to contribute to knowledge, but also to influence long-term political thought about political problems in Britain that relate to cultural minorities.²

In comparison, the works of LMs were initially influenced by political practices in countries such as Canada (see also Patten, 2014: viii). Hence, Kymlicka (1999: 133–134; 2016: 67) states that he ‘grew up with the assumption that justice required some sort of special status for Quebec and Aboriginal peoples’, and initially disagreed with Charles Taylor that ‘only communitarianism could defend special rights for groups like the Québécois or native Indians’, as he thought liberals could too. In short, political events in Britain initially inspired applied scholarship among BSM scholars that focused directly on political debates, but political practices in other countries often initially inspired less applied scholarship among LMs about whether liberal theorists could plausibly endorse such political practices.³

Second, BSM scholars initially approached their work on multiculturalism with a conception of multiculturalism that focuses on immigrants who become citizens and their descendants (Meer, 2006; Modood, 1993; Parekh, 1974a; Uberoi, 2007). In this, BSM scholars are strongly motivated, as Levey (2019a: 213) notes, by their own South Asian origins and the British colonial legacy. In comparison, LMs offer conceptions of multiculturalism that focus on other cultural minorities too, namely national minorities and indigenous peoples (Kymlicka, 1995: 37).

It might seem, then, that BSM scholars neglect certain cultural minorities. Yet, as already noted, BSM scholars are focused on Britain where issues that relate to indigenous peoples, such as the Inuit, do not arise; and where national minorities are conceptualised as part of debates other than those about multiculturalism, such as devolution and national independence. Such debates can be construed as debates about national minority cultures and be made part of multiculturalism, as Kymlicka does. But doing so seems artificial in Britain where no one criticises or endorses a national minority multiculturalism. This is because the multiculturalism that people have in mind relates to non-white immigrants and their descendants who have a history shaped by colonialism and who become citizens.

Third, when BSM scholars initially focused on immigrants who became citizens, they noted that, like other human beings, such people were ‘unique’ individuals and that they ‘belong to economic, political and cultural, religious and other groups’ (Parekh, 1978: 36. See also Meer, 2010: 77; Modood, 1993: 85; Uberoi, 2007: 131). But BSM scholars did not claim that individuals are more important than cultural groups. This is because this claim presupposes that a person can be individuated from a cultural group even though cultural groups provide patterns

of thought that influence individuals and often also a language in which they think. Cultural groups thus form individuals just as individuals form cultural groups; the two cannot be separated. Yet, at times, thinking of immigrants who become citizens as individuals is more important, for example, to uphold their individual rights. At other times, thinking of them as groups is more important so as to, for example, fight stereotypes as these focus on groups.

In comparison, LMs such as Kymlicka (1989: 140 emphasis added) privilege 'individuals' as '*the ultimate* units of moral worth'. Kymlicka (1995: 75), of course, thinks that groups are important too. But he defends group rights only if they are 'consistent with individual freedom', and shows why such rights should not be used to restrict the freedoms of individuals because he prioritises individuals over groups. However, BSM scholars address the same issue, as we note above, by referring to instances when conceptualising cultural minorities as individuals is more important than conceptualising them as a group and instances when this must be reversed and it is more important to conceptualise cultural minorities as groups.

Fourth, when BSM scholars first wrote about immigrants who become citizens and their descendants, religious minorities and, in particular, Muslims were often the focus (Meer, 2006; Modood, 1990; Parekh, 1974a: 229; Uberoi and Modood, 2010). This is partly because Muslims were central to controversies such as the Rushdie Affair, 9/11 and the 2001 riots and BSM scholars were focusing on these controversies. Hence, some BSM scholars initially wrote about religion, Islamophobia, secularism and so on (Meer, 2006, 2010; Modood, 1993: 85; 1994; Parekh, 1986: 24) as part of their way of thinking about multiculturalism, and continue to do so. Indeed, some have made the theme of rethinking secularism central to their conception of multiculturalism (Modood, 2019).

In comparison, Kymlicka candidly admits of his book *Multicultural Citizenship* (MC), 'there are gaps and omissions that, in retrospect, are pretty glaring. One is the issue of religion, which is largely absent from MC. This partly reflects the politics of the time. When I first came to these issues in the late eighties and early nineties, the issue of religious difference and religious accommodation was not at the heart of the debate about multiculturalism' (Kymlicka, 2016: 396). In regard to secularism, he states: 'Insofar as I discussed it at all in MC, what I said expressed a pretty knee-jerk unreflective commitment to a kind of American-style secularism' (2016: 396). These admirably honest claims are true, except for the fact that at the heart of the debate about multiculturalism in the late 1980s and early 1990s in Britain, at least, were issues of religious difference resulting from debates about the Rushdie Affair (Modood, 1990: 149; Parekh, 1990: 703). BSM scholars focus on urgent issues in Britain and thus they engaged with religious difference and secularism at a time when LMs did not.

Fifth, BSM scholars, with the exception of Parekh, initially wanted to balance their contribution to political theory with extensive empirical research. They led surveys that examined the views and circumstances of ethnic minorities (Modood et al., 1997). They also interviewed politicians in order to identify reasons for their

attitudes towards Muslims that are not offered in their speeches (Uberoi and Modood, 2010: 304) and interviewed Muslim intellectuals and NGOs to ascertain their understanding of multiculturalism (Modood and Ahmad, 2007). They examined archival evidence of the intentions of politicians when creating policies of multiculturalism (Uberoi, 2009). They also analysed newspaper articles so as to show how fear of Muslims is constructed (Meer, 2010: 182). These and other empirical works were accompanied by conceptual work on how racism takes the form not only of colour racism, but also of a racism that targets cultural and religious differences of non-white minorities (Meer, 2010; Meer and Modood, 2009; Modood et al., 1997). Levey (2019a: 220) is thus right to assert that BSM scholars contribute to normative political theory, but they also conduct empirical and conceptual research that seems more social-scientific.

In comparison, LMs such as Kymlicka analyse what existing empirical evidence suggests (Kymlicka, 2010, 2015a) and collaborate with social scientists so as to produce sophisticated empirical research (Banting and Kymlicka, 2006, 2017). But the primary contribution of LMs is to political theory (Carens; 2000; Kymlicka, 1989, 1995; 2002; Patten, 2014). Likewise, most LMs do not conduct research on what minorities themselves think about their identities, racism and exclusion, the claims of politicians and journalists or the nature and types of racism. In contrast, for most BSM scholars the empirical study of precisely these subjects is as important as their work in political theory.

Sixth, BSM scholars began their work by considering how Britain is conceptualised and envisaged by British people (Meer, 2010: 2; Modood, 1993: 5; Parekh; 1974a: 231; Uberoi, 2007: 150). This is because if most British people have conceptions of Britain that exclude cultural minorities, then they will think of such minorities as outsiders. This can exacerbate the exclusion and discrimination that cultural minorities often experience and make such minorities unwilling to be part of a group that mistreats them. However, if most British people have conceptions of Britain that include cultural minorities as normal and equal citizens, then the cultural differences of such minorities are less likely to seem abnormal to others in Britain. Such cultural differences are also thus less likely to be feared and to seem like something to avoid. When British people have inclusive conceptions of Britain, it helps to reduce their fear of cultural difference.

Equally, if British people have conceptions of Britain that include cultural minorities as normal and equal citizens then such conceptions foster unity. This is because such conceptions allow British people to envisage themselves as a culturally diverse unit or group, which, in turn, is necessary if they are to conceptualise collective goals and challenges that they can meet together. Such inclusive conceptions of Britain thus foster a unity among culturally diverse citizens which also reduces their fear of one another's cultural differences.

Such conceptions of Britain are, of course, another way of discussing national identity, and LMs, too, note the value of national identity (Kymlicka, 1995: 188; 2015: 12). However, they say little about national identity compared to their primary focus: trying to identify a 'liberal approach to minority rights' (1995: 75) and

to determine whether such rights are just or whether there are 'strong cultural rights' (Patten, 2014: 11).⁴

In comparison, justice and rights feature infrequently in the political vocabulary of BSM scholars but not because theoretical questions about rights for cultural groups are unimportant. BSM scholars focus on conceptions of the nation that exclude minorities despite their formal individual and group rights, and show what can happen if such conceptions become inclusive, as doing so seems more politically urgent in Britain. The theoretical priorities expressed in significant LM works differ from the political priorities of BSM scholars.

Seventh, BSM scholars began their work by advocating the importance of intercultural dialogue in a multicultural society as it leads to intercultural learning (Meer, 2010: 46; Modood, 1993: 69; Parekh, 1974b: 42; Uberoi, 2007: 151–52). Intercultural dialogue is also particularly useful when there are disagreements between the members of different cultural groups. To illustrate this use, consider a controversial minority practice such as polygamy.

Most cultural majorities in Western societies reject this practice, but the practice need not breach any human rights. Nor need it be inequitable for women as polygamy allows women to take more than one husband (Parekh, 2000a: 282). Such reasons make a ban difficult to justify; and even with such a ban, the practice can continue covertly. What is required is a dialogue in which members of a cultural minority who favour the practice become convinced that it is unjustifiable, or a cultural majority comes to accept that the practice is justifiable or at least tolerable.

In comparison, an LM such as Kymlicka (1995: 122–123) assumes some informal intercultural dialogue when he notes the 'educational benefits' of cultural diversity. But such dialogue is given limited importance as it does not justify minority rights. BSM scholars, however, as we noted earlier, are less concerned with justifying minority rights; and unlike LMs, they note how intercultural dialogue is beneficial because it can help to resolve the controversies that are inevitable in multicultural societies.⁵

In summary, BSM scholars began their scholarship on multiculturalism in opposition to LMs, by disputing the need for a liberal theory. Unlike LMs, BSM scholars were contributing to political debates in Britain that focused on racially marked immigrants who became citizens and formed ethnic identities, especially Muslims. Equally, unlike LMs, BSM scholars did not prioritise individuals over groups, they valued minority 'voice' about formal rights, and they conducted a wealth of empirical research and prioritised national identity and intercultural dialogue in ways that LMs did not.

Some may, of course, say that the types of policies that LMs and BSM scholars advocate are likely to be similar and this is true. But this does not change the fact that BSM scholars would not defend such policies using the liberalism or the multiculturalism of LMs, as BSM scholars approached their work on multiculturalism with a different set of ideas. The presence of these ideas meant that even though the seminal LM works of Kymlicka were widely cited and well-known by

the time Modood was writing about multiculturalism, as were other LM works by the time Uberoi and Meer were writing about multiculturalism, all three thought that they had much to learn from LMs, but that they need not become LMs. They adopted a different course which Levey describes, and they thought such a course was possible as people such as Parekh had been charting it since the 1970s (Modood, 2014a; Uberoi, 2018).

Conclusion

In this article, we have focused on the ideas that BSM scholars initially used in their scholarship and their intellectual influences in order to extend Levey's analysis in a historical direction. It seems pertinent to conclude by discussing two small aspects of Levey's analysis that we disagree with before we briefly discuss the future of the BSM.

First, Levey criticises the way that BSM scholars identify the following two ways of thinking and talking about national identity. BSM scholars note how we might, for example, refer to 'Britain's identity', which is a conception of what Britain is, or a person's British identity which is one of many identities that a person might exhibit when they say they 'feel British' (Parekh, 2008: 56; Uberoi, 2018: 50–51; Uberoi and Modood, 2013: 25). Levey (2019a: 215–216) claims that 'the distinction drawn between Britain's identity (polity) and British identity (personal) does not quite do, as even the latter is understood in terms of aspects of the polity that individuals share and identify with (e.g. laws, taxes, welfare, state symbols and ceremonies, national sports teams ...)'. Levey is thus claiming that BSM scholars do not appreciate how the two ways of thinking and talking about national identity are related.

Yet Parekh (2008: 56) explicitly states that they are 'related' and Uberoi (2015: 81; 2018: 51) explicitly and repeatedly shows how in the following ways:

'The two ways of thinking and talking about national identity are related ... a person cannot plausibly say that they feel "British" or "English" without having any notion of Britain or England. Equally, the relationship between these two ways of thinking about national identity can be empirically significant. This is because if ethnic minorities in Britain think that British people are solely white and Christian, then such minorities might think it strange to think of themselves as British. And if many in England think that England is a white and Christian nation, they may think that ethnic minorities cannot be English. The conceptions of a polity or a nation that its members have can thus influence how they think about their own and one another's national identities.'

Indeed, BSM scholars are hesitant to refer to these two ways of thinking and talking about national identity as what Levey calls a 'distinction' precisely because they acknowledge that these two ways of thought are related and Levey seems to have inadvertently missed this.

The second point of disagreement with Levey (2019a: 216) is his claim that Parekh is more apprehensive about governments ‘forging a national cultural identity’ than Modood and Uberoi. Yet the difference between Modood and Parekh on the role of government seems exaggerated as the Commission for Multi-Ethnic Britain’s report (2000: 229) says ‘political leaders should ... lead the country in re-imagining Britain ... and in ensuring that the national story is inclusive of everyone’. Both Parekh and Modood helped to write this report thus they have both argued, in print, that political leaders should lead the process of encouraging inclusive conceptions of a country among its citizens.

But Levey’s claim is more plausible in relation to Uberoi (2007: 152) whose early work does suggest that governments should create what he calls a multicultural national identity. But this early work was immediately followed by more caveated pieces that offer a ‘hypothesis’ (2008: 408) about the extent to which a government can alter a national identity. Likewise, there are later pieces which state that ‘no government can promote a single conception of a polity without running the risk of this conception seeming like it is artificial and it is being imposed on those who think about their polity differently’ (2018: 54). With this in mind, Uberoi, like Parekh and Modood, gives a leadership role to governments in promoting inclusive conceptions of a country in the following ways that all three would endorse.

Governments should reject conceptions of their country in which its citizens are solely of one faith or race. Governments should also prohibit discrimination and promote race equality. Over time, this alters what many citizens think is permissible in a polity, thus illustrating that their conceptions of it have changed. A government should also authorise school curricula to teach children about the different cultures and religions in the country. In such limited ways, governments can discourage exclusive conceptions of a country and encourage inclusive ones. But Modood (2007: 153), Parekh (2008: 65) and Uberoi (2018: 54) all reject governments stating exactly what these conceptions should contain and accept that such conceptions should be ‘woven in debate and discussion and not reduced to a list’.

Let us now turn from these minor disagreements to the future of the BSM. Some might find the idea of a future for a multicultural school of thought odd as they think multiculturalism is politically and intellectually dead. Yet policies of multiculturalism have remained and expanded (Banting and Kymlicka, 2013; Matheiu, 2017). Claims about multiculturalists using essentialist conceptions of groups or culture have been shown to be implausible as have claims that policies of multiculturalism are divisive (Kymlicka, 2010, 2015; Mason, 2007; Modood, 2007; Uberoi, 2008). And alternatives to multiculturalism, such as interculturalism, have been shown to be inadequate by critics and advocates of multiculturalism alike (Joppke, 2018; Modood, 2017). The political and intellectual death of multiculturalism has been exaggerated, and BSM scholars are trying to rise to new political challenges such as the following.

As anti-immigrant sentiment and political parties spread along with exclusive ideas of the nation, it is politically urgent to understand the nature and causes of such sentiment. BSM scholars have thus moved from focusing on immigrants who become citizens and their descendants to also examining the fears of cultural majorities (Bouchard, 2011) in relation to immigration so as to separate reasonable from unreasonable fears (Modood, 2014b). Likewise, to address the spread of exclusive ideas of nationhood, they offer new work on the importance of citizens having inclusive conceptions of their country (Modood, 2018; Uberoi, 2018).

Existing BSM scholars are thus attempting to rise to these new challenges but a school of thought will adapt as new members apply its ideas in new and different directions that the original membership did not consider. This is what is beginning to happen among a number of early career scholars whose doctoral or post-doctoral work has been supervised by Modood: here are some examples.

Jan Dobbernack uses a BSM conception of multiculturalism in order to focus on bottom-up political mobilisation but thinks this needs to be combined with a genealogical approach that is attentive to the obstacles in the way of achieving the normative goals of the BSM (Dobbernack, 2018, Dobbernack and Modood, forthcoming). Aleksandra Lewicki argues, contrary to the BSM, that national citizenship is insufficient, but when articulating a perspective on social justice that is informed by Nancy Fraser, Lewicki (2014a, 2014b) replaces Fraser's conception of recognition with one from the BSM. Terri-Anne Teo (2019) explores whether the BSM's understanding of civic multiculturalism is helpful in understanding or improving multiculturalism in Singapore, and argues that it has more applicability than other western conceptions if it is extended from citizens to include non-citizens such as temporary migrants. Erdem Dikici (2016) develops Modood's idea of integration to show how transnational NGOs strive to integrate new immigrants and their descendants into their new national home. Thomas Sealy (2018) develops the BSM defence of multiculturalism against interculturalists, advocates of 'multiculture' and superdiversity, but argues that the BSM's efforts to include ethnoreligious identity fail to include religiosity-based minority identities, such as those of British converts to Islam, and so should be extended to do so.

These early career scholars can be thought of as the 'next-wave' of the BSM, and two areas of similarity among them are crucial. The first is that their work is sociology informed by political theory or *vice versa*. It straddles disciplines and maintains the balance between political theory and empirical research that we referred to earlier. The second similarity is that the 'next-wave' are not just acolytes. They identify omissions, silences and weakness in the thought of BSM scholars that they seek, in their own ways, to address and hopefully in doing so will improve and expand BSM scholarship in the years to come.

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Notes

1. It is striking just how many of the political theorists who Levey (2019a: 204–205) lists call themselves liberals.
2. A critic might ask why Uberoi (2008, 2009) initially wrote about Canadian multiculturalism, if he was focused on Britain. The answer is that those early pieces were part of an attempt to see what Britain can learn from Canada about promoting national identity (Uberoi, 2007).
3. See Kymlicka's (2002: 339) excellent division of the debate about multiculturalism into a number of stages.
4. Levey (2008, 2018, 2019b) is exceptional among LMs because of his continuous and impressive work on national identity.
5. Such dialogue takes a particular form in BSM scholarship that is best described by Parekh (2000a: 268–273) but others such as Charles Taylor value it too albeit for subtly different reasons (see Modood, 2017).

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