

'Race', identity and curriculum development: the case of the 'Writing' of the history Schemes of Work, 1999-2000.

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Abstract

On the night of 22nd April 1993 in Eltham, south London, a black teenager, Stephen Lawrence, was murdered while waiting at a bus stop. The police investigation, the media sensationalism and the trial proceedings of the case brought many issues about race and racism to the nation's attention. This fact was not lost on a number of leading educationalists, some of whom had been working for decades to promote these issues; a key implication of the murder, for them, being that issues of race and racism should be better reflected in mainstream thinking about educative processes and practice.

This idea was clearly supported by recommendations 67 to 69 of the *Macpherson Report* about the murder enquiry published on 24th February 1999, with recommendation 67 pinpointing that:

consideration be given to amendment of the National Curriculum aimed at valuing cultural diversity and preventing racism, in order better to reflect the needs of a diverse society.

In the two weeks surrounding the report's publication, the QCA was holding meetings about proposals for Key Stage 3 in Curriculum 2000. The Principal Subject Officer's attention was drawn to the potential significance of the *Macpherson* recommendations to curriculum restructuring.

This paper intends to focus on the influence of the *Macpherson Report* on:

- The selection and choice of the 'Writers'.
- The formulation of the templates for the new Schemes of Work between May and July 1999.
- The apparent tensions between Principal Subject Officers, civil servants and elements of the media.

And, more generally, will go on to consider:

- The internal (governmental) and external (media) critiques of the 'Writers' work.
- The debates leading up to the publication of the history templates for Curriculum 2000 and an analysis of the dilution of original suggestions.
- The problematic nature of analysing information from the position of 'insider researcher'.

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'Every nigger should have their arms and legs chopped up and left with fucking stumps.'

One of the youths suspected of committing the murder.

[Source: Publication of Race on the Agenda (ROTA) cited by Richardson, 1999: 11.]

'the test of our sincerity as law makers is not how well we can express sympathy ... but the implementation of the recommendations to make sure this type of thing never happens in our country again',

Tony Blair, Prime Minister, House of Commons, 24th February, 1999 (the day of the report's issue).

'... consideration be given to amendment of the National Curriculum aimed at valuing cultural diversity and preventing racism, in order to better reflect the needs of a diverse society.'

Recommendation 67, The Stephen Lawrence Inquiry (Macpherson, 1999: 334).

Introduction

The death of Stephen Lawrence on the night of 22nd April 1993 has become one of the defining moments in race relationships in twentieth century Britain. He was murdered while waiting at a bus stop in Eltham, South London, in what was a racially motivated attack.

On 24th February, 1999, nearly seven years later, the Stephen Lawrence Inquiry was published (Macpherson, 1999). The implications of the Macpherson Report, as it is generally called, are far reaching. The chronological focus of this paper is on the six month period immediately after the publication of the report into the murder inquiry - from late February to early August 1999; the conceptual focus intends to problematise the attempts here to reconstruct events, from the personal viewpoint of eye witness₂, describe perceptions of that period and discuss the report's influence on the writing of Schemes of Work for the new history curriculum for 2000.

1 Writing the new history curriculum for 2000: the QCA and the selection of 'Writers'

(a) *The QCA and the history curriculum*

Sometimes employment owes much to chance. In March 1999 I insinuated myself into the outer circles of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), a non-elected, decision-making body, a 'quango', which determines what changes are made to the National Curriculum (NC). Historically they, like other quangos, have sometimes acted in a reactive, an eccentric and often in a secretive way. (Not unsurprisingly then, they now occupy MI5's old premises.) Most seriously though at that time, for the future of school history, there was some uncertainty about the way in which their work was subject to a limiting 'steer'. There is some historical evidence to support this assumption. In 1990, Nick Tate, the QCA's Chief Executive, seemed, by his actions and inactions, to be positive about multicultural issues when the first NC was framed: importantly for history he showed support for the critical notion of 'Interpretations of History' which, as an Attainment Target then in its own right, seemed to be the essential fulcrum of the subject - holding out the promise for pupils and teachers of a greater accent on a critical pedagogy for historical studies.

Phillips' illuminating chronicle of the making of history in the NC describes how first, in 1990, Tate did not reveal his own views on history (Phillips, 1998a: 127), whereas later, in 1994, he 'came off the fence' (to use Tate's own phrase). According to Phillips, Tate lamented the tendency in history teaching to avoid the teaching about 'famous', meaning famous white individuals. His widely broadcast assertion, in *The Times Educational Supplement* during 1994, that an emphasis be placed on teaching a common cultural heritage, was accompanied by his assurance that it would still be possible to support notions of plural and dual identities. However, his other published views that best culture was rooted in Greece and Rome and in Christianity might be described as travelling in the direction of 'partial history' (D'Sena, 1998); his associated claim, that other cultures - a particular reference to newcomers' cultures - would benefit from the maintenance of a strong majority culture (here Tate means Anglophone high culture) can be given a similar interpretation. Perhaps this position was stimulated by Tate's 'anxiety about the future' (Phillips, 1998a: 129) as well as a concern with relativism and the post-modern critique of knowledge. Working on this assumption Phillips inferred that Tate wanted to go back to 'a scramble to appropriate the past' (Furedi, 1992, cited in Phillips, 1998a: 132).

These were the common, broadly published perceptions of Tate's position at the beginning of 1999; I cite them here, at the beginning of this piece because it led a number of history teacher-educators, including myself, to believe that they would not find a role in QCA work (Phillips, 1998b), that only historians willing to adopt a QCA, meaning Eurocentric stance, would be utilised. In addition, this 'knowledge' led me to believe early in 1999, even before beginning my work with the QCA, that teachers should expect little *prima facie* movement in the new version of the curriculum. My pessimistic reading of the situation at the time prompted me to conclude 'that the revisions in the history curriculum for 2000 will not be allowed, on the face of it, to look very different'. (D'Sena, 1999: 22). Additionally, I was under no illusions that even when placed in a position of potential influence, you should assume, when given a position within governmental spheres, that power is automatic. The classic example of this came in 1989 to 1990, when the Multicultural Task Group in the first NC became 'the group that never was', its report never published (Tomlinson, 1993). I was convinced that a higher level steering group would put a red line through the suggestions made by QCA consultants.

(b) *Selection to be a 'Writer'*

In the four weeks surrounding the publication of the Macpherson Report, the QCA held a series of five meetings, attended by invitation only, around the country on 'Developing the School Curriculum: seminar work in progress in history'. By sheer chance, the Principal Officer (PO) for History at the QCA was known by one of my senior colleagues, Professor Hall. Hall had forwarded my name, amongst others, to her and I was subsequently invited to attend one of the meetings. I had never had or made any contact whatsoever with the QCA before. I was unable to attend the meeting in Leeds, but was able to attend the final meeting, that held in London on 2nd March 1999.

By the end of the day-long meeting I had introduced three points into the discussion that were not being made by any of the other dozen members. One concerned the Anglocentricity of the curriculum; another was a specific recommendation about changing History Core Unit titles to better reflect global concerns and perspectives; the final one strongly urged that recognition be given to the recommendations in the Macpherson Report. Since I had never received an invitation to a government meeting before and did not anticipate being invited back, I put the case strongly. On leaving, I gave the PO a copy of my own specific recommendations which she promised to read. (D'Sena, 1998). I was asked informally, at that point, if I would be interested in writing Schemes of Work. I said yes, but expected to hear no more of the matter.

In April, the PO made contact with me, inviting me to be one of four 'Writers' (a term they continued to use in a technical sense) and suggested that my specific suggestion about a Unit title had received approval from a higher-level steering group. In planning a date for the first weekend meeting the QCA almost seemed to be over-accommodating: the team of four would meet on the weekend of my choice. We met in London on Friday, 22nd May.

At that point I was unclear about who the other three Writers would be and (as a member of a minority ethnic community) I was thinking through the political contexts of tokenism.

2 *Formulating templates for the new Schemes of Work*

Before the weekend meeting briefing papers were sent to each Writer and using that important historical skill, reading between the lines, they suggested that some of the liberal thinkers of the QCA sought a route around Tate's views.

The Minutes of the last meeting of the QCA History Steering Group, before the proposed May meeting, support this view: the suggestions for constructing the Units showed little change from those already taught, were unimaginative and potentially very Eurocentric. They were as follows:

Year 7	Bridging course c. 4 weeks Medieval realms with a depth study (e.g. Crusades or Black Death) c. 34 weeks
Year 8	Making of the UK c. 13 weeks Britain 1750 - 1900 with depth study Black peoples of the Americas 22 weeks
Year 9	20th century world 34 weeks Overview: questions on issues 4 weeks

[Source: QCA, unpub. Minutes, 14th April, 1999]

Memories of the making of the first NC made it likely that these suggestions, as described in the Minutes of 14th April, would be changed by the time of the May meeting. Leaving that

aside, 'the new agenda', the term used in the Minutes (QCA, Minutes, p. 3) implied that one way around narrow Eurocentric content could be through providing non-prescriptive templates for planning in Schemes of Work like those already published for Key Stage 2. The terms of reference issued to the four writers, for writing the schemes, were as follows:

- (a) 'the scheme must not imply that any single approach, in style or in terms of the historical themes chosen, is better than another' [no 3];
- (b) the scheme 'must be inspirational' [no 1], taking forward the practice of teaching [no 2]; it further emphasises that 'inspirational is about approach'; that approaches must 'spark their (pupil) interest'; 'It should rekindle, where it has dimmed, the enthusiasm'; 'It must be ground breaking stuff, representing the best of the best';

and, more specifically with reference to this paper's subject, schemes should seek:

- (c) 'very different approaches' and the ability to contribute to cross curricular aspects such as citizenship [no 4];

and, ultimately

- (d) to 'take practice further'.

[Source: QCA, Key Stage 3 History Scheme of Work
Guidance for Writers, unpub. April 1999].

Each Writer came from a 'centre of expertise' (Rose, 1996, cited by Kelly, *et. al.*, 2000: 113) and they therefore arrived with their own idea of what constituted 'good' history, as well as what constituted 'bad', 'true' and even 'false' history. All were experienced in government work and had written NC materials before, apart from myself; two were from very senior positions in the history education world. My centre of expertise was rooted in the idea that research epistemologies can be racially biased (Scheurich and Young, 1997: ch. 7 *passim*; Asante, 1989: *passim*) and that acknowledging and giving access to alternative views of the past was a key to overcoming this. (D'Sena, 1998). A paper of this kind is a supporter of the narcissism of reflection. It is not inappropriate, therefore, to summarise one of my strongly held views about the past that I believed would not be held as strongly by the (then unknown to me) others. A week before the May weekend meeting I wrote:

'There are schools of thought which propose that education systems have at their core the imperatives of social reproduction, and the maintenance of social structures, with all the accompanying patterns of inequality; and, in addition, there is a tendency towards cultural reproduction, encouraging the transmission of a dominant knowledge which supports an existing social order. Certainly, Molefi Asante (1987, p. 126) is convincing in his argument that, in the States, Euro-American cultural ideology has had a specific and debilitating effect on the identity formation of the black population in the US for similar reasons. A 'critical' approach to this 'predatory culture' has already been clearly articulated in the USA (McLaren, 1995, pp. 24-5).'

(D'Sena, 1999: 18)

(Further research intends to unearth the principles supporting the other writers' centres of expertise.)

The initial writing process was both complex and laborious. The weekend, from 4pm on Friday to 4pm on Sunday, was extremely work-intensive, with only short breaks for food and late finishes discussing work over dinner, with no real free time until 10pm. The four Writers

were guided by two POs. An initial briefing was followed by a brainstorming to decide on eighteen questions that, when answered fully in Schemes of Work, with lesson objectives, suggested activities and content, could provide suggestive templates of good practice for teachers of history in Key Stage 3. Each brainstorming and work session was prefaced by reminders, from the POs, of the constraints on our abilities to translate our firmly held ideas onto paper. A great deal of the semi-informal talk over meals was about the involvement of the Civil Service and government ministers and the influence of the press on governmental thinking and actions.

I contributed six of the original eighteen questions; there was therefore a measure of receptiveness. After working with the most experienced Writer on one of them, we each took another away to complete in the next three weeks. It was agreed that I work on one of my suggestions, 'Why was slavery abolished?' I posted the completed Scheme to the QCA.

At the next meeting - a Group Meeting in early July with six more Writers who had been appointed to contribute to the other Schemes - the eighteen questions had changed considerably. A 'Steering Group' had suggested changes. For one, two of my six contributions had been axed, most notably the Scheme about slavery. Even so, this still left four. Of these, the one about industrialisation had been adapted, though the questions about the holocaust, human rights and Ireland remained intact. I felt that if my presence had made a difference, then it was in the inclusion of the latter two, both in contemporary history.

The tone of the Group Meeting was less inventive, more guidance had been given to the POs and they, in turn, impressed upon us the necessity for haste: and therefore Writers were given a more well defined steer. There is insufficient space here to give a mini-biography of the participants. Most pertinent, for this paper, the meeting was prefaced by a warning that 'one of the most conservative newspapers in Britain' (Guardian, 2003: 43), The Daily Mail newspaper, would be delivering negative press should the group insist on a non-Anglocentric overview; the Macpherson recommendations were never mentioned; and more mention was made of the influence, by Ministers and their civil service aides to mandarins in the DfEE, who in turn influenced the Steering Group and the POs. (Future research will, by interview, seek to investigate this phenomenon as well to explore some of the other speculations about elite groups presented below).

After that meeting, I completed the Scheme on industrialisation, incorporating opportunities for pupils to develop perspectives at the core of Macpherson's recommendation 67 (amongst other issues). The Schemes were subsequently edited by 'checkers' at the QCA, their overall suitability determined by the Steering Group. They were published in September 2000, with references to perspectives on cultural diversity removed.

3 Apparent tensions between Principal Subject Officers, civil servants and elements of the media

Recent scholarship has used data from interviews with education policy-makers to 'explain policy making *via* what it is that individuals and groups do and say in the arenas of influence in which they move' (Ball, 1990, cited in Phillips, 1998a). This has shed light on the context of text production at the macro (state)-level. Ball's conclusion was that the NC was the product of hand-to-hand fighting; that policy was interpreted and disputed in ways which were 'unanticipated by the initiators or formulators of the Act' (p. 135). (This confirmation of the existence of *ad hocery* in government proved important in his and latterly others' research design.)

I was mindful of the idea that a ‘good history curriculum’ was not a ‘reality’: the existence of such a thing is not an absolute truth. What is held to be good pedagogy and content in any subject cannot be decontextualised from those things to which it is articulated (Hall, 1985) – expert knowledge production needs to be seen in relation to contemporary conditions. Hence there is much to be learned from examining the processes which compel and impel the ‘actors’, meaning the QCA Principal Officers, the DfEE advisers, the civil servants and government ministers as well as the ‘Writers’, to contribute to a construction of the truth of what constitutes good history and approaches for the curriculum as they see it (Kelly, *et. al.*, 2000). Neither should one assume that claims to ‘the truth’ remain uniform in any one group or institution. This is not the place to give full explanation of the connection of this mindset to Foucault’s assertions about ‘regimes of truth’ (Foucault, 1980: 131)³, but when used in conjunction with Hall’s theorisation of articulation to problematise the decision-making processes in the construction of the Schemes of Work, one is able to better understand definitions of ‘good’ pedagogy and ‘good’ history. (And, incidentally, the construction of Standards in education more generally).

The scholarly emphasis and literature on understanding education policy and the roles of individuals and elites in policy-making at a macro level has grown in the past twenty years.⁴ An investigation of the production of these Schemes will give an opportunity to discuss, in far more detail, the interconnectivity and dissonance of the ‘regimes of truth’ some of which were apparent from discussions inside (and also, importantly, outside) these two meetings.

4 *The internal (governmental) and (external) media critiques of the ‘Writers’ work*

Articulation with the media was significant and was probably far more significant than ‘Writers’ were given to understand. Covert media pressures will be discussed later; in the first instance overt media pressure was lost on nobody – The Macpherson Report had led to defensive and offensive positions being expressed in the national press. The major teaching unions, for instance were quick to react. On the matter of institutional racism, the NUT believed it would be ‘extraordinarily unfair’ to condemn the education system (*The Guardian*, 24th Feb, 1999), while the NAS/UWT cited class and poverty as being as significant as race as factors contributing to educational disadvantage (*The Daily Express*, 8th March, 1999).

Nationally, comment of the Macpherson Report was both immediate and graphic: the memorial stone was daubed in white paint within a few hours, while one Conservative councillor, in Left wing Haringey was quoted as saying '(t)he report should be put where it belongs - in the bin' (*The Independent*, 3 March, 1999). Most of the hostility was printed in the tabloids. Richard Littlejohn in *The Sun* (2 March, 1999) felt compelled to respond to an article written by Tony Blair in the black press in a characteristic way:

'Given that (Blair's) latest comments were for consumption by the Black community, I'm surprised he didn't mention that his childhood hero was Malcolm X, and that his favourite food is goat curry and yams'

Polly Toynbee, in *The Guardian* (11 March 1999) criticised both the Mail and the Telegraph: 'if you want a perfect model of institutional racism, buy the Telegraph'. The Home Secretary, Jack Straw, was more accepting of the report’s findings and in the House of Commons on 24 February 1999, the day of its publication, stated:

‘Any long-established, white dominated organisation is liable to have procedures, practices and a culture which tend to exclude or disadvantage non-white people.’

Statements like these may have some bearing on my selection on or near to 2nd March. After the end of May, with the implications of the recommendations more fully digested at the very top (meaning ministerially), the effects of a reflex action or articulation from the political elite in response to a continuing bad press had percolated down.

Whoever constructs a curriculum will have their version criticised: the nature of the subject means there will never be one agreed version that is acceptable to all. In informal discussion, one of the writers told of a mini-campaign, by one of the so-called 'quality' press (*The Telegraph*), which sought to accuse her of insufficient use of historical information; indeed the broadsheets would 'phone her asking for quotable quotes and, on occasion, would attempt to create controversial news by using this ploy. I also had some personal experience of this.⁵

Importantly, for this discussion, the hostile press that had been anticipated and was so clearly flagged at the beginning of the Group Meeting did materialise. A later, very critical reference to the Writers' work, which lamented a potential loss of the dominance of elite and Anglocentric perspectives, was published in August in *The Daily Mail*.⁶ In both the May and July meetings, we were given the distinct impression that Blair had been keen to mollify the Mail and that August was not the time to have a discussion on 'Standards' in education. Indeed, in terms of education, Blair's articulation with standards may have been less on the curriculum and more on the matter of his insistence on retaining Chris Woodhead as OFSTED chief, in spite of the fairly robust accusations of 'sleaze' that were still hitting the headlines.

5 *The debates leading up to the publication of the history templates for Curriculum 2000 and an analysis of the dilution of original suggestions*

There is insufficient space here to give an analysis of detailed differences between the old orders and the advice contained in the new Schemes of Work. They were published in September 2000 and are available at www.qca.org.uk. Here, there is only space to consider the Schemes in relation to the Macpherson recommendations.

Throughout this six-month period, the QCA officials demonstrated the impression that there was an uneasy relationship between them and DfEE officials, who had greater contact with elites in government, and had influence over their work. According to Robin Richardson, a close observer of the report's general impact, nobody in the DfEE appeared to have read the Macpherson Report (Richardson, 2000: 14) or was willing to admit to having done so. Those in the QCA who I met on March 2nd had not: they acknowledged that recommendations had been made about education, but did not know exactly what they were. I was under the impression that they had still not read the report by the time of the Writers' Meeting in May.

Who read what and when might provide one type of indicator, though we can be more certain that the DfEE abolished the Advisory Group on Raising Ethnic Minority Achievement only a few weeks later and made no attempts to follow up the recommendations (Richardson, 2000). In other words, at the time of knee-jerk reaction, a time when the report might have had a significant impact in the short term, no positive reactions were made in government spheres to the recommendations. Aware of this, Herman Ouseley, Head of the Commission for Racial Equality, issued a clear warning that:

'The issues raised by Macpherson can no longer be confined to the equal opportunities sub-committee.'

(Ouseley, 2000: 20)

But by that time, they had! One of the other four Writers - the one with the most insider knowledge for an outsider - Christine Counsell, editor of *Teaching History*, the professional journal - admitted in November 1999 that the Schemes had been constructed in haste and:

‘In fact, the proposals included hardly any changes at all, other than some minor tweaking to allow teachers the flexibility to build pupils’ knowledge more effectively’

(Counsell, 1999: 2)

More specifically, about history in relation to the report’s recommendations, Marika Sherwood wrote:

‘There is yet another problem with the compulsory history curriculum. It quite deliberately ignores the long history of Black peoples in Britain, while including the study of ‘Black peoples of the Americas’ as a possible ‘world study’ before 1900. Can we still not accept that Black peoples have been living here since at least the time of the Romans? Would not the inclusion of this history be a step in the direction indicated by Macpherson?’

(Sherwood, 2000: 26)⁷

The history curriculum will continue to rearticulate, though by 2000 the curriculum was clearly reluctant to articulate meaning within an explicit and proximate domain of ‘race’ or racial politics. Conditions preferred a strong domain of Standards; other domains which gave an emphasis to cultural diversity and were more unsettling to ‘tradition’ provoked anxiety and rage in some quarters. The phrase ‘back to basics’, which placed a premium on an imagined set of traditional values and history, of the kind espoused by Tate (above), seemingly still dominated in DfES and QCA circles and, most importantly in the circles, both public and private which influenced them.

It seems fair to conclude that there is little sign that the current administration is willing to take on the type of challenge thrown down by the Macpherson recommendations for education. On this matter generally, influential writers, based at the London Institute of Education concluded:

‘Labour’s naïve multiculturalism is an advance over the determined refusal to consider equity issues displayed by previous Conservative governments. It nevertheless represents a grossly inadequate policy response in the face of deep seated and institutionalised racism that characterises the contemporary education system.’

(Gillborn, Youdell and Kirton, 1999: 16)

6 *The problematic nature of analysing information from the position of ‘insider researcher’*

Here, only a few ideas can be mentioned.

For one thing, tensions can be created by adopting a principled position in relation to the processes of knowledge production (Hunter, 1994, cited in Phillips, 1998b). Furthermore, principle itself, for example the principle of social equity, say, is the product itself of those sorts of processes and needs to be problematised as much as an approach to social inequity would.

Second, for this I had to problematise my own 'blackness', something I have generally been unaccustomed to doing.⁸ This is a significant point and not a distraction: Hall's articulation theory stated the position clearly; 'blackness' has different meanings in different contexts and relationships, when there are different signifying chains (Hall, 1985: 108).

Third, any problems about reflexivity affecting validity (Schwandt, 1997: 135) could clearly be influenced by the narcissism of reflection, a phrase I have used above and feel is worthy of repetition. This might affect the writing up of findings in a number of ways: and most problematic is the fact that emotions, fieldwork, disclosure and self-censorship are entwined (Kleinman and Copp, 1993: 13-46; Lee, 1993: 185-94).

Fourth, working for the QCA supports the idea that reflexively produced knowledge results in more uncertainty than certainty (Giddens, 1994: 3, cited in Kelly, *et al.*, 2000); and certainly lends support to the general theory of reflexive modernisation which suggests that this is the 'paradox of human knowledge' – expertise makes one more aware of alternative knowledge, less certain about our own and hence about the future (the more I find out, the less I know that I really know), which therefore may seem more threatening.

Fifth, being an insider does not necessarily give you privileged information, only what you might at first believe to be privileged information. My observations of my own and others' participation in the first Writer's and then the Group Writer's meetings seemed to mirror both of Sanger's notions of 'Inside out or Outside In?' (Sanger, 1996, ch. 10 *passim*, and p. 267 for a marvellous example of this in comic form).

Sixth, there is an extensive literature on the theory and methodology of 'elite' interviewing (Moyser & Wagstaffe, 1987 in Phillips, 1998a), within the context of educational policy. However, the virtues and strategic merit of using elite-based interviews to unlock the doors of policy-makers' mindsets was more recently summed up by Phillips after completing his analysis of the making of the history curriculum between 1990-95. It was a way, he wrote, 'to synthesise the divide between historical and sociological methodologies in an analytical account of education policy' (Phillips, 1998: 7). Further research utilising this approach could provide a way forward in order to find a way to address some of the assertions in this paper.

7 *Conclusions: what difference did the Macpherson Report make to the writing of the history Schemes of Work?*

- 1 It made my selection, as a 'Writer', a much greater likelihood.
- 2 It made the platform for discussing multicultural and intercultural issues, at the brainstorming stage, much greater (due both to the proximity in time of the events and also the small number of writers).
- 3 It played no part and made no difference at the Group Writers stage.
- 4 Its relative lack of effect on the history curriculum has aroused comment in the academic press.
- 5 Overall, its effects on the final written Schemes – in terms of 'multicultural content' – were small. A recent work on inclusive education asserted that 'effective teaching is informed by knowledge of pupils, knowledge of disciplines and knowledge of pedagogy' (Daniels and Gardner, 2000: xvii). Discussions underpinning the 'writing' process seemed to focus on these in reverse order paying very little attention to the first component – the pupils. In doing so, it could be claimed that the reflections on pedagogic approach were therefore not necessarily appropriate.
- 6 It did not move the debates about self-identity in relation to interculturalism, as an issue in the history curriculum, away from a slow back burner. To paraphrase Giddens' idea, the gloss placed on such issues by the history curriculum only assists

to make an understanding of the evolutionary nature of self-identity a work in slow progress: a 'biography which is reflexively lived' (Giddens, cited by Kelly, *et. al.*, 2000: 118).

- 7 Compared with one of our near neighbours' policies – very little. It been suggested that the NC needs to be more pro-active, as it tends to be in Holland (a nation with a similar imperial history and legacy) (Driessen, 200: 55-72) in recognising and acting on ideas to secure equal opportunity for all in the spirit of recommendation 67. The writing process paid little heed to other models and research conducted elsewhere. (For a relevant American example, see Ghuman, p. 210 cited in Daniels and Gardner, 1999.)
- 8 Finally and more generally (and this holds across the curriculum, not only for history) it may have opened a way, in the longer term, to those more regular participants in government decision-making, for thinking about and acting on recommendation 67's issues. The DfES and QCA have promoted 'Inclusion', rather than cultural diversity as the more politically acceptable, media-friendly vehicle for addressing the issues highlighted by Macpherson. Influential educationalists, such as Robin Richardson (Richardson and Wood, 1999; Richardson, 2002), have been quick to recognise the opportunities afforded by the inclusion debate. Additionally, the introduction of 'Citizenship' in the NC since 2002 provides yet another vehicle. However neither provide adequate and explicit advice on promoting cultural diversity; consequently further influential analyses on the issues, such as the Parekh Report, have found the need to take Macpherson further and reassert the need to transform educative processes at all levels (Parekh, 2000, pp. 142-158, 301-303).

Conclusion

Ten years after the murder, the debate continues and the Macpherson Report still makes front-page headlines (*The Independent*, 2003:1). Stephen Lawrence's death has made the phrase 'institutionally racist' a widely understood and accepted term that needs to be tackled across society, not just within the Metropolitan Police Force which dealt with the murder enquiry in such 'a lacklustre and haphazard way' (Guardian, 2003: 43). The Macpherson Report concluded that:

'Institutional racism consists of the collective failure of an organisation to provide an appropriate and professional service to people because of their colour, culture or ethnic origin. It can be seen or detected in processes, attitudes and behaviour which amount to discrimination through unwitting prejudice, ignorance, thoughtlessness and racist stereotyping which disadvantage ethnic-minority people'.

(Macpherson, 1999: 321)

In relation to these ideas, the writing of the templates for the history curriculum was a lost opportunity.

The basic concept of producing templates of 'best practice' with frameworks of information for teaching a subject has the potential to be of great use to experienced, trained and creative teachers - they can use them, mould them or even ignore them. However, at a time of teacher shortages and with time being a precious resource, the temptation has been for some teachers (perhaps especially non-specialists) to take on the templates uncritically as a prescription for meeting pupil needs. For some, therefore, *suggestive* templates have been transformed in importance to *essential* templates. Yet, taken in the UK's societal context, where one in eight has a minority ethnic affiliation (British Census, 2001), cultural diversity has been glossed over in the templates. Even mainstream educational philosophy would be alarmed: Bruner's view (1996), for instance, is that 'you cannot understand mental activity unless you take into

account the cultural setting and its resources, the very thing that give mind to its shape and scope' (p. 10). When the National Curriculum is again due for review in 2004, more recent work on history, values and diversity may prove influential. Then, as now, while it would be laudable to insist that teachers 'be fully aware of their own philosophy of History' in order to be reactive to change (Stow, 2000: 79), it will also be vital that those in positions of power in the DfES and the QCA critique their own philosophies too in order to be more proactive in making effective engagement with the cultural diversity of British society.

Endnotes

- 1 'Race is a term used less and less these days because it refers to a concept that few people believe in any more. The idea that people belong to different 'races' was developed in the 18th and 19th centuries in an attempt to explain the many differences between people. Scientists and philosophers of the day divided humankind into three racial groups based entirely on superficial differences in skin-colour, hair texture, eye shape, etc. Ever since then, the pseudo-scientific 'evidence' has been used to reinforce the belief that people's physical, intellectual and behavioural differences are hereditary. Genetic research has shown that underneath the 'paintwork', human beings are essentially the same, meaning that people's skin colour is of little more relevance than the colour of their eyes or hair.' (Dadzie, 2002: 93).
- 2 Hence, there will be occasion, in this piece, to use the personal pronoun in describing events. Being an 'insider researcher' is problematised in part 6, below.
- 3 'Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple forms of constraint. And it induces regular effects of power. Each society has its regime of truth, its 'general politics' of truth: that is, the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctified; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with what counts as true.' [Source: Foucault, M. (1980) *Power/Knowledge: selected interviews and other writings, 1972-77*, p. 131.]
- 4 For details and analysis, see Phillips (1998b) *passim*. This approach will be familiar to the historian of the 18th century; it is a form of Namierism for contemporary history.
- 5 A keynote address given by me (D'Sena, 1999) at the second international Equality in Education conference in Verona in mid-May was described, in not an altogether friendly, but at least in an anonymised way, by a journalist on the editorial page of *The Times Educational Supplement* only a month later in the following way:

'Some of the papers were turgid and too academic to be any good to anyone outside the ivory towers. But when teachers and teacher-trainers spoke you got a sense that anti-racist education was far from dead' [Source: 'Will education lead society out of racism?', Yasmin Alibhai-Brown in *The Times Educational Supplement*, no. 4329, 18 June, 1999, p. 16.]

I assumed this to be a reference to my paper, since it was the only paper that the reporter attended during the three-day conference. At the end of the writing process, *The Daily Telegraph* was more explicit in its criticism of the templates:

‘The landmarks of British history have become optional parts of the National Curriculum. They appear only as italicised examples of what is permissible to teach ... However there is no such equivocation about teaching History through a host of politically correct social themes ... Even good schools therefore will find it difficult to pass on to children a sense of national identity’ [Source: letters to the editor, *The Daily Telegraph*, 11 September, 1999].

- 6 *The Daily Mail*, 5th August, 1999, p. 35, 'School reforms which 'write off' greats of British history', by Tony Halpin. For the British media the summer months, when political news is in short supply, are known as the ‘silly season’ – when stories are blown out of proportion.
- 7 Of course she was not to know that this issue had been addressed by me in the first (weekend) meeting; that a Scheme about contending interpretations about blacks in the British Empire and Britain had been written, submitted and rejected by a higher steering group at some time in June 1999. (Nor was she to know that her other assertion, that there could be linkage between the Core Unit Britain 1500-1750 with West African empires (p. 26) had been addressed in Key Stage 2 with a verbal indication that the Unit title be changed to the Tudor World).
- 8 An analysis of the complex nature of Anglo-Indian identity has yet to be written. Thanks are due to Geraldine Charles for allowing me to read chapters from her forthcoming work on ‘Anglo-Indian Ancestry’ (2004). For more on hybridity and multiple identities see, *inter alia*, Hall (1985), Richardson (2002) and Kanneh (1998).

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