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INTERCULTURAL EDUCATION AND SOCIAL COHESION

*By Jagdish S. Gundara**

I.   Identities and Societal Diversity

It is not just the identities of individuals and groups that are important in national contexts. It is also important to consider how individual states and larger entities such as the OAU, OAS, NAFTA, the European Union and the Council of Europe represent national or regional identities at the intra-state levels. While this paper addresses issues internationally, it uses Europe as its focus.

Issues of belonging measure the extent of how inclusive or exclusive a state or region is. There are problems about the status of minorities or settlers, particularly in relation to their identities and sense of belonging.   Different formulations and terminologies are used to exclude them from the body politic. For example, how long does a "migrant" or an "immigrant" remain an immigrant? Do children of immigrants born in Europe see themselves as living in "host" countries? As the Council of Europe's Interim *Report* suggests:

> Community relations politics are therefore directed not only towards migrants but towards the population as a whole. Community relations are not about migrants as a separate and problematic group, but about the interaction between the different groups and communities which go to make up a society as a whole.[1]

The *Report*, however, contradicts itself by referring to "the host community" Para.10) as an entity and then excluding "historic" or "traditional" minorities (para.10) from its consideration.[2] A state which sees itself as a "host" can exclude "guests" at will.

This raises issues concerning the use of terminology and definitional frameworks.   For instance, to suggest that some societies have recently *become* diversified or multicultural implies that there have been no historically based diversities and that diversity in such societies derives from immigrants. Social scientists and historians have a major contribution to make in this area which will have vital implications for all who are involved in the process of education. If the identities of nation states are presented as inherently monolithic, monocultural and monolingual, the common perception will be that groups who are identified as different cause the problems

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[1]   Council of Europe, Committee of Experts on Community Relations, *Community Relations and Solidarity in European Society*, (1989) at 4.

[2]   *Ibid.* at 5.

created by societal diversity in various nations and regions of the world. It leads to "difference" being equated with "deficit".

An examination of nation states would by and large demonstrate their ethnically-based genealogies. However, given the nature of nations and nationalism, this is only one aspect of national identity. The other aspect is the post-enlightenment development of political and bureaucratic frameworks within which democratic and egalitarian nations function. This includes the modern constitutions of these states and the international human rights instruments they are signatory to and these have implications for education.

As a consequence, maps of nations may be constructed to illustrate tensions within the ethos of such states with respect to different languages, regions, social classes, families, religions, traditions and various aspects of modernity. These complex national and societal frameworks also include equality as an aspect of legal citizenship and try to eliminate gender and racial discrimination using constitutional principles.

The image of the modern and impersonal nation often masks its ethnic origins. Since these nations rely on professional politicians, bureaucrats and intellectuals to encode and transmit the myths and symbols of the modern nation, this can lead to feelings of anomie and rootlessness among the disadvantaged groups and communities within the nation state. These may include sections of dominant nationalities and territorially based minorities, as well as those of immigrant origin. Xenophobic responses by one or a combination of these groups can constitute a grave danger to safety and security and lead to exclusions. They can heighten xenophobia and racism towards the indigenous and immigrant populations by scapegoating them for all that is wrong in society. They can also lead to identities based on a siege mentality amongst immigrant and other minorities as they try to defend themselves and their interests. The job for teachers and educators becomes extremely difficult, particularly if the issues are incorrectly framed and addressed. It is therefore important to examine how to tackle the complex issue of the Janus-headed nation, so that their education systems can deal with these complex issues more rationally.

For example, if the teacher must continually confront classrooms containing children who have false but comforting notions of an exclusive national community, then the minority or the immigrant child will remain on the periphery of the school's discourse. Teachers and educational systems require a framework which allows them to engage creatively and constructively with these issues because of their centrality to the process of education. This interactive process could contribute to a sense of belonging not only within the school but also within the community.

A Council of Europe Interim *Report* suggested that it would exclude territorial or historical minorities from its ambit.[3] There may have been very good reasons for this, but such an exclusion in the project camouflages a critical issue about what it means to

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[3]   *Ibid.* at 5, para. 13.

belong in European societies. As Professor Nigel Grant made clear at the Kolmarden Conference on *Intercultural Training of Teachers* in 1985:

> The ethnic groups in Scotland have the additional problem of being minorities within a minority. They have come to terms, somehow, with their identity as Sikhs or Poles or whatever vis-a-vis the majority community in Scotland; but they also have to work out their identity in the larger context of the United Kingdom, within which the Scots of all kinds are an identifiable minority [...]. Many Gaels, Irish, Italians and Poles have, rightly or wrongly, assimilated into Lowland Scottish Anglophone culture; what has prevented many Asians from doing so and driven them back into their traditional cultures is racism.[4]

What Nigel Grant said in 1985 is more relevant now in both Scotland and Wales which have devolved with the establishment of the Assembly in Cardiff and Parliament in Edinburgh. Hence, the whole issue of a sense of belonging, or lack of, it is tied up with that of the nation, including the historic, territorially based nationalities. This is particularly so because minorities and immigrants may experience xenophobia and racism within the devolved national contexts as well. These complexities across and within national boundaries cannot be ignored if we are to address such issues at the school level.

Another aspect of this complex issue concerns the perceptions and perspectives formed by those who have settled in European and other societies. What becomes clear to many people who come to work and live in other countries is the diversity of these societies and also the unitary state structures which govern them. For these groups, their sense of belonging cannot be improved by instituting cosmetic measures. If authorities want to tackle the negative features of narrow nationalism, racism and xenophobia, then nominal actions ought to be avoided because they do not allow situations to improve. Those who have come to settle in new societies have useful experience which ought not to be ignored, but rather built upon. Their understanding of the societies of settlement are based on the diversities observed first hand. They must see their future as part and parcel of the diverse groups within these societies, which those who govern many nation states may choose to ignore.

The presence of the Sami in Sweden, the Scots and the Welsh in Britain, the Bretons and Corsicans in France; the existence of different European languages and dialects; the religious conflicts as well as religious co-existence in various parts of Europe have not gone unnoticed by those who have come to settle in Europe in the post-World War II period. The class divisions in European societies which have historical and contemporary dimensions have also had a major impact on the lives of new settlers in Europe. When many of these settlers come across discussions about diversity in society or about racism and multiculturalism in education as a primary consequence of their presence, they are surprised. They feel that such questions relate not only to their own presence in Europe but to fundamental questions about the nation, and the minority question in Europe. The settlers also observe the problems faced by "gypsies" or, more appropriately, the Roma in Western Europe. As Puxon has observed: "Roma are dumped

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[4] National Board of Universities and Colleges (UHA), "Intercultural Training of Teachers" in *Report from the Conference in Kolmarden*, (Stockholm: 1985) at 93.

as illiterate, or semi-illiterate among the unskilled and unemployed, rendering them a disinherited and exploited race. The accumulative effects of neglect and persecution are catastrophic."[5]

Many of the recent settlers understand the plight of the Roma because they themselves have experienced the "catastrophic" effects of colonialism, underdevelopment and racism. Their experiences are similar to the persecution of the historic minorities and clearly indicate the state apparatus can deny fundamental human rights. The existence of authoritarian tendencies and the rise of xenophobia may have more to do with fears which lead governments to ignore underlying dichotomies, schisms and diversities seen as divisive. However, to improve levels of belonging the interests of these diverse groups cannot be ignored. In the case of travellers and gypsy communities, their identities as people who move cannot be analysed on the same principles as if they were settled. Within the context of nation states with territorial boundaries and settled citizens, those who travel are seen not only as different, but also as marginal.

There is, therefore, an important issue concerning how historical and contemporary diversities are ignored by many governments. The existence, and resultant implications, of these diversities is fundamental to addressing the phenomenon of educational exclusion and to developing social inclusion and cohesion internationally, especially in relation to "fourth world peoples".

II.   Redefining nationalities

Obviously, since most societies are complex entities, with diverse populations, complex negotiations are required to ascertain what their potential identities are likely to be. As "Auslander" or immigrants have increasingly settled in Europe, there has been concern about defining their legal and political position within European societies. The most common designation has been that of "ethnic minorities" and Castles refers to them as "Western Europe's new ethnic minorities."[6] However, in terms of their identity this may not be a satisfactory term because the new settlers by and large have basic problems of nationality and citizenship which are unrelated to ethnicity. They may also have not one, but multiple identities, including those from mixed backgrounds who represent hybridism.

The issue of multiple identities or hybridism raises the larger issue of how rigid or flexible social structures or institutions are. The more rigid they are the less sense of agency the groups have in changing their identities or social positioning to enable them to participate in democratic and socially cohesive societies.

Most of the new settlers who migrate have come from nation states which have diverse populations. These settlers are therefore either nationals of the country of origin

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[5]   G. Puxon, *Roma: European Gypsies* (London: 1980) ; M.R.G., *Report n°14*, 3d ed. at 14.

[6]   S. Castles, H. Booth & T. Wallace, *Here for Good: Western Europe's New Ethnic Minorities* (London: Pluto Press, 1984).

or of the country of settlement. Their position in legal and political terms is continually being changed through legislation. As and when these groups resist discriminatory legislation or racism in countries of settlement they do not do so on the basis of "ethnic" solidarity, but as nationals of countries from which they migrate. Since the new settlers live in nation states and citizens may not only be defined in terms of their "ethnicity", it may be useful to reappraise the use of this term.

The use of "ethnicity" by social anthropologists certainly does not help clarify this complex issue unless dominant ethnicities are also examined in this framework. A more systematic analysis of the basis of identities of nation states in historical and contemporary terms must be undertaken so that a clear definition of issues may emerge. For instance, what are the differences between national minorities and "ethnic" minorities? Do the national minorities (in Quebec, Ontario, Scotland, Brittany, East Timor) accept the nation states as defined by the dominant nations? Do these groups in territorially based regions, in turn grant the same rights and privileges to others referred to as "ethnic" minorities?

Many national minorities have a recognised territorial base and some of these are constitutionally recognised within the state. However, the newly settled communities also occupy urban spaces which may not be constitutionally recognised by the nation states but may, nevertheless, represent the birth of new national minorities. The black community as part of the working class in Britain belongs to communities like Brixton, Southall and Harmondsworth. Similarly, the Turks and Kreuzberg in Berlin live in a sanctuary against the racism they experience, both from the "Ossies" and the "Wessies". Likewise, Chinese in many Canadian cities have established cohesive communities.

The importance of involving social scientists to define issues of pluralism in education are illustrated by the complexity of national populations, whether they include historic minorities or not. This analysis ought, in particular, to consider how centralised nations are exclusive or inclusive of marginalised communities.

III.   Secularism

Societal diversities may necessitate regulation and it is best that this is based on consensus amongst the constituent groups and communities within most nations. Most modern states have to face the issue of secularism. Yet, these states do not demonstrate any clarity about secularism and the role of religion within the state. Historical legacies and ambiguities continue to determine the identities of most nations. This not only raises questions for the political system, but has great significance for education and the development of inclusive communities in most national contexts. While religious tolerance is a facet of modern secular societies, it may be necessary to have clear definitions of the secular nature of such societies and the rights and obligations of various citizens and groups. If for example, it was clear that issues of religious *instruction* are part of the private domain with no role in the public domain in secular societies, those who belong to all religious groups would ensure that this remains the case. On the other hand, issues of religious and spiritual *knowledge* and comparative study of religions can

be part of education within the public domain. Alternately, if religious symbol systems are very powerful, we might ask if there are ways of cross-fertilising values from religious and secular systems within the public domain.

This raises issues at two levels. First, how can nation states within their modern secular frameworks ensure that religious communities of different faiths will receive equality of treatment and freedom of speech to match their duties and obligations as citizens? The second level is much more serious for educators. It concerns the accretion of feelings, ways of seeing and understanding, by nations and by those who are classified as the "other" and whose voices are ignored.

Thus notions of secularism make us focus much more sharply on our own understanding of the issues that teachers and other educators need to confront in intellectual terms. In particular, the issue of religious identity requires more serious consideration. The modern rise of theocracies cannot be ignored. Even in secular societies, as in the United States, the rise of electronic churches is an indication of the type of fundamentalism which may need to be faced because of its implications for the multi-faith nature society. Since religious symbol systems strike a stronger chord than the diffuse systems of secularism, educators and social scientists need to reappraise the nature of secular education and its role in strengthening the legitimacy of all citizens. The rise of such strong belief systems in modern secular states can be a reflection of how secular states have failed to provide a safe and secure framework for diverse faith communities. It is also partly attributable to strong assertions of human rights which are not accompanied by effective measures to ensure their implementation.

It is a truism that conflicts will obviously occur between the state and various belief systems, or between one belief system and another. Current resolutions of such conflicts are based on *ad hoc* solutions or pragmatic approaches to resolving them. It may be that a clearly defined bill of rights and constitutional solutions to the issues need to be explored and the Canadian model is important for such analysis. Within such a legal framework, fundamental human rights of all the citizens ought to be guaranteed. The *European Convention on Human Rights* and the various international covenants are not a substitute for binding national legal codes.[7] This is an issue for human rights groups and lawyers, particularly as complex issues in relation to secularism are bound to increase.

A bill of rights which assures the religious rights of all communities ought to emerge from a total acceptance of the societal diversities in a national or a regional context. In some instances the current rise of fundamentalism in some faith communities is in direct contrast to their fears of assimilation. They in fact, represent the "siege mentality" mentioned earlier.

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[7]   See S. Poulter, "Ethnic Minority Customs, English Law and Human Rights" (1987) 36 I.C.L.Q. 589.

IV.   The Identity of The Other, the Oriental and Knowledge

Another important barrier to inclusive communities, particularly in the cultural and educational domains, is the way in which minorities or immigrants are seen as "the other" - "The other" or "the Oriental" who is different from "us". This issue presents a major challenge to understanding by educators in inclusive communities. Knowledge issues raised by their presence may inform us about how "the other" is defined. Whether "the other" can or does belong to a national society requires a brief comment.

Some European politicians have taken strident positions. Franz Schonhuber, the head to the German Republican Party, makes this clear in the way in which he represents the Turks. He maintains that he is not against Turks, and that not only is his daughter fluent in Turkish, he also owns a Villa on the Turkish coast. But "never will the green flag of Islam fly over Germany." The Turks are hospitable and family oriented people, but they are an "alien society".[8] By asserting knowledge about the Oriental he can distance them from Germany. This merits some consideration. Another example of this kind of thinking comes from the Minister for the Interior, Joseph Michel. While cognisant of the fact that the very viability of Belgium depends upon cooperation by the Flemish and Walloon people on matters of bilingualism, he attempts to sidetrack considerations of these fundamental social issues scapegoating the immigrant community in Belgium as the cause of malaise. In a speech in October 1987, he said: "We risk being like the Roman people, being invaded by *barbarians*, who are the Arabs, Moroccan, Yugoslavs and Turks. People who have come from far away and have nothing in common with our *civilization*."[9]

This statement reflects the "commonsense racism" of large numbers of European people. In opening up discussions about education, or culture, in plural societies it is important to explore how notions about "Our Civilization" have been constructed and how the "other" is identified and defined out by the particular European type of historiography.

The Joseph Michel statement, while reflecting a narrow definition of a nation, does not rest on ignorance of European nationhood. It is a construction which is consciously created, recreated, manipulated, obscured or mystified to enhance or ensure the continuity of established nationalisms. Identities of groups can be ascribed and they can then be excluded, pathologised, dominated, marginalised or distanced by being referred to as "barbarians", "ethnics", "migrants" or "Orientals". It is important at this level, to explore the notion of "our civilization" and the distance or connections with groups considered to be "barbarians". Nation states are complex and as they become involved in even larger entities like the European Union, the governments of some states tend to retrench to reinstate their narrow national identities within the larger whole. This has resonance in other national and regional contexts in the Americas, Africa and Asia,

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[8]   *New York Times* (26 November 1989) A4.

[9]   J.M. Markham, "Rightist Parties Forming in Europe" *New York Times* (22 November 1987) 1-1, 1-23 (my emphasis).

where issues of Eurocentrism may raise reactions in the forms of Afrocentrism, Islamic, or Sinocentrism.

The rise of narrow nationalisms is a major barrier towards the recognition of plural societies. An issue which requires some discussion concerns how such a narrow definition of nations and knowledge has emerged in modern nations. This has implications for most nation states, whether in Europe or influenced by the European nation state model.

Nation states have tended to define themselves by generating a sense of the "other" as an outsider, who does not belong. They tend to generate this identity through myths and memories which may or may not be true. A range of the definition of the identities of the "other" has been articulated by western thinkers and necessitates some discussion.

Likewise, the role of historians and social scientists is not to assist in the mystification of narrow nationalisms in currently structured nation states, but to assist in their demystification. Social scientists and educators need to adopt a critical perspective and distance themselves from narrow definitions of nations so as not to aid and abet the implementations of identities in the name of "fatherland", "national unity" or "national integration". Likewise the development of a non-triumphalist history which can be disarmed to create better intercultural understandings is necessary.

The first task here is to undertake a very brief description of how the identity of the "other" has become defined in "civilized" thought in order to shed some light on how to deconstruct it, using other systems of thought and historical frameworks. Hence, increasingly there is a need to develop non-centric and inclusive curricula which validate knowledge from different cultures and civilisations.

Many nations may even deny the multi-faceted and multifocal origins of modern nation states. The overwhelmingly centralised and dominant ethnicities of nation states need to be studied to enable the possibility of a clearer focus on the historical bases of knowledge and contemprorary nature of these nation states.

Martin Bernal argues that the Egyptian and Phoenician influence on Greek civilizations was undermined during the period after the French Revolution when Christianity felt threatened by the Freemason avowel of Egyptian philosophy. Three other major factors which influenced an interest in the Greeks and their transformation into the pure childhood of European civilization were the "notion" of progress, the increase of racism and the impact of Romanticism.[10]

The Ancient Greeks had written their own views of history which were accepted until the Renaissance. As European imperialism spread in the late 17th century and the colonisation of the Americas and the extermination of the native Americans and enslavement of African blacks, the disciplines of classics, as the Science of antiquity, and

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[10] M.G. Bernal, *Black Athena: The Afro-Asiatic Roots of Classical Civilization*, vol. 1 (New Brunswick: Rutgers Press, 1987).

"racial science" also became established. A principle began to be asserted that different races were intrinsically unequal in physical and mental endowment. Thus, the identities of the subordinated and colonised people were not something they chose. They were given to them.

Aristotle believed that the Greeks were superior to other races and he justified slavery.[11] As Europe expanded, the ideas of "progress" became linked to its economics and industrialisation, and Artistotle's notions of slavery were used in expansion to Africa. The rise of racism meant that earlier notions of Greece as a mixed culture of African and Semitic sources was denied. Greece became the ideal for the growth of German civilization connecting German soil and blood. The notion of the superiority of European civilization, and subsequently of Germanic Ayranism dominance, has its seed in this period.

As it rose, European nationalism, particularly when it had overtones of Romanticism, tended to look on Greek and Hellenic culture as its point of origin. During the 18th and 19th centuries the hostility towards the Egyptian and Phoenician civilizations was intensified, particularly to distance them from the Greeks. In the 1880s the intellectual atmosphere was transformed by the triumph of racial Anti-Semitism in Germany and Austria. Through Imperialism, Europe and the Americas were also acquiring increasing control over vast parts of the world and the indigenous people of America and Australia were exterminated while those of Africa and Asia were humiliated and subordinated. By 1885, the Indians and the Semites were both cast aside. The rise of Aryanism during this period is explained by a Belgian writer, Guy Bunnens, who explained that Europeans:

> maintained that it was unbelievable that nations so important today should have played no role in the past. It was therefore necessary to assert the "rights of Europe over the claims of Asia". The historical background at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th century explains these new theories. For this was the epoch when the colonialism of the European powers was triumphant. There was another non-scientific factor. The end of the 19th century saw a great current of anti-Semitism in Europe, particularly in Germany and France. [...] This hostility against the Jews extended in history against those of the Semites, the Phoenicians.[12]

A critical reading of European thought is needed so as to reappraise the way in which knowledge is currently constructed. This different reading ought to involve a deconstruction and reconstruction of the way in which the diverse origins and developments of human history have been obfuscated. This would have a profound influence on how we construe the diverse origins and development of knowledge - which ought to assist in a reappraisal of what educators consider as legitimate and relevant knowledge. It might also assist in deconstructing "common sense" racism in Europe which is able to classify people as "barbarians" or "uncivilised". The construction of these categories within European historiography and the denial of societal diversities

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[11] Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. T.A. Sinclair (London: Penguin, 1962) at 269.

[12] Bernal, *supra* note 10, quoting G. Bunnens at 376-77.

within European nations requires further consideration. This construct, however, has implications in other contexts beyond Europe where other types of centricisms based on Islam, Asian values or Afrocentrism have developed.

The dominating groups and elites have ignored the enormous contributions of all groups to the production and creation of knowledge. National boundaries tend to obfuscate not only the diverse origins of knowledge and peoples within the nation, but also of those beyond its boundaries. National constraints not only structure knowledge, they do so by excluding the contributions of the "other" (who may include women, linguistic communities and religious minorities or "non-believers"), as well as those who are considered to be racially different.

Discussions and debate tend to demonstrate the better and lesser identities of some groups. Hence, those in the "developed" countries are able to talk of those in the "developing" countries - thus reinforcing identities of inferiority. The role of educators is to assist in the deconstruction of the dominant-self wherever it might exist, and however it is defined. This process requires educators to be involved in assisting the "other" to speak for themselves and to articulate their cultures and histories. The "knowledge industry" as Edward Said referred to it at the American Anthropological Association (1987) Conference, has a responsibility to eliminate the maintenance of subsidiary and inferior geographical or intellectually constructed regions - both at international as well as national levels.[13]

One of the issues which we ought to consider is defined by Edward Said, who claims that: "The production of knowledge best services communal as opposed to sectarian ends; how knowledge that is non-dominative and non-coercive can be produced in a setting that is deeply inscribed with the politics, the considerations, the positions and the strategies of power."[14]

None of the cultural systems are frozen or have a fixed status. Educators, social policy workers, and teachers, need to challenge the muteness imposed upon the identities, the knowledge and images of oppressed people and civilizations. They need to grasp the legacies of resistance of these civilizations and ensure that there is a connection established with general histories of societies and of the social bases of the production of knowledge. A dominative mode of teaching about visual images and literary knowledge provides teachers with powerful tools. Therefore, the first process we may have to consider is to "unlearn" as Raymond Williams says "the inherently dominative mode."[15]

In the case of Western culture, this unlearning and letting the "other" speak for itself is an ethical question for Western civilization. Part of this process would entail avoiding the depiction or the containment of those outside the dominant framework - be they blacks, women or "Orientals". This would require the development of an

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[13] Audio tape of E. Said's Session at American Anthropological Association Conference, Chicago 1987.

[14] E. Said, *Orientalism* (Harmondsworth: Penguin, 1978) at 326.

[15] R. Williams, *Culture and Society, 1780-1959* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1959) at 376.

"oppositional critical consciousness" so that the "seductive degration of knowledge can be avoided."[16]

Inclusions and exclusions based on the historiographic constructions of knowledge are particularly important because of the way in which the identities of the superior and the civilized or the inferior and the uncivilized are constructed.

V. Belongingness

In the context of eliminating inequalities, nation states ought to recognise the complex societies in which their structures are built. The sense of belonging in complex societies require complex national machinery which is finely tuned - and is able to function precisely because it is in harmony. The different parts must be able to function differently and effectively within a framework, as in complex modern technologies.

Hence better school and community relations, particularly in the educational and cultural domains, can only occur if at the underlying level, legal, political and economic measures have been taken to ensure the inclusion of locally shared spaces based on the principles of equality and justice. Understandings which only result from lifestyles and cultures cannot have lasting effects if the wider parameters of institutional discrimination are not tackled.

VI. Social and Cultural capital and some educational initiatives

The creation of social cohesion in schools and communities presents a profound challenge for societies in the new millennium. This is particularly the case at a national level which must ensure that identities and knowledge are dynamically enhanced, instead of maintaining the ethnic view of static "ethnic" groups who are structured and positioned within the lower echelons of national societies. Measures to ensure not only equality of opportunity, but also equality of outcomes, can form a basis for solidarity within equalitarian societies. In effect, the migration into many countries constitutes a cultural capital which ought to be nurtured and which would lend strength to developing social cohesion. There is, therefore, need for social and cultural policies which can allow development of this social and cultural capital to develop social cohesion. This would be achieved if cultural and national identities of all groups are allowed institutional spaces to develop. However, in circumstances where inequalities, assimilative tendencies, and discrimination continue, a deterioration of community relations and exclusions including the fragmentation of communities in the world is assured.

Priority ought to be given to tackling nationalistic, ethnic and racial violence as well as harassment[17] and denial of access to all the structures and institutions of society.

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[16] Said, *supra* note 14 at 328.
[17] Commission for Racial Equality, *Learning in Terror: A Survey of Racial Harassment in Schools and Colleges in England, Scotland and Wales 1985-87* (London, 1988).

An example of this was the attempt by 11-15 year old children in British schools not to acknowledge that they were bilingual because of fear of racist comments from their white peer group. The Linguistic Minorities Project found, for instance, that while children did use their first languages with grand-parents and parents, this usage dropped in relations with their siblings or peers. This "non reciprocal language use" represents a net loss of linguistic capital which could add to linguistic vitality of all languages, including dominant ones. Unless, these languages are supported within the mainstream education system, they become marginal[18] and are excluded from society's discourses.

Intercultural bilingual education is one important aspect of developing socially cohesive polities. There is obviously a broad range of other issues which can be referred to briefly. The development of a non-centric curriculum which allows diverse groups in a polity to develop a shared and common value systems are of even greater importance. It is not "ethnic" knowledge for "ethnics" which is necessitated. Rather important symbolic and substantive changes must be made in mainstream curricula to ensure that all groups can see that they have a stake in the social system and in its stability. Engagement with such a curricula can, for instance, include the disarming of history whether this is in the Caucases or in Cambodia.

Intercultural bilingual and curricular changes also raise questions of teachers competence to teach. Good intercultural teacher education at initial and continuing education levels is necessary. Teachers who are appropriately educated must have the understanding, skills and knowledge to operate in complex classrooms. They need an enormous amount of support including appropriate teaching materials. However, classrooms themselves do not operate in a vacuum and what happens in school corridors, playground and the community also requires examination. Hence school and community links need to be strong to ensure that there are positive interactions and links between the democratically organised learning environment and its community.

In the final analysis social cohesion is not only a responsibility of educators, but is an issue for social and public policy. Hence, state, regional and international institutions need to uphold standards to protect democratic forms and rights of ordinary peoples everywhere.

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[18] *The Linguistic Minorities Project* (London: ULIE, 1983); J. Gundara, "Linguistic Diversity, Globalisation and Intercultural Education" in J.L. Bianco, A.J. Liddicoat & C. Crozet, eds., *Striving for the Third Place: Intercultural Competence Through Language Education* (Melbourne: Language Australia, 1999) at 23-42.