

Background notes and bibliography for:

Hur motverka segregation och rasism i kommunen? Internationell forskning och metoder kring arbetet mot segregation och rasism.

**How can we combat segregation and racism in the municipality?
International research and practice about the work against segregation and racism.**

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A contribution to:

**Tre parallella konferenser på tre orter om nyanlända
flyktingars välmående och inkludering i det finländska samhället.**

När: 22.5–23.5 2017 kl. 9–16

**Var: CLL/Åbo Akademi Vasa, rum C215, Academill, Strandgatan 2
CLL/Åbo Akademi Åbo, Mellanvågen, ASA-huset, Fabriksgatan 2
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Introduction

In preparing this address I have been very aware that this is an inaugural meeting of what is going to be a much more extended process; with further regional workshops, and then the long term continuation of the projects that develop from your collective deliberation. For that reason I have set myself the task of outlining what I regard as some potentially important generic initial questions that may inform how each of you may develop your own ideas. There are several reasons for this: amongst which are -

- The fact that in relation to the challenges that you wish to address the specific circumstances in each location are going to be critical in determining what are the appropriate strategies to be developed.
- It has been my experience over the last forty years, and more, that time spent thinking about how to expose the assumptions that inform our decision making on how to frame policies is never wasted.
- And that you already possess expertise that I lack.

One of the first questions that we must address is whether the focus of our efforts is to work with the population and institutions of the majority society in order to counter their racism and ensure an equitable and civil environment for the settlement of asylum seekers: or, to work with the asylum seekers, in order to enable them to access their rights and dignity through giving them the appropriate knowledge and skills for life in Finland. These are not mutually exclusive options, and both require the sort of honest reflexive preparation that I will try to sketch below.

Over the years in working on concrete policy initiatives with NGOs , local government and state government I have remained astonished at the variety of different, and indeed opposed, perspectives that individuals can bring to their interpretation of apparently agreed plans of action. So in interpreting my role here I have chosen to address these seemingly common agendas and invite us to consider what *a priori* beliefs and values we bring to their

formulation and interpretation. Consequently my presentation is likely to be seen as either helpful and challenging, or patronising and insulting. So it is just as well my presentation is on the second, and last day.

As a social scientist who has always aspired to make my 'academic research' relevant to concrete social policy issues I have had the privilege of on occasion working directly with NGOs, governments and individuals who are seeking to confront racisms and promote equality in their society; and one persistent conclusion I have reached is that given any policy initiative there is always the scope for deeply held disagreement about how to best address the issue at hand. And, secondly, and perhaps more troubling, is that good intentions are absolutely no guarantee of appropriate and effective interventions. People may agree on the wording of the principles that they intend to follow; but have very deep differences in their understanding of what they mean when translated into action. They may agree on the plan of action, but have very different commitments to its implementation.

Experience 1:

**THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA - SUBSTANTIVE EQUALITY
POLICY**

CONTEXT COMMITMENT RESISTANCE SUPPORT

Experience 2:

ECCAR - THE EUROPEAN COALITION OF CITIES AGAINST RACISM

A COMMON TEN POINT PLAN OF ACTION

and

A HUGELY PROBLEMATIC VARIATION IN PERSPECTIVE AND COMMITMENT

So accepting that we are all here motivated by our own moral commitments and guided by our own experience I would like to embark on unwrapping the layers of understanding we are likely to bring to our shared task.

National Self Imagery and Collective Self Regard.

A good place to start is by making explicit those taken for granted national narratives that we share when we come to engage with the reality of diversity in our contemporary society. Charles Taylor (2004) talks about 'modern social imaginaries: - those deep cultural eddies that are part of our shared imagined history and behavioural repertoire. In this context we can specifically note those beliefs about *how nice we are*. Certainly the British have a strong sense of their collective virtue as the mother of Parliaments and as a haven for refugees. *'WE, the British, are law abiding, polite, self-controlled, open –minded and generous: unlike some of our European neighbours.'*

Beliefs like this are held despite the lamentable history of British resistance to accepting German Jewish refugees at the outbreak of the Second World War and our current shameful resistance to admitting refugees and asylum seekers. In the 1980s when I was involved in an ambiguous manner with the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Immigration, it was clear then that Sweden saw itself as particularly 'nice' and progressive and equipped to provide advice to its near neighbours on matters related to immigration. And over years of ad hoc contact I would have to suggest that the Norwegians see themselves as particularly civil and humane. So perhaps it is worth your spending some time in exploring just what elements of *your national narratives* are likely to distort your understanding of current immigration and ethnic relations.

Each country has its own history of nation building, and inherent in that process has been the positioning of a virtuous and superior self in relation to the lived negotiation of living with specific others. Countries like Britain, with their long history of involvement in slavery and colonialism, provide a strong case study for the role of the hand of history in shaping contemporary identities, values and beliefs. Countries with less flamboyant histories of global oppression nevertheless carry forward their own legacies of stereotypes and racist cultural repertoires. Standing here in Helsinki we might for example remember the historic and current place of the Sami in the national imagination and understanding of the rights of minorities. The *'invention of tradition'*,(Hobsbawm and Ranger :1983), is a very real part of each nations construction of its own past - in the interests of shaping its present. We can think for example of the careful management of Finnish history that is involved in the continuing significance of the Winter War and the careful forgetting of the Civil war.

The academic literature is rich in its many accounts of the ways in which past events in intergroup relations have left deeply embedded imaginative repertoires of entitlement and membership of the national family and the reciprocal banal acceptance of the marginality, inferiority and disenfranchised status of others. David Goldberg (2002) has written eloquently about the interweaving of nation building and racism; and today across Europe we are all too self-evidently seeing the re-assurgence of a racist and neurotically asserted xeno-nationalism. (Fekete 2009): from which Finland has not been exempted.

We should not think that we are in a position to start to develop concrete strategies to counter racism and to develop policies of integration for asylum seekers and migrants until we have made ourselves critically self-conscious of the particular strands of nationalism and racism in popular culture that shape ethnic relations in our country: because it is all too apparent that racist and xenophobic sentiments have become permeated into the values and policies of mainstream politics in Europe. This therefore demands that we are cautious in unthinkingly claiming the credentials to set out on our virtuous purposes.

This is important because I seeking to facilitate the entry of asylums seekers in Finnish life *we must be aware of the sentiments and interests of those who would oppose us; and equally be aware of the potentially limited imagination of those we see as our natural allies*

Tolerance versus Rights: what is the conceptual framework that shapes you policy making?

If we are to develop specific initiatives to address the challenge of racisms and to promote equality for refugees and asylum seekers in our country, what is the conceptual and moral framework that frames our thinking? In addressing the process whereby at the level of municipalities and communes people come together to develop such policies, what language do they use to legitimate and shape their actions?

Let us be more specific, if we are contemplating addressing the needs of asylum seekers, refugees and economic migrants: what informs our understanding of the relation that exists between the established settled national majority and these multiple minorities? I would like to juxtapose two potential scenarios: one is framed in the language of *tolerance*, and the other in the language of *rights*.

Where a 'nice' and concerned majority respond to the current circumstances of ethnic minorities and asylum seekers this may be out of a humanistic concern at the racism and marginalisation that these minorities currently experience; or it may be out of a pragmatic realisation that unless adequately ameliorated these circumstances will result in social and economic costs for the majority. One frequently visible conceptual and moral discursive means of framing such a response is in *the language of tolerance*. Drawing upon the historically embedded sense of self-regard, that we have already addressed, the majority rehearses its decency and invokes the social virtues of tolerance as a legitimating framework for taking action. However, I would like to invite you to share my anxieties about the unfortunate downside of this position.

Tolerance

If we start to consider the nature of tolerance it rapidly becomes apparent that the taken for granted virtue of tolerance comes with strong normative *assumptions* about who tolerates whom. As I have argued elsewhere:

“ For tolerance to be necessary there must be a prior belief that the person to be tolerated has an intrinsically undesirable characteristic, or that they are not fundamentally entitled to the benefits which are to be allowed them. Those to be tolerated by definition, possess some such social stigma..... Tolerance is the exercise of largesse by the powerful, ultimately on behalf of the powerful. It is the generous extension of forbearance toward someone who is intrinsically objectionable or not deserving of the privilege being allowed. (Husband 1995: 65).

Thus, for example, those who are tolerated are routinely expected *to be grateful* for the generosity of their benefactors. As a basis for an equitable inclusive society this is hardly an appropriate basis for addressing inequalities between fellow citizens and denizens. It is the comfortable use of the concept of tolerance by the members of the dominant interests of society that results in their outrage and resentment when their ‘inferiors’ demand *their rights*. When women, Indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities and members of LGBT communities assert their rights, it is an expression of their refusal to be infantilized by the politics of tolerance. At the same time it is easy to observe in contemporary diverse societies the insidious logics of *the limits of tolerance*.

Nation states appear to be complacently comfortable with the notion that there is a natural limit to their tolerance; that they should not be pushed too far in the spirit of equal recognition. In their analysis of the Belgian response to ethnic diversity, Blommaert and Verschueren (1998) talk of the construction of an idea of “the threshold of tolerance”. In essence, this asserts that there is a natural limit beyond which it is not reasonable to expect majority populations to sustain their ‘normal’ level of tolerance. They argue that:

“The threshold of tolerance is an objectifying socio-mathematical concept that defines the conditions under which the all-European tolerance and openness may be cancelled without affecting the basic self-image. The European does not become intolerant, until this threshold is crossed. Just let him or her step back over the same threshold, i.e. just reduce the number of foreigners again, and the good old tolerance will return. In other words, even in moments of intolerance the European is still tolerant at heart, and the observed behaviour is completely due to the factual circumstances which render it impossible to exercise this essential openness. Needless to say, the threshold of tolerance is not an exclusively Belgian notion. It is commonly used in other European countries.”

(Blommaert and Verschueren 1988: 78)

The awesome political utility of this notion of the threshold of tolerance lies in its capacity to defend the assertion that tolerance is a defining capacity of the virtuous majority; whilst simultaneously allowing for conditions where it has a natural breaking point, due to unreasonable external pressures. It follows from this that a proper state politics of diversity lies in creating the environment in which tolerance may be guaranteed. This, of course, may mean draconian border policies, institutional mechanisms to contain the ‘unreasonable’ demands of minority ethnic communities and asylum seekers, and a creative cultural massage of the majority identity. The moral turpitude and cultural weaknesses of those who

are a 'burden upon decent society' are easily invoked discursive tropes to legitimate such 'necessary' actions of national self-interest; and regrettably are too easily found uncritically regurgitated in news media.

The social science literature has a great deal to offer in providing insight into the social psychological dynamics that feed the resentments of majority populations at what they see as the unreasonable, and even corrupt, demands of minorities and asylum seekers. [see for example the literature on Integrated Threat Theory,- Stephan, W. G. and Stephan, C. W. (1996) ,Stephan, W. G., Ybarra, O. and Bachman, G. (1999). On backlash against multi-cultural and anti-racist initiatives see, for example; Hewitt, 2005; Vertovec and Wessendorf,(2010); Abrajano and Hajnal;2015; Pai,2016; and Husband and Alam,2011).

In a world of diversity we need each to ask ourselves what are the limits of our own moral and political imagination. In developing policies to facilitate the 'integration' of asylum seekers we need to be aware of the political and cultural context in which we are operating in order to make explicit blind spots that may limit our thinking, and sensibilities in the majority communities that may generate resistance and backlash to our intended actions.

Rights and Agency

We routinely experience our access to rights through the civic expression of rights and privileges as citizens of the state. In which case we are at risk of being cognitively and emotionally challenged by the predominance of xeno-racist assimilationism that is *routinely* at the core of mainstream political discourse in our countries. The legions of Margaret Thatcher's *enemies within* are everywhere currently around the world being reproduced in the rhetoric of politicians in defining and addressing the needs of their *distressed middle classes*. The never ending flow of asylum seekers, the immigrants with their *victim culture*, the undeserving welfare scroungers: the *skivers* as opposed to the virtuous *strivers*, the radical Muslim as opposed to the righteous Christian: our political imagery is full of the imminent threat from dangerous outsiders. The language of nation, of citizenship, and of belonging and right, are permeated by ideologies of neurotic self-interest expressed through discourses of apparently reasonable and legitimate concern. Meek(2016), for example, provides an eloquent account of the current international construction of the marginalised and poor as a threat to 'decent hardworking people': a category that includes everyone from "a struggling small-time café owner with a bank loan to Britain's richest beneficiary of inherited wealth". (ibid p.3). Finding an anchor point beyond this hegemonic package is no easy feat.

Thus, before we can proceed any further there remains a necessary clarification regarding the legal conception of rights that must frame inclusive civility. A question that has become very pointed within political analysis rests upon whether we frame the provision of universal citizenship through the language of universal individual rights or whether we must

necessarily invoke an appreciation of group rights: and an acceptance of *differentiated citizenship* (see the debate between Kymlicka [1995, 2001] and Barry [2001]).

[This is an area of political philosophy that is riven by large, and nuanced, differences that cannot be addressed here. Vitikainen (2013) has provided a valuable over-view of the many fundamental, and subtle, areas of contestation across these many disputed perspectives.]

Young (1989) is among those who have argued persuasively that within a universalist provision of *individual rights* it is the interests and priorities of the majority that come to define what are the normative needs and cultural practices that should be addressed through treating people equally. Think of the long struggle of women, ethnic minorities and Indigenous peoples to achieve an equitable expression of *Their* understanding of their rights. In essence a model of universal equal provision for individual rights becomes a legal/political framework for the hegemonic expression of dominant interests: whether those are defined in terms of class, gender or ethnicity.

Drawing upon Taylor's (1992) discussion of the politics of difference and Kymlicka's (1995) work on multicultural citizenship I have argued elsewhere for the necessity of adopting a model of differentiated citizenship as a necessary framework for delivering equitable substantive citizenship in diverse societies (Downing and Husband 2005: Chapter 9).

It is worth noting Taylor's distinction between the homogenising politics of recognition – of equal dignity: and the new particularism of a politics of difference. To quote him:

“the development of the modern notion of identity, has given rise to a politics of difference. There is of course a universalist basis to this as well,..... Everyone should be recognised for his or her unique identity. But recognition here means something else. With the politics of equal dignity, what is established is meant to be universally the same, an identical basket of rights and immunities; with the politics of difference, what we are asked to recognise is the unique identity of this individual or group, their distinctiveness from everyone else. The idea is that it is precisely this distinctness that has been ignored, glossed over, assimilated to a dominant or majority identity.

(Taylor 1992 : 38)

In essence universalist principles of rights must be delivered with a systematic sensitivity to the particularity of their expression in relation to the diverse values and needs present in the population. A simple liberal *politics of recognition* must be replaced by a radical *politics of difference*. In other words, to quote the Western Australian Substantive Equality Policy: *If you want to treat me equally, you may have to be prepared to treat me differently.* (Equal Opportunity Commission of Western Australia). *Treating people equally does not necessarily mean treating them the same.*

This necessarily involves the reality that meeting *your* needs may cost more than meeting mine; and that consequently recognizing your rights is not merely a moral virtue, but may, inherently in a zero sum economy and political system, have a significant impact upon my established privileged status. My current status as a Professor at the Sami University of Applied Science in Guovdageaidnu, in the Norwegian Arctic, has provided me with a telling example of the commitment that must be given in order to allow all to be educated in their own language; and to have media that addresses their priorities, and in their language.

A willingness to recognize the limitations of addressing minority ethnic experiences of inequality through an individual rights perspective, and a consequent willingness to adopt group based differentiated citizenship, does not require a necessary rejection of the role of individual human rights. On the contrary I would argue that individual human rights principles are required to protect individuals from the potentially oppressive impact of group pressure. Thus a necessary pragmatic practice must recognize both the strategic essentialism (Phillips, 2007) of groups seeking to define and protect their shared interests, and the need of individuals to assert their own view of the good life and the freedoms that should attend it.

Since individuals' experience racial and sexual discrimination as members of specific social categories, rather than because of their individual character, it is appropriate that the redress for such discrimination should also recognise shared group interest. Invoking hopeful nostrums, based upon claims of national tolerance, is no adequate basis for the construction of equity and civility.

However fraught and uncomfortable, the theoretical challenge of differentiated citizenship must be addressed. As must the practical dilemmas of constructing a policy framework capable of negotiating the particularistic expression of shared universal rights. Anticipating what I will argue below one implication of the politics of difference is that in addressing the needs of asylum seekers we must start from a recognition of the reality that: '*If we want to treat them equally we must be prepared to treat them differently*'. We cannot equate equality with treating everyone the same. We must make known to ourselves the distinctively different realities and needs that are subsumed within the concept of asylum seeker.

Addressing the rights of the marginalised and oppressed through a perspective of the *Politics of difference, and principles of differentiated citizenship* identified above might provide a context where inevitable struggles would have a different dynamic. One response of course might be a majority rapid retreat from acceptance of the politics of difference; to an ideologically defensive assertion of the tolerant decencies of a politics of recognition.

Tolerance is always a discursive tool of the powerful. Those given resources from with a discourse framed by tolerance are expected to be grateful.

Within a politics of difference the disadvantaged do not have to be grateful for a recognition of their rights claims; they merely robustly, and legitimately, claim them. This is an honest contested politics of conflicted interests, rather than an anodyne, and oppressive, politics of social cohesion.

Thus, for example, for many marginalised communities their bonding social capital is a valued and necessary resource for their collective survival. But in an era of neo-liberal individualism the very act of seeking to sustain a strong in-group collective identity may well be judged as being retrograde and divisive by governments committed to promoting the manufacture of the individualised consumer –citizen.(see for example, Husband and Alam, 2011 on the British situation).Where tokenistic assimilationist policies toward asylum seekers have over time resulted in their marginalisation it is not unreasonable that they should mobilise to seek redress for their situation. Action by the oppressed remains a politically legitimate intervention by the marginalised who are dissatisfied with, or disbelieving of, the political sleights of hand that offer prejudice reduction and social cohesion as policies whereby the dominant and privileged retain their advantage whilst asserting their tolerance. As Wright and Baray (2012.p 27) have argued:

“ A collective action perspective concerns itself with equality across groups, not harmony, and focuses on social justice, not social cohesion.”

Thus in linking our discussion here with the earlier account of achieving an appropriate disposition to difference we can note that an acceptance of a right to be understood fits admirably with Dobson’s(2014) proposal of a conception of a dialogic democracy within which there should be a normative *listening out for difference*; rather than a mere *listening to difference*.(ibid p,34).It is consequently important that in a world characterised by diversity and inequalities he suggests that we should “understand dialogue as *structured disagreement underpinned by apophatic listening*.(ibid p. 107- emphasis in original).[Apophatic listening involves the *temporary* suspension of the listener’s categories in order to make room for the speaker’s voice]. The discursive environment anticipated by his view of a dialogic democracy is not one where consensus is the inevitable goal of dialogue. On the contrary, as noted above, Dobson (2007:130) argues : “*..the role of a dialogical approach to democracy is to produce difference, multiply voices, and ensure that ‘closure’ is not achieved at the expense of failing to question prevailing relations of power*. This stands in marked contrast to the dominant European policy discourse of social cohesion with its flaccid politics of empathy and consensus.

The implications of this discussion lies in our recognizing the requirement that in developing a response to the arrival of asylum seekers in our country we seek to develop relevant initiatives and policies *with them* NOT *for them*. In the current European context it is fair to

assume that policies developed in response to the significant development of asylum seekers within our population will be likely to have a significant assimilationist agenda. *If the policy is to promote the eradication of the distinctiveness of the common heritage and culture of specific asylum groups in order to make them 'good citizens' we would have to recognize their right to resist this. And if autonomous expression of self-regard and mobilisation by asylum seeker communities is then regarded as 'political radicalism' then we must acknowledge the repressive and unjust nature of the state response.*

When considering the development of initiatives to challenge racism it is important that we first self-consciously interrogate the value systems and beliefs that currently shape national policies on diversity and ask whether or not these are helpful, or a fundamental challenge, to the practical steps we wish to undertake.

Equally we have to ask what value systems and familiar modes of political action can be found among the different interest groups we hope to engage with. Seeming agreement on strategy can be radically undermined by the existence of very different conceptions of the political frameworks invoked to justify them.

If countering racism is one of our aims: how do we understand racism.

Racism as Prejudice

If we are to promote strategies to counter racism and promote equity for asylum seekers, then again, it will make sense to pause and self-consciously examine how we understand the nature of racism. For the way we understand the basis and modes of expression of racism will determine how we can conceive of eradicating its emergence, or limit its impact. Social psychology has now developed a very considerable body of relevant research follow on from the pioneering work of Gordon Allport (1950) on prejudice .Partly because of the historical tendency of psychology to take the individual as its unit of analysis psychology has offered up a very persuasive body of work that has provided a basis for understanding the individual psychological dynamics underlying racism. Much of this, as we shall see, remains of value: but there have been costs attached to the powerful presence of this academic tradition.

When we reduce racism and racial discrimination against ethnic minorities to prejudice we are inevitably led to the analysis of the prejudiced person, since they are the 'problem'. Hence the policies which flow from this approach peripheralise the role of the institutions of the state and the routine discriminatory practices which are to be found in professions and other social institutions". Particularly as an early impetus to this research was an urgent need to account for the brutalities of the Second World War and the attempted genocide of the holocaust, (see, for example, Snyder,2011, for a painful account of mans' genocidal

capacities), it is hardly surprising that much of this research lent itself to equating racism with extremism.

“If, prejudice is defined as being rooted in the damaged psyche of traumatised individuals then the policy options are likely to be somewhat different. Where the racism is extreme then these manifestations of this abnormal prejudice are likely on past evidence to be seen as the being part of the “unlovely 10 per cent” of extremely prejudiced individuals that are to be found in virtually all attitude studies. As extremists they are by definition a minority and are consequently often regarded as the inevitable emotional casualties of contemporary society. The policy implications of this analysis is that they should be contained and isolated as attitudinally rabid. *If racists are the extremely prejudiced then by definition the rest of us are moderates and natural vessels for our national capacity for tolerance.*” Husband,(1991, pp50-51).

Something of this response was seen in the response to the rise of the National Front in the 1970s.—

“ If the extremism of the National Front’s prejudice made for comforting comparisons with the majority of white Briton’s; then the consolidation of this flattering self-image was made possible by the identification of the more benign “normal” range of prejudice present in the population at large. A variety of initiatives aimed at putting these normally prejudiced persons in touch with themselves and their prejudice have been developed. Indeed if we are to follow the arguments of Katz (1978) those innocent receptacles of prejudice are themselves victims of racism. The psychologising of racism as prejudice is thus able to continually reduce social phenomena to psychological processes. Even the expanded formula of “racism equals prejudice plus power” still inhibits the identification of the essentially ideological nature of racism because it ultimately resorts to an individual conception of prejudice. (see Gurnah, 1984, Sivanandan, 1985).”

Husband (1991,p52)

This conflation of racism with prejudice and psychologically distressed extremists may have significant implications for a specific raft of policies aimed at promoting the interests of asylum seekers; particularly were the aim is *to change the majority society in order to facilitate the ‘ integration’ of asylum seekers*. For here the focus will be upon a specific element in the majority society, whilst leaving unaddressed the more subtle forms of racism that may be endemic in the rest of the majority society.

The literature on Islamophobia and on the basis of intergroup hostility has shown that a sense of threat from the arrival, and concentration, of the ‘incomer’ can be a critical source of intergroup hostility. This literature moves us away from a concern with the internal psychological make-up of the individual and points us to an examination of the real, and

perceived nature of intergroup relations. *Integrated threat theory*, (Stephan and Stephan, 1996, Stephan et al ,1999, Stephan and Stephan, 2000) helpfully distinguishes between *symbolic threat* – (a perceived threat to ‘our culture and values’; and *realistic threat* – (a perceived threat to our economic, political and material interests). Politicians and the media have been cynical in their calculated manipulation of these fears. (Just think of Britain / BREXIT / and the role of anti-immigrant sentiment).

This literature is particularly important in trying to understand both how the asylum seeker comes to be scapegoated by the majority population; and , how they come perceive the reception. Frida Johansson Metso yesterday quoted this statement about the experience of asylum seekers:

“ The reasons for mistrust are embedded within the social context from which asylum seekers have come, and that are exacerbated by the social context in which they are now living”. Hodson and Hewstone (2013) in their review of contact as means of improving intergroup relations point out that an improvement of trust is a very key mediating element in this process. (see also: Hodson ,Hewstone and Swart .2013)

An Alternative Concept – Institutional Racism

In the last decades an alternative conceptualization of racism has received increased analysis in academic life, and has had an impact upon policy formulation. The concept of institutional racism is essentially a sociological view of racism which focuses upon social structures and institutional practices rather than personal psychologies. In particular it focuses not upon the intentional acts of individuals but rather upon systemic outcomes of institutional systems and routine practices. (Williams 1985). This shift from intent to outcomes has very considerable policy implications. Specifically it leads to the unhappy consequences that nice people can be accused of being culpable of participating in generating racist outcomes. *“Institutional racism occurs wherever individuals, in carrying out the routine practices of their employment or institution, produce outcomes which in their effect discriminate against members of ethnic minority populations. This form of discrimination is much more insidious than that which may be attributable to prejudice, and requires much more extensive initiatives in monitoring, training and institutional change if it is to be countered.”*

Husband (1991p53)

The core of the concept of institutional racism is the irrelevance of the intentions of the actors involved. Instead it emphasises:

Institutional structures, responsibilities and routine practices.

This leads to a need to examine:

- Where the power lies within the institutional structures

- And, specifically those points in an institutional structure where individuals are able to exercise discretionary power: to grant access, set or interpret rules, allocate resources. [Thus for example people lower down in a hierarchy may still have very considerable discretionary power].

- The ways in which these rules and routines are legitimated. [The literature on the concept of *communities of practice* is valuable in opening up these dynamics. (Lave and Wenger,1991, Wenger,2007).

- The ways in which these structures and process actually produce their discriminatory outcomes.

Of course even where discriminatory outcomes result from the continuing of routine ways of doing things that are no longer appropriate for a new multi-ethnic population,[as is often a source of discrimination in health care delivery], we still have to ask why the professionals involved in this process did not perceive their behaviour to be discriminatory. At this point we are forced back to look upon the continuing prevalence of racist beliefs and ethnocentric practices as an essential part of the interplay between personnel and institutional structures.

A thoughtful use of this account of institutional racism can be a very powerful tool for planning and exercising a project aimed at challenging racism and discrimination. In developing an initiative to promote the best interests of asylum seekers it is likely that we will be working from within a specific organisation; and will be employing its resources and utilising its organisational structures and routines. Equally we are likely to seek to collaborate with other organizations and here, as in our own organization, *it is good practice to assume that the subtle penetration of the processes of institutional racism may need to be checked out, rather be assumed to be not applicable because our good intentions are so self-evidently central to our actions.*

The liberals' nightmare- Aversive racism

More recent research on *aversive racism* points to an even more disturbing possibility, for it points an incriminating finger at well intentioned liberals. [Like ourselves?].

Aversive racism describes the biases of individuals who are politically liberal, who see themselves as non-racist and who openly endorse non-prejudiced views; but who at the same time have unconscious negative feelings and beliefs that become expressed in subtle, and indirect ways that they are able to rationalise as normal and reasonable. (Dovidio and Gaertner, 2004).Aversive racists are characterized as people having egalitarian conscious attitudes whilst at the same time having negative unconscious racial attitudes. They may be able to express positive views about diversity and seemingly have no difficulty in being in diverse ethnic contexts, but at the same time may possess well established negative and racist views which they manage to suppress in liberal company.

As Pearson et al (2009 p 5) have argued:

“ Because aversive racists consciously recognize and endorse egalitarian values and truly aspire to be non-prejudiced, they will *not* act inappropriately in situations with strong social norms when discrimination would be obvious to others and to themselves. Specifically, when they are presented with a situation in which the normative response is clear (e.g. right and wrong are clearly defined), aversive racists will not discriminate against Blacks. In these contexts, aversive racists will be especially motivated to avoid feelings, beliefs and behaviours that could be associated with racist intent. However, the non-conscious feelings and beliefs that aversive racists also possess will produce discrimination in situations in which normative structures are weak, when guidelines for appropriate behaviour are unclear, when the basis for social judgement is vague, or when one’s actions can be justified or rationalized on the basis of some factor other than race. Under these circumstances, aversive racists may engage in behaviours that ultimately harm Blacks but in ways that allow Whites to maintain a non-prejudiced self –image and insulate themselves from recognizing that their behaviour is not colour blind. Thus, although the processes through which contemporary biases emerge can often be subtle, the consequences can be severe.”

Dovidio et al (2002) have argued that because the dual operation of explicit and aversive racism Whites and Blacks are likely to form very different perceptions of ethnic relations. With whites focusing upon explicit attitudes and overt behaviours they are able to perceive the situation as amicable and non-prejudiced. But with the experiential based sensitivity of Black people they are likely to be much more acutely attuned to subtle non-verbal cues and develop a sense of distrust of whites. (Pearson et al, p 9)

The research on aversive racism raises some awkward questions about who can be trusted to evaluate the adequacy of policy initiatives aimed at eradicating racism. It would seem that by definition the role of an entirely majority ethnic policy team must be suspect. But equally it raises the not so comfortable question of the role being offered the ‘black’/ ethnically- other colleague in working in such a team. Are they to carry the burden of representing all non-majority interests? Are they lead players? Or ‘merely’ ethnically sensitive reviewers of policies developed by majority colleagues.

In her address yesterday Frida Johannsen Metso spoke of:

the centrality of the role of the : “ the practitioner’s sensitivity to the person’s cultural background. ... especially qualities of trust, understanding, respect and caring connection.”

It is troubling to think what implications aversive racism might have for the efficacy of a ‘committed and professional’ practitioner.

This leads us to the question of who are the active players in developing anti-racist policies.

DEVELOPING POLICY INITIATIVES:

Who are we; who are the target beneficiaries of our work; and who are our allies?

The spectre of institutional racism haunts the meeting rooms and offices of those who would take a lead in developing policies to counter racism and promote equitable ethnic relations.

If we revisit what we know, then we can recall that in terms of institutional racism it is entirely feasible that well intentioned people may in seeking to challenge racism in fact develop initiatives which are in their effect both discriminatory and scarred by understandings and ignorance that are racist at root.

There are three inter-related questions that we could usefully ask:

Who are the we who are seeking to develop this initiative?

Who do we aim to benefit?

Who are we working with?

Who has the lead?

Let us briefly take each one in turn:

Who are the ‘We’?

Typically when you look at where initiatives to counter racism have come from, one of the key players is the local municipality or commune. Motivated by both personal concerns and institutional responsibility local authorities are particularly sensitive to changes in their local demography: sometimes following national policy, or just as often acting against a policy vacuum, or indeed racist national policies, the local state recognises the need to address the social consequences of demographic change within their area. It is

not at all unusual for local authorities to be much more progressive in seeking to challenge discrimination and racism than their National government.

This allows us ask whether the individuals who have been given the responsibility for this task actually have the appropriate skills to carry it out. Often they are merely the occupant of the job description, which in the context of their local authority, means that they acquire this responsibility *ex officio*.

Given that they have been given this responsibility does this mean that they will have the fulsome support of their divisional director and of the local authority politicians and council? We most certainly cannot assume so.

Where the local project is being driven by an externally imposed national policy agenda then there may in fact be quite intense local resistance and resentment at having local funds and personnel committed to this 'politically correct' task. (see Husband , 2010 for a discussion of the use of the concept of 'political correctness' as a counter-narrative to multi-ethnic policies).

Additionally, given that these policies are often in response to relatively recent changes in the demography of the local population it is therefore also likely that members of this immigrant/asylum population will not be employees of the local authority; and consequently their experience and expertise cannot be assumed to be naturally a part of the existing potential workforce from which the team will be drawn.

Critically considering the experience, identity and competences of the personnel responsible for the development and implementation of policies is a fundamental requirement.

Who do we aim to benefit?

In the past there have perhaps been too many instances where this question has not been thoughtfully addressed: the answer seemed too self-evident. Within the context of national policies on multiculturalism, or even anti-racism, it was easy to assume that the beneficiaries of such policies were the 'ethnic minority communities', the 'migrants', 'refugees' and 'asylum seekers'. However, over the last decades the social sciences have been permeated by the perspective of post-modernism which has empathised both the complexity and temporal contingency of identity. The concepts of hybridity and intersectionality (Yuval-Davis,2006, Nash, 2008,Gilroy,1993) have stressed how we all possess very many different membership groups; and how our experience of our own identity may involve subtle, and sometimes radical, fusions of these different elements; which may mix and remix differently in different contexts and at different times. The unthinking and simplistic use of ethnic labels has been likely to result in your being charged with essentialism, and the political and policy dangers of loosely using ethnic labels has

been extensively reviewed (Brubaker, 2004,2015, Phillips,2007.). Thus *if your answer to the question - who do aim to benefit from your policies?- is something like “ the Somali community”, the “ Syrian refugees” or “ the asylum seekers” then you are almost certainly in trouble.*

Knowing someone’s ethnicity is a very minimal basis for understanding their needs: and issues of gender, age, sexual identity, religion and health status are likely to be critical in shaping their distinctive biography and current needs. For this reason *equality impact assessment* became a fundamental tool of those seeking to develop non-discriminatory local policies.[see for example:

http://www.acas.org.uk/media/pdf/s/n/Acas_managers_guide_to_equality_assessments.pdf. And <http://www.ecu.ac.uk/guidance-resources/governance-and-policies/equality-impact-assessment/>

It is almost certainly also worth noting that frequently one of the *de facto*, if not identified, beneficiaries of such policies have been the majority population. At the political level it needs to be recognised that the development of programmes to challenge racism and promote equitable ethnic relations are a powerful means of sustaining the *amour propre* of the majority population. We noted above the power of national self-images and the significance of the contemporary social imaginaries that provide part of the normative bed-rock of our capacity for civil coexistence. In this context programmes that reaffirm our commitment to equality and civility benefit all. Belief in collective and mutual rights are a benefit to all.

At a pragmatic level in justifying the development and maintenance of such policies it is also worth remembering that in the long term these programmes are likely to be a cost effective benefit to the majority population, and all tax payers. If we took the case, for example, of developing non-discriminatory transcultural health care services, then in the short term they certainly are likely to require additional funding. But, in the long term the more appropriate and effective care will result in lower future costs.

Who are we working with?

And Who has the lead?

When we come to consider who are our colleagues and allies in developing and delivering policies to counter racism and discrimination then the issues we have briefly reviewed above become very relevant.

If we have answered the question of who are the intended beneficiaries of our policy innovation then we have gone a long way to identifying the knowledge and skills-sets we need to define and deliver our programme.

We need to be very conscious of the implications of the concrete reality of hybridity for our understanding of the experience and needs of our target groups. On this basis recruiting ‘a member of the target ethnic community’ to our team may be no better than having an experienced and sensitive member of the majority ethnic community. A forty or fifty year old person who speaks Arabic and settled in Helsinki from Iraq 20 years ago may be a dubious source of expertise for developing a programme to work with young teenage refugees. Sharing an ethnic or national identity is no guarantee of mutual understanding. The expertise and experience that we need to have present within our team needs to be defined in relation to our earlier question of: - “ who are the intended beneficiaries of our intervention”?

When we considered which ‘community organizations’ may provide valuable expertise and resources to help us to develop and deliver new programmes we need to be very alert to the existence of frequently unspoken assumptions within local state organizations about which minority group organizations are ‘respectable and reliable.’ *Local authorities have been shown to rely heavily on the ‘safe pair of hands’ principle when recruiting partner organizations or individuals from the local minority communities.* (Husband and Alam 2011). Local authorities are typically conservative organisations, and are comfortable in working with people they have worked with before. I suspect that this is often because their mode of dress, demeanour and ways of working are closer to those of the established local state and the professionals working within it. This raises issues both of inter-personal cultural competence, and unstated political assumptions.

Individuals may be excluded because ‘ they don’t seem quite right’ and organizations may be excluded because they are seen as ‘too radical’.

There is a question of whether in developing initiatives to ease the entry and settlement of refugees into *our country* are we in effect hoping to help them to adapt to fit into the interpersonal norms and civic routines of the commune, or are we seeking to help majority individuals and institutions to adapt to meet the human needs of new comers into our community. Certainly at present across Europe there is a very strong assimilationist ideology permeating national multi-ethnic policies; often accompanied by both explicit and implicit racist ideologies.

In the current neurotic context of fear of terrorism and the concern with exposing and excluding radicalised individuals and groups, it is all too easy for some local ethnic minority groups to be labelled as ‘problematic’. The widespread anti-Muslim sentiment that has been a part of popular and state discourse for some decades now is sufficiently embedded in state policy for us to be concerned about the stereotyping of members of specific groups of refugees.(Halliday,1996;Allen,2007;Sayyid and Vakil,2010). Donald Trump’s racist wish to exclude all Muslims is merely an extreme manifestation of a widespread Islamophobia.

This takes us back to our earlier discussion of making explicit to yourself the political perspective that frames your, and your local commune's, political perspective. Is the defining ethos of your agency an exercise of tolerant concern to help new asylum seekers and refugees. In which case you may have a predilection to see yourself as knowing what is best for *them* and knowing 'how to work within the system'. In which case your ideal partner agency will be one that is dependent upon you. How might you feel about a minority NGO or local group who are highly motivated, organized and have a willingness to confront an authority they see as potentially part of their problem. [They can smell out institutional racism and aversive racism in a way that even well intentioned and committed members of the majority population might not. And they may come from regimes where the institutions of the state are regarded with deep suspicion.]

Notions of the '*proper way of going about things*' are deeply embedded in institutional and professional routines; and in many countries explicitly expressed statements of opposition are seen as a breakdown in dialogue: and symptomatic of personal and professional failure. In my own institution my unwillingness to be constrained by the disempowering politesse of university hierarchy resulted in me be introduced on one occasion as: " This is Professor Charles Husband- a leading member of the awkward squad". This is a status that puts you outside of the closed intimate circle of institutional power; but nevertheless leaves you as a potential threat to that power.

Additionally direct action in the context of a conflict of interests is frequently seen as absolutely wrong. Insisting on working through the *official channels* and through *proven methods* can in this context be a denial of both the experience and agency of marginalised communities.

In an era of neo-liberal individualism the very act of marginalised groups seeking to sustain a strong in-group collective identity may well be judged as being retrograde and divisive by governments committed to promoting the manufacture of the individualised consumer – citizen. However, action by the oppressed remains a politically legitimate intervention by the marginalised who are dissatisfied with, or disbelieving of, the political sleights of hand that offer prejudice reduction and social cohesion as policies whereby the dominant and privileged retain their advantage whilst asserting their tolerance. (see Husband and Alam,2011, Coulthard).

As Wright and Baray (2012.p 27) have argued:

" A collective action perspective concerns itself with equality across groups, not harmony, and focuses on social justice, not social cohesion."

In developing programmes to address the needs of asylum seekers we have come full circle from our opening discussion of what are the contemporary social imaginaries and taken for granted models of civility and justice, and how they impact upon the working culture of my

home institution; and consequently upon the sort of strategies that we are likely to conceive of, and regard as legitimate. In this context an unthinking commitment to harmony in social action, framed by an ideology of tolerance, is a foundational myopic constraint on the collective imagination of the project team.

Social science has a lot of relevant insights that may be offered to clarify the issues in play here and to address the challenges of meeting the needs of asylum seekers; such as responses derived from the literature on: -

Cultural adaptation

Institutional racism

Insights from the application of the contact hypothesis.

These are among the areas where you already have expertise and will be developing over the remainder of this programme.

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Substantive Equality

Addressing systemic discrimination in service delivery.

Substantive equality recognises that policies and practices put in place to suit the majority of clients may appear to be non-discriminatory but may not address the specific needs of certain groups of people. In effect they may be indirectly discriminatory, creating systemic discrimination.

In this section you can find:

- information about the WA State Government's Substantive Equality program and how it is being implemented
- resources for those participating and supporting information
- EOC training for systemic discrimination
- Feedback - your views are important

