Legitimising Racism: An Exploration of the Challenges Posed by the Use of Indigeneity Discourses by the Far Right

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Abstract

The disintegration of the British National Party (BNP) has removed the threat of the party securing a place in the political mainstream in the UK. But, in coming close to this objective it has succeeded in renewing and legitimising both its own claims to speak on behalf of the indigenous people of Britain, as well as the similar claims of other groups such as the English Defence League (EDL), the English Democrats and the Freedom Party. Rather than assessing the impact of the BNP in terms of the number of votes and councillors, this article contends that the renewal of racist discourse may enable far right views and ideologies to penetrate and gain acceptance in mainstream British society over the next decade. This article examines the re-shaping of the rhetoric of indigeneity by the BNP to legitimise racism. Using articles originally written for the BNP magazine *Identity* between 2006 and 2008 and extracted from the BNP website in advance of the 2010 elections, this article discursively analyses the way in which the BNP deploys the concept of indigeneity in its constructions of social groups in Britain. It is suggested that the potential (mis)use of indigeneity as a legitimising vehicle for racist and illiberal views and policies is exacerbated by the lack of clear definitional boundaries around the concept of indigeneity itself.

Keywords: *Indigeneity; Racism; British National Party; Whiteness; Multiculturalism; Cultural Difference; Racial Science; English Defence League; Islam*

Introduction

1.1 The British National Party is seeking to rebrand itself through constructing opposition to racial integration through discourses of indigeneity, and the party sets itself up as sole champion of the indigenous population of Britain. In the May 2010 elections the BNP gained more than 500,000 votes. However there is potential for a party not identified as racist to receive a more impressive showing at the polls. Xenophobia, nationalism and authoritarianism are still very much present in Britain (Pitcher 2009, Mudde 2002) and polls indicate a large number of people (43% of respondents) believe that the BNP have a point but would not however support the party (Kellner 2009). The discursive construction of the BNP (or other far right groups such as the EDL) may be crucial to whether or not they are perceived as legitimate.

1.2 Overt racism is currently socially unacceptable (Copsey 2008) and few would claim to be racist (Billig 1991; Van Dijk 1992; Van Dijk 1993, Goldberg 2008). In contrast, indigeneity as a social and political category has achieved 'an extraordinary currency' (Niezen 2003: 203) and indigenous identity is 'a badge worn with pride' (Niezen 2003: 3). Indigeneity, unlike race, legitimises linking 'primordialist claims of distinctiveness' to self determination demands (Niezen 2003: 3). If the far right can position its rhetoric within the discourse of indigeneity rather than racism, it is possible that underlying racist ideology may be legitimised. This article examines how the BNP seek to construct the indigenous Briton and the possible effects of such constructions.

Essentialist Truths?

2.1 While races have no biological reality (Nayak 2006), race discourses remain central to modern society (Goldberg 2008). Race is considered a 'significant category of meaning and experience for all individuals'

(Gunaratnam 2003:6) and is performed and (re)constructed in social interactions and contexts (Nagel 1994). The racialisation of society - accurately and permanently separating people into meaningful categories based on phenotype or genotype (Burton et al 2010) - legitimizes consigning those constructed as essentially and biologically inferior to the scrapheap (Malik 1996; Law 2010). Ethnicity, arguably more fluid and open to self-selection than race (Mason 2006) is also dependent on social negotiations, power and self-interest and the more socially important ethnicity is, the more ethnic groups function like racial ones, becoming fixed, biologically determined and heritable (Hall 2000). The BNP take the view that ethnicity derives from and is inherent within race, and the terms are used interchangeably within this article solely to reflect their usage in that way by the BNP. Racism ensures that Whiteness confers a wide range of social, cultural, psychological and economic advantages to those identified as racially White (McDonald 2009) or indigenous Caucasians (BNP 2005).

2.2 Racial discourse has provided a powerful rallying cry for oppressed minorities who have reclaimed racial concepts and deployed them to subvert their original ends (Law 2010; Gunaratnam 2003). Indigeneity falls within that emancipatory tradition. Beginning in the 1980s indigeneity became increasingly recognised by a lay audience as referring to 'a primordial identity, to people with primary attachments to land and culture, 'traditional' people with lasting connections to ways of life that have survived from time immemorial' (Niezen 2003: 3). Narrowing this definition has proved practically and politically difficult. Indigeneity tends to be defined differently for three separate purposes: legal and analytical purposes, practical and strategic purposes, and collective and global purposes (Niezen 2003). Saugestad (2001, cited in Kendrick and Lewis 2004) identifies a de facto definition consisting of four main principles: priority of land use and occupation, chosen cultural distinctiveness from newer arrivals, identification as a distinct group or collectivity and acceptance of this by others, and finally the experience of historical or current discrimination, subjugation or exclusion. In contrast, the United Nations Working Group on Indigenous Peoples considers the main criteria for claiming indigeneity to be defining oneself as indigenous, being in a non-dominant position in society, possessing historical continuity with pre-colonial societies, having a particular link to ancestral territories, and having a distinctive ethnic identity (Nair 2006). Under this definition there is no need for others to accept the validity of indigeneity claims, nor is a history of exclusion or subjugation required. Yet for Law (2010) indigenous status is the global recognition of victims of exclusion and subjugation through racism, colonialism and globalisation. Similarly, while Law holds that 'notions of 'unbroken ancestry'' form a vital part of the definition (Law 2010:47), Kendrick and Lewis (2004) argue that indigeneity is not essentialist but rather created by the context of extreme discrimination and dispossession. The variety of understandings gives rise to a lack of conceptual clarity that can be used by groups like the BNP for their own purposes. This article does not seek to redefine the term but rather to explore the ways in which the BNP have deployed it within their literature and rhetoric.

2.3 Integral to indigeneity is the collective preservation of cultural differences. Boutros-Ghali wrote of a new human rights covering 'collective rights, historical rights [and] first and foremost, cultural rights' (1994:13). The indigenous struggle does not seek equal rights and citizenship for all individuals indigenous and non-indigenous. Indigenous movements instead make two demands: that ancestral lands and territories are returned, and that indigenous and mainstream cultures develop separately (Niezen 2003). Separate development encompasses the right for indigenous people to determine their own affairs, speak their own language, educate their children separately, observe their own pre-missionary forms of spirituality, pursue their own economic development, and execute their own justice without interference from non-indigenous peoples (Niezen 2003). According to Kuper (2003), this rhetoric carries within it the assumption that descendants of the original inhabitants of a particular territory should have privileged, even exclusive, rights to its use and resources in perpetuity, and the assumption that immigrants and their descendants can never achieve more than guest status in any land. This is broadly the same rhetorical territory as that occupied by the far right in Europe (Suzman 2003) and enshrined in the policies of the BNP.

2.4 Racism and indigeneity have much in common. Both ascribe social, cultural and often spiritual meaning to heritable essential categories. Both seek separate development to protect heritable essences from dilution/defilement. There are also important differences. Indigeneity is a liberation struggle - 'a last ditch defence' from a people 'persistently and profoundly discriminated against' to counter a 'process that colonises their land and resources' (Kendrick and Lewis 2004: 5). Racism is constructed by the powerful within society to maintain and increase their power. Does this distinction sufficiently separate the two categories? If powerful indigenous majorities were granted the rights and privileges demanded by disempowered minorities of indigenous peoples it would be considered 'discriminatory and offensive' (Suzman 2003: 399). However, where that majority population claims that without assistance it is in danger of losing majority, culture and heritage to alien colonizers, at what point should those claims be heard? It is within this discursive territory that the BNP stakes its claim to legitimacy.

Racist Past, Indigenous Future?

3.1 Britain has arguably the most comprehensive anti-racist and anti-discriminatory legislative framework in the world (Kushner 2003) and anti-racist movements have rendered it socially unacceptable to openly espouse racism (Pitcher 2006). Western contemporary race talk is strategically constructed to deny racism ('I'm not racist but...') and racist identities are largely debased (Augustinos and Every 2000: 251). Racist views, opinions and political strategies are unlikely to be accepted as legitimate. However, politically motivated discursive challenge and manipulation will affect what is perceived as legitimate (Krell-Laluhova and Schneider 2004) and opinions, values, positions and actions may be illegitimate when positioned within one discourse, and legitimate when situated within another. Nick Griffin, in deliberately subverting liberal discourse and liberal concepts to illiberal ends, is trying to move BNP rhetoric from an illegitimate racist discourse to a legitimizing discourse (Copsey 2008).

3.2 What effect could the BNP rebranding exercise have? The far right has historically struggled to win electoral support in Britain, and before 1999 the BNP was a 'dismal failure' (Goodwin 2008: 347). Between 1945 and 2000 only 6 candidates from the right wing political fringe were elected at local level (Wilks-Heeg 2009). In contrast, similar parties in France, Austria and Italy secured substantial electoral support (Bowyer 2008). There may be many reasons for this. Some have postulated a British predisposition to tolerance and against extremism (Eatwell 1996), others have examined the effects of the British electoral system (John and Margetts 2009), or the actions of mainstream parties in adopting the concerns and votes of the far right (Ignazi 2003; Goodwin 2008). In addition, a reputation for thuggery and violence (Copsey 2008) and factional infighting may have confused and put off potential supporters (Ignazi 2003). This article does not seek to examine further the reasons behind the historical and current fortunes of the far right and readers are referred to those authors for further analysis. The article focuses rather on the subversion of the concept of indigeneity.

3.3 Nick Griffin, elected leader in 1999 set out to turn the BNP into an electable mainstream party (Copsey 2008). The new BNP, while still teaching 'the truth to the hardcore' was exhorted to present the rest of the electorate with 'an image of moderate reasonableness' replete with 'idealistic, unobjectionable, motherhood and apple pie concepts' (Griffin, quoted in Copsey 2008: 101-2). This new political strategy is heavily indebted to Le Pen's Front National style neo-populism in France (Rhodes 2009). Familiar liberal discourses are deployed by the BNP to muddy the waters between left and right, mainstream and extreme (Zuquete 2008). Discourses associated with feminism, animal rights, anti-racism and anti-censorship have been used by the BNP to put forward a profoundly illiberal agenda. A core part of the BNP agenda is the use of discourse associated with indigenous struggle to demand the wholesale expulsion of non-whites from Britain and the prohibition of 'miscegenation'. The BNP argues that the need to protect and maintain cultural differences justifies otherwise unjustifiable exclusionary practices (Zuquete 2008). If the BNP can position itself as protecting the indigenous Britons, it may be able to insulate itself from charges that it and its policies are racist.

3.4 To examine how the BNP deploys the concept of indigeneity, electoral political rhetoric was the focus of this analysis (Reisigl 2008: 98) and data were collected from material produced by the BNP and freely available on the internet. During the 2010 election campaign, the BNP reissued 78 articles from past issues of the BNP magazine *Identity* on their website. Originally published in 2006, 2007 and 2008 the articles were written when the party was finalising its discursive redefinition and re-presented in 2010 to showcase the development of BNP philosophy. The available articles have been combed through to isolate instances where the BNP had used the concept of indigeneity. This data was then analysed to explore both how the BNP were constructing indigeneity, and what the discursive effect of positioning far right supremacy claims within legitimate indigeneity discourse might be.

The Appliance of Science: Constructing the Indigenous Britons

4.1 Indigenous status must be claimed by a distinct people or nation descended from the original inhabitants of a particular territory. To validly use the term 'indigenous British' the BNP must show that the people it purports to represent are actually a historical people rooted in Britain, rather than a disparate group of immigrants who happen to share the physical characteristic of white skin. Without such evidence, a claim to indigeneity must fail. If however white British people are descendants of the 'first folk', the BNP can perhaps insinuate itself alongside the legitimate determination of indigenous people all over the world to protect indigenous culture for successive generations. The BNP has manipulated science, particularly genetics, to claim descent and to construct both the indigenous Briton and the threat posed by the genetically different outsider.

4.2 The BNP states repeatedly that white British people are the direct descendants of the first British people, and that their aboriginal heritage is being denied them: *'Far from being immigrants and 'mongrels', we, the native folk of these islands are the first people. We are the aborigines here and to deny that is both implicitly and explicitly racist'* (Griffin July 2007: 4). The reversal of the charge of racism here is a common discursive strategy for the BNP which involves both denial that what is being said (that Britishness is exclusively white and heritable) is racist, and defending racist claims, that white people are synonymous with the indigenous British. The 'indigene' remains different from the non-white 'immigrant' (an immigrant in perpetuity) and from the 'mongrel' (whose claim to ownership and rights is debased by the co-mingling of non-native stock). The BNP state that blood alone gives entitlement to indigenous British status: *'It's not just a matter of taxes or language or culture, it's about ancient genetic identity'* (Griffin July 2007: 7). This is an essentialist category: white Europeans contain enough genetic similarity to be assimilable, others do not. This construction of indigeneity is harnessed to claims of collective rights of ownership over the whole territory: *'This land is our land – and we are entitled and determined to keep it that way'* (Griffin July 2007: 7). Why or in what way 'this land' belongs more to a white immigrant than a non-white one is not explained.

4.3 This central genetic claim that white British people are overwhelmingly the descendants of the original inhabitants is made repeatedly, and constructed as conclusive and scientifically measurable: thus: *'all the evidence of the scientific revolution of DNA studies over the past few years' indicates 'the fact that two thirds of the indigenous people of the British Isles are the direct descendants of the first pioneers who followed the retreating ice sheets at the end of the last glaciations and the vast remainder of our ancestors arrived during Neolithic times'* [emphasis added] (Griffin July 2007: 4). Most importantly for the BNP, indigeneity is contingent on race. Racially white people are descendants of indigenous British people. Whiteness and British indigeneity are synonymous. Quite what white people of non-British heritage may make of this co-option into British indigeneity is not explored! Race is constructed as a biological concept hardwired into the genes of the British people, and racial characteristics as enduring unchanged from generation to generation: *'...the emergence of the first White racial type about 35,000 years ago,...almost identical to many modern Whites'* (Kemp Oct 2006: 10). The BNP argues that as racial

characteristics are a vital marker of British indigenous status they, and the racial categories deriving from them, are an important part of indigenous British heritage. Thus whiteness – by no measure a specifically British characteristic – is somehow transformed by right wing rhetoric into the defining marker of indigenous British culture. As such, it is claimed, whiteness itself must be celebrated, protected from extinction through race mixing, and retained if the culture is to survive.

4.4 Central to this claim is the concept of race as an essential heritable category dividing indigenous Britons from immigrants. The BNP attempt to establish the legitimacy of this connection by repeatedly drawing down 'objective' discourses of science and genetics, using scientific images such as brain scans, DNA chains, graphs, tables and statistics to amplify its points or simply illustrate its articles. In addition, the BNP carefully utilises research to manufacture credibility: showcasing illustrious scientists and presenting their findings as self-evident and indisputable. The reader is informed that DNA research has established beyond doubt that indigeneity and race are genetically encoded and connected.

4.5 As illustration, let us examine the way the BNP uses the research of *'Professor Bryan Sykes, Professor of Human Genetics at the University of Oxford'* (Harper Apr 2007:8). Three Identity articles (at least) are devoted to an *'extensive examination of the Professor's work'* (Ibid) and his books are promoted by the BNP online. The BNP summarises (using scientific language) the historical journeys of selected chromosomes through the veins of successive generations of white British people. The Professor's books are said to prove that the *'indigenous inhabitants of these islands are of a markedly common stock... a people of ancient, allied and settled blood'* (Harper May 2007: 14). The BNP's claim is worth setting out in full as it contains the genetic basis of their claim to indigeneity: *'Because we are an amalgam of those clans, themselves relatively closely allied, which he has identified as matrilineal, descended from the seven daughters of eve and the five male clans, we are justified in holding that, until the arrival of the Empire Windrush in 1948, the British people together with the people of the Irish Republic could be regarded as a homogenous people whose associative mating over the millennia had only served to unify as a distinct ethnic nationality'* (Harper May 2007: 15). The BNP constructs post 1948 immigration as introducing non-native racial genes to Britain: a biological disaster for the native population.

4.6 The BNP resorts to another favourite rhetorical strategy to explain away Professor Sykes' own conclusion that his findings *'make nonsense of any biological basis for racial classifications'* (Harper Apr 2007: 10). The BNP asserts that scientists are being forced to hide a mass of evidence which conclusively disproves the prevailing liberal ethos of equality and multi-culturalism. Professor Harper's interpretation of his findings can *'only be interpreted as a politically correct finale'* [emphasis added] (Harper Apr 2007:10). Similarly, Davis quotes the New York Times of 27th October 2005 as stating that evidence for genetically encoded racial differences has been found *'however the research team advises that such information be suppressed'* (Davis Apr 2006: 17). The dangers for white scientists brave enough to tell the 'scientific truth' about race are illustrated by Frank Ellis (*'Leeds University lecturer'*) forced to resign for *'voicing politically incorrect opinions'* (Heydon Dec 2006: 24). The BNP claims that only scientists who are retired or reputationally and financially secure dare speak the truth about race science. Political suppression is also used to explain why the reader may be unfamiliar with this vast amount of self-evident scientific proof. Finally, this rhetorical device invites readers to suspend disbelief: their critical faculties have deliberately been undermined by liberal propaganda: the so called 'mushroom treatment' – kept in the dark and fed on bullshit not facts' (Barnes Jan 2006: 25). The most important fact for the BNP is that races: *'... differ not only in physical characteristics but in mental ability'* (Baxter Feb 2006: 25).

4.7 Claiming that race is the distinguishing factor between indigenous Brits and immigrants allows the BNP to try and legitimise racial categories and rehabilitate racist ideas within mainstream political discourse. Indigeneity requires the indigenous population to be distinctive from other sections of society. Despite the fact that whiteness is not a uniquely British attribute, the BNP claims whiteness as the main part of British indigenous distinctiveness. By positioning whiteness as indispensable to British identity and culture, the BNP demand that race is celebrated in the same way in which culture is celebrated. They argue that to view such celebrations of whiteness as racist is itself racist, offensive, and denies indigenous people the legitimate expression of pride in their culture. The BNP further claims that the same distinctive genes produce both whiteness and the intellectual superiority of the white indigenous peoples over immigrants - a superiority it claims is evidenced scientifically, culturally and religiously. Once again, the BNP seeks to manipulate modern science to support the 'facts' that it is constructing.

4.8 Scientific claims about genetic superiority are asserted through the work of William Shockley 'the genius who **also** invented the transistor' [emphasis added] (Davis 2006: 14). In addition to his Nobel Prize-winning invention, Davies reports that Shockley repeatedly proved statistically that in the USA IQ level was racially determined and genetically inherited (Apr 2006). Shockley's research articulated a biological hierarchy of intelligence, with black Africans at the bottom and Whites and 'Orientals' at the top. Black IQ rates were said to rise by a specific and measurable factor for each increasing percentage of white genetic material mixed with them. So-called objective, scientific and irrefutable sounding conclusions that *'Different races exhibit different average intelligence and different variance or spread'* are augmented by an explanatory graph (Davis Apr 2006: 16). The 'fact' that 'Orientals' do as well as or better than 'Whites' serves the rhetorical purpose of indicating that the findings are not simply self-serving but factual.

4.9 These 'facts' about the genetic superiority of the indigenous Britons are a constant theme. 'Scientific' research is claimed to prove that average population IQ is *'by far the most important factor in determining the wealth of the country'* and importantly that below average IQ is responsible for the lack of development and poverty in sub-Saharan Africa (Lynn Jan 2007: 8). Lynn (*'Emeritus Professor of the University of Ulster'*) and Vanhanen (*'Emeritus Professor of Political Science at the University of Tampere and at the University of Helsinki'*) make an economic argument for restricting immigration by IQ levels. A

table is produced showing the top ten nationalities of UK asylum seekers next to the alleged average population IQ of each country. It is unclear where this average IQ data comes from (the table is attributed to the legitimate United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) website) (Lynn Jan 2007: 10). The average IQ of the populations of the four sub-Saharan nations listed (Nigeria, Eritrea, Somalia and Congo) are all claimed to be 'below the lowest IQ for which the tests are accurate' so an IQ has had to be assumed (although we are not informed of the basis of the assumption) (Lynn Jan 2007: 10). Scientific evidence comprehensively challenging this discourse of white mental supremacy is ignored (see for example *'The Bell Curve Wars'* edited by Fraser [1995]). By cloaking supremacy claims in the language of science, the BNP attempts to give them the patina of 'objective truth' suppressed for political reasons. The doctrine of economic necessity is invoked: to survive economically Britain needs to stop importing genetically stupid people and stop breeding with genetically inferior people. Interbreeding results in permanent loss of the genetic edge so vital to the identity and success of the indigenous Briton.

4.10 History is deployed to demonstrate the White 'man's' superiority in action. Genetic success has led inexorably to cultural success: Western civilisation. Genetic evidence has been claimed to show that the 'White Race' was responsible for almost all technological advances throughout history, as well as such diverse achievements as the Great Silk Road cities, and Ancient Egyptian civilisation (Kemp, Oct 2006). Charles Murray, (with Herrnstein co-author of the *'The Bell Curve'* [1994] linking IQ to racial genetics), concludes that white males *'dominate the narrative of human accomplishment'* (Heydon July 2008: 11). These accomplishments are presented as factual evidence to rebut any idea that all societies are accomplished. *'The overwhelming success and influence of the West... is a standing denial of their [the politicians and the BBC's] fatuous and essentially immature idea of 'equality.'*" (Heydon July 2008: 13). Equality of course underpins universal doctrines of human rights, systems of law, justice and government, liberalism, and multiculturalism.

4.11 Non-scientifically produced 'evidence' of specifically indigenous British superiority is expressed in discourses looking at the achievements of Christian civilisation and Empire. These discourses are problematic for the BNP. Christian Britain is a vital cultural reference point and allows discursive opposition to 'alien' religions (particularly Islam). However, Christianity in Britain arrived in the 7th century (Maddox May 2006) and cannot legitimately be considered an indigenous religion of the pre-missionary type usually protected and transmitted by indigenous people. In addition, Christianity is not limited to white people. To position Christianity as a province of white indigenous identity, black spirituality is constructed as different and inferior: *'Some of the relatively new black and Pentecostal churches, along with some evangelicals in the Church of England, seem relatively 'vibrant' but are intellectually and theologically shallow offering emotion rather than truth'* (Maddox July 2006: 25). Finally, to position Christianity – a proselytising global religion – as endangered and in need of protection by and for the indigenous peoples of Britain, the BNP discursively distinguishes 'real' Christianity from the corrupted and debased Anglican Church. Real Christianity is constructed as under attack from the inside by liberalism and multiculturalism and therefore rendered incapable of communicating what the BNP perceives as the true Gospel (Maddox July 2006). It is the vestiges of this real Christianity that are claimed to be threatened by the alien voracious false religion Islam poised to unleash Sharia law on an unsuspecting nation.

4.12 Empire also poses problems for the BNP in relation to claims to indigeneity. Empire, that *'tremendous influence for good.. on all the world's peoples'* now stands maligned by an inferior and ungrateful world (Dewar Nov 2006:13). Colonialism is constructed as positive, progressive and noble, taken on for the good of lesser nations incapable of managing their own affairs. The white man civilises the world making it a better place. This duty is ongoing: indeed *'the position in Africa and most parts of Asia – then as now – was quite simple: the peoples of these areas desperately needed just and orderly rule, this could only be provided by Europeans and it was their duty to provide it. This argument still holds good today...'* [emphasis in the original] (Dewar Jan 2008: 14). Dewar argues that re-engaging with *'...our imperial destiny'* would be a positive step for Britain (Dewar Jan 2008: 15): after all, *'Britain's historic mission ...has been to enoble mankind'* (Dewar Nov 2006: 12). Interestingly, in claiming the mantle of indigeneity, the BNP allies itself with victims of the very Western civilisation, glorious past and missionary church lauded in this article. The continuing desire of sections of the BNP leadership to remove the self-determination of other peoples must surely undermine the legitimacy of any moral claim to indigenous status.

Embattled, Endangered and Ignored? Constructing White Victimhood

5.1 Historically indigeneity is coupled inexorably with minority rights and redressing grave historical and ongoing injustices perpetrated by the strong against a weaker people (Niezen 2003). This presents the BNP with a challenge – far from being a threatened minority group, indigenous Britons, by the BNPs analysis, would constitute some 85% of the British population (Platt, 2009), and the overwhelming majority of the powerful elite. How can white people in Britain be positioned as endangered despite their overwhelming numerical and (according to the BNP) intellectual superiority? The BNPs answer is simple: white people are their own worst enemy. Once again, it is all in the genes.

5.2 The BNP posits (this time without any attempt at scientific justification) that white people possess a 'liberal gene': *'that sits destructively and uniquely within our own people'* (Butler July 2008: 28). This *'genetic curse'* is a *'weakness of our ethnic group'* (Butler July 2008: 28) and predisposes white people to behave unselfishly towards others at the expense of themselves. Other races, allegedly unhampered by this gene, act in their own racial interests unopposed by the genetically soft-hearted indigenous Britons (Butler, July 2008). It would be interesting to see this argument deployed in the context of colonialism or the excesses of empire, but of course it is not. Soft-heartedness is used solely in relation to the context of multiculturalism in Britain. It should be noted that whilst the liberal gene is constructed as making white people vulnerable to multiculturalism, it is multiculturalism ('multiracialism') itself that is the true enemy of

the BNP. Various described as a '*rationalist construct*' (Hamilton Mar 2006: 15), an 'experiment' created by '*the 'human equality' egalitarian fantasy*' (Griffin Nov 2006: 6), a '*fully fledged secularist ideological mania*' (Griffin Nov 2006: 6) held in place by '*tyrannical liberal myths*' (Liddell Apr 2008: 15), as an '*alien...infection which has rotted the Christian Churches in the British Isles*' (Maddox Aug 2006: 27), as a '*blueprint of abstractions that is designed to lead to a multi-racial Utopia, a perfect world on earth where we have all become coffee coloured*' (Hamilton Mar 2006: 16) multiculturalism is positioned as responsible for the undoing of Britain.

5.3 Multiculturalism is also constructed as ideologically opposed to indigenous Britons. Indigenous Britons are necessarily positioned as the victims of multiculturalism rather than the co-beneficiaries (Hamilton Mar 2006). The 'host' nation is constructed as fragmented, undermined and stripped of cultural identity and unity (Baxter Feb 2006). There are two potential outcomes for multicultural societies: either extinction through bloody interethnic conflict or extinction and collapse through racial interbreeding. Britain is said to be undergoing '*Balkanisation*' (Heydon Nov 2007: 26) with civil war a likely outcome as a result (Barnes Aug 2006). The alternative is positioned as equally bad: cultural disintegration and collapse due to miscegenation (Barnes Aug 2006). Interbreeding will extinguish the indigenous British people '*as an ethnically homogenous group (race)*' (Baxter Feb 2006: 25). This is portrayed as the liberal ideological goal, and to this end the indigenous youth are being indoctrinated with a political message that '*is leading them to commit self-inflicted genocide through race-mixing*' (Baxter Feb 2006: 26). The BNP uses the discredited language of Nazism to construct multiculturalism. They assert that whereas Hitler illegitimately wanted a Reich inhabited by '*a 'Master Race' of Pure Aryans*' multiculturalists want an inverted version of this: a world made up entirely of '*the coffee coloured person*' (Hamilton Mar 2006: 15). Multiculturalism and Nazism, rhetorically positioned as mirror images of each other, invite equal discredit.

5.4 The indigenous British are constructed as an intellectually superior people, genetically liberal and soft-hearted, betrayed into throwing away their birthright on immigrants. The 'immigrant' is constructed very differently and is determined on racial grounds alone. Immigrants are not white and are framed within very familiar hate discourses. Here we find discourses linking immigrants to criminality: '*increased lawlessness, gang warfare, organised crime, terrorism...*' (Green June 2008:28). Immigrants are repeatedly described as a vast ever-increasing invasion of bad people whose criminality is visited upon a defenceless host population: '*the increasing millions of immigrants who are crowding to our shores...who mug our people...who rape our people...who knife our people to death*' (Butler July 2008: 28). Criminality is presented as a character trait (some immigrants '*have a propensity...for serious crime*' [Hamilton, June 2006: 13]) and as arriving with the Empire Windrush ('*Britain has become a lawless country in the past 50 years sadly*' [Ibid]). Constructions of crime itself are racialised (so we have '*ethnic crime*' [Ibid]) and figures and statistics are presented so as to cause maximum levels of impact ('*on a pro rata basis... ethnic crime already costs approximately 6 billion a year*' (Hamilton June 2006: 13)). Official statistics and Government announcements are used in a form most calculated to raise the threat level: thus '*The Under Secretary of State for the Home Department Joan Ryan estimates that around 75% of illegal entrances are facilitated by organised crime*' is interpreted to mean 500,250 immigrants are linked to organised crime (Green Nov 2007: 9). Prisons are portrayed as so overflowing with expensive foreign criminals that others escape unpunished. Horror stories often with a sexually violent theme set out the dangers posed by immigrants to the host nation, for example an influx of asylum seekers in Dover allegedly resulted in girls trapped inside their homes '*for fear of their safety*' (Hamilton June 2006:13).

5.5 Criminality is not the only problem created by the presence of immigrants: there is also '*lack of housing, lengthening NHS waiting lists, social fracturing, general overcrowding and the gagging of free speech*' (Green June 2008:28). Bogus asylum seekers are '*fed, sheltered and given more protection than a native born citizen*' (Green Nov 2007:9). Immigrants import '*dangerous illnesses like TB and AIDS*' and get free NHS care for life (Hamilton June 2006). Immigrants are positioned as work-shy and a drain on benefits and public services (Green June 2008). To make matters worse, genetically inferior immigrants incapable of assimilation into a racially based definition of nation, then have children (Rose 2008). The '*birthrate and distribution of these children by underclass and ethnicity...is a recipe in itself for the destruction of our Christian based law-abiding society*' (Rose Jan 2008: 26). Reverse colonialism is constructed as underway and intent on the permanent destruction of indigenous ethnic communities. '*Rear Admiral Chris Parry Head of the Ministry of Defence's top strategic think tank*' has apparently warned that 'reverse colonialism' is already undermining Britain, creating diasporas full of immigrants owing allegiance not to Britain but to '*unstable and anti-Western regions*' (Griffin July 2006: 4). Again, this is a constant theme: '*mass immigration is slowly but surely displacing the founding population with non-European immigrants*' (Kemp Oct 2006: 13). '*National outpost after national outpost has been set up by the incoming hordes of numerous cultures and religions...that have no intention of integrating*' (Maddox Aug 2006: 24). The extinction of the indigenous people of Britain is presided over by a liberal elite incapable of recognising or preventing the dangers: '*we pay them to procreate voters who in 20 years time will be mobilised to take our country from us*' (Rose Jan 2008: 26).

5.6 The indigenous population is positioned as victimised, discriminated against, and unable to demand their rights against newcomers who are positioned as contributing nothing. There is a continuing theme of politically motivated unfairness and oppression with immigrants privileged over white people: immigrants can have their own organisations while white people cannot (Kemp Oct 2006), the police are obsessed with racist crime but unconcerned about anti-white racist crime, white children are denied their indigenous heritage and an education as schools take on the multicultural agenda and struggle to deal with the sheer numbers of immigrants demanding attention (Rose Jan 2008). As Hewitt (2005) noted, this type of discourse is often contained in 'true' stories of which the following is an example: '*...a case recently where an illegal immigrant raped a child at knife point. After he had served his sentence.. he was considered too dangerous to the British public to be set free. He refused to be repatriated and under the conditions of the ECHR he could not be forced to leave Britain. Knowing this our criminal lodger then sued for wrongful imprisonment and was not only set free but awarded £50,000 of tax payers money as compensation for his*

extra imprisonment' (Green Nov 2007: 10). Hardworking indigenous working class people are positioned as having to bear the brunt of this tax funded political experiment by being forced out of their homes and communities so that criminal and undeserving immigrants can obliterate their way of life (Hamilton Mar 2006). These discourses also construct the BNP's claim that the indigenous British population is being systematically persecuted and oppressed.

5.7 The BNP constructs Islam as a specific, central and immediate threat to indigenous culture. Asian Muslims are said to retain strong bonds at odds with those held by the indigenous British (Baxter Feb 2006). There are enormous practical benefits of constructing a religious rather than a racial demon. Islam, as a chosen religion, is open to critique (although 'Asian' functions here as a racial category). Expressing religious hatred is not prohibited by social norms in the same way as racial hatred. However, unlike other political parties, the BNP opposes Islam not extremism. In reviewing 'Clash of Civilisations' by 'Harvard professor Samuel Huntington' Griffin cites this extract: '*the underlying problem for the West...is Islam, a different civilisation whose people are convinced of the superiority of their culture and obsessed with the inferiority of their power...*' (Griffin Mar 2006: 5). Islam is positioned as the alien invader, its leaders only pretending to be moderates, and Muslim immigration is constructed as a plan to move to the West '*and raise large numbers of children at taxpayers expense...as part of a religious war...*' (Hamilton Sep 2007: 27).

5.8 Under the guise of protecting vulnerable indigenous Britons from the Islamic threat, the BNP are able to elaborate the most vile, caricatured and extremist picture of Muslim people in Britain. Muslims are positioned as extremists and terrorists, powerful beyond measure and able to subvert both the legal and the political systems for their own ends (Hamilton Sep 2007). In an article reprinted in entirety from the Irish Brandsma Review (unknown author Mar 2008), Islam is described as a religion that would force upon the indigenous British population un-British practices such as female genital mutilation, domestic violence, stoning rape victims, paedophilic rape, slavery, Sharia Law, etc. Lacking the white liberal gene, Muslims are cruel, intolerant of other ways of life and other religions, ruthlessly self-interested and will not hesitate to destroy Christianity and the secular liberal society that has betrayed Britain to Islam in the first place. Muslims are constructed as unassimilable into the British way of life: if anything fanaticism increases down the generations resulting in '*a massive and irreversible tide of radicalisation and anger*' sweeping through Muslim youth (Griffin Nov 2006: 6). Finally readers are told '*the Koran imposes a Divine obligation on every Muslim to wage holy war against non-Muslims, making Islam intrinsically hostile to Britain*' (Bean May 2006: 12). Islam and Muslims (constructed in largely racial terms) pose a fundamental threat to British Christian society, which the political elite is ideologically prevented from opposing and the indigenous population too ill-informed to counter.

5.9 The BNP constructs the indigenous people of Britain as in the process of being extinguished by two processes: firstly by the '*...decades of immigration and asylum combined with a higher non-white birth rate [that] have already resulted in indigenous British people becoming a minority in many cities*' (Britain's 'occupied territories'), and secondly by miscegenation; it is asserted that '*Britain has the world's highest rate of interracial relationships*' (Baxter Feb 2006, 25). For this reason, the BNP argues that indigenous Britons are under threat of imminent extinction.

5.10 These claims must be resisted, and there are immediately obvious challenges to the BNP's constructions. Firstly, there is the question of representation. A large proportion of white British people do not support the BNP so from where does the party get its mandate to act as mouthpiece for the rights and aspirations of indigenous people in Britain? There is the issue of power: whites form the majority population of Britain and white people predominantly wield political, legal, religious, social, cultural, academic and economic power. White British people are the dominant majority; they do not need protection from it. The rule of law must be part of Britain's cultural heritage, so presumably land gained legally (as opposed to stolen) should not be handed back even if owned by non-whites. What is the place of the mixed race people in the BNPs new indigenous society? Finally, British culture, the Anglican religion, British music, British education, British philosophy, British food, British literature, British law, British systems of government and justice and the English language can be and have been adopted by people of varying ethnic origins throughout the world. While any legal claim must fail for these reasons, the value of the 'indigenous Briton' label to the BNP lies in the discursive space it makes available to them, and the valuable social and political identity that is associated with it.

New Discourse, New Danger?

6.1 It could be argued that the way in which the BNP have deployed indigeneity is not new. After all, according to Back et al (2002) both left and right have enforced an exclusive definition of British cultural norms and the last 30 years have seen an unchanging understanding from government that the 'British way of life' was both a national treasure and in need of protection from enemies within and without. The concept of indigeneity is already used outside BNP discourse in an unproblematical fashion to refer to white British people. Thus Archbishop of York and former refugee John Sentamu stated that the rise in anti-immigration feeling was caused by 'local politics... not [being] very good at actually supporting the indigenous population' (Sentamu quoted on BBC News, 11 May 2006). In addition, at the time of writing, the fortunes of the BNP appear to be in steep decline despite their rhetorical revival. Why should we take this discursive repositioning of the far right seriously?

6.2 It is argued that the failure of the BNP does not indicate the rhetorical failure of the concepts it subverted to serve its own ends. It could even be argued that the very failure of the BNP will allow people who would never consider joining such a party to utilise indigeneity rhetoric more readily; rhetoric constructed for the specific purpose of advancing the far right in Britain. The BNP has deployed a new concept of whiteness at a time of discursive, economic, social and political upheaval. In Britain 'the context of declining national sovereignty and the dual 'threats' of asylum and terrorism' have contributed

to new ideas around society, identity, community and fairness (Law 2010: 150) and issues relating to asylum, immigration, religion, race and culture have been more prevalent this century than in the previous 20 years (Richardson 2009). There is a powerful groundswell of opinion that non-white immigration is a social evil (Griffin 2005) and 60% or more of respondents to MORI polls between 1989 and 2007 believed that there were too many immigrants in Britain (Finney and Simpson 2009). Media scares about and official responses towards asylum seekers and illegal immigration have changed public discourses and legitimised so-called 'common-sense racism' (Kundhani 2001: 43) sanctioning often virulent campaigns conducted against immigrants in general and asylum seekers in particular (see for example Grillo 2005; Hubbard 2005; Kushner 2003). The terrorist attacks of 9/11 and 7/7 intensified anti-Muslim sentiment in Britain (Wilks-Heeg 2009) reaffirming white Christian constructions of Britishness and demonising British Muslim ways of life as culturally and theologically alien and unassimilable (Phillips 2006). The BNP recognise that they have benefitted from this "...ever-growing wave of what the last dinosaurs of the doomed multicultural (sic) call 'Islamophobia'" (Griffin Oct 2006: 5) but far right revival in Britain preceded the BNP (Wilks-Heeg 2009) and the rehabilitation of racist discourse propounded by the BNP may far outlast the BNP itself.

6.3 Indigeneity provides the far right with an identity already legitimised by its use by first peoples around the world. Deploying indigeneity allows the far right to discursively re-position the label of "Britishness" from its use as an inclusive political identity (*'Every ethnic minority is told to express their Britishness'* (Hannam Oct 2007:16)) to an exclusive racially white one. The rhetorical focus on what is and is not British will strengthen racial nationalism and aggressive majoritarianism in the UK both within mainstream political parties and on the far right fringe. White people fearful of losing political, social and economic power, and feeling threatened by minority claims for equality, may yet deploy the concept of indigeneity to maintain privileged positions. Indigenous identity could become the voice and interpretative repertoire for many views and feelings that cannot at present be publicly expressed due to the prohibition on racist discourse. Whilst this prohibition on racist discourse is itself under discursive attack (see Goodman and Burke 2010; Every and Augoustinos 2007) indigeneity may provide an unassailable platform legitimising views that must otherwise be viewed as racist. The discourse of indigeneity transforms the determination of white people not to lose collective power, into a moral struggle for liberation and the preservation of a people. Anti-racists need to find a way to discursively challenge these constructions to prevent them gaining mainstream currency.

Conclusion

7.1 What are the boundaries of indigeneity? Where a threatened and oppressed minority group, descended from the first people on the land and historically identifying itself as a nation and clearly in need of protection, asserts indigenous rights it is easy to support that claim without working out exactly which criteria are essential to indigeneity definitions. It is also easy to overlook essentialist and nationalistic constructs within indigenous communities themselves under the broad justification of 'self-actualisation' of the threatened minority (Niezen 2003). These constructs, if unchallenged, can then form part of the concept of indigeneity. However, if indigeneity is not clearly defined, it is difficult to withhold the term (and the legitimised discourse that attaches to it) from particular groups on the grounds that we dislike their politics. In particular, we need to look urgently at whether or not the definition can ever apply to a dominant group which can produce evidence that it is likely to lose its dominance without protection. This is a task for social scientists such as anthropologists, lawyers, and activists (both those who campaign for the rights of indigenous people and those who campaign against racism and fascism). Without a clearer understanding of the limits of indigeneity, the concept remains a powerful identity position that can potentially be politically mobilised in such a way as to legitimise the racist discourse of far right movements and strengthen racial nationalisms across the planet.

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