

**DARE conference  
Vienna 14-16 November 2008**

## **Reshaping Intercultural Learning?**

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## **Interculturalism in Europe today?**



## Workshop aim

*How adequate is intercultural learning?*

- Conceptually
- Politically
- Educationally

*What is your involvement in intercultural learning/education, and what do you aim to achieve with that involvement?*

## Questioning *adequacy*:

- **Conceptual**: Is intercultural education *racist*?
- **Political**: Is intercultural education *anti-political*?
- **Educational**: Is intercultural learning *fundamentalist*?



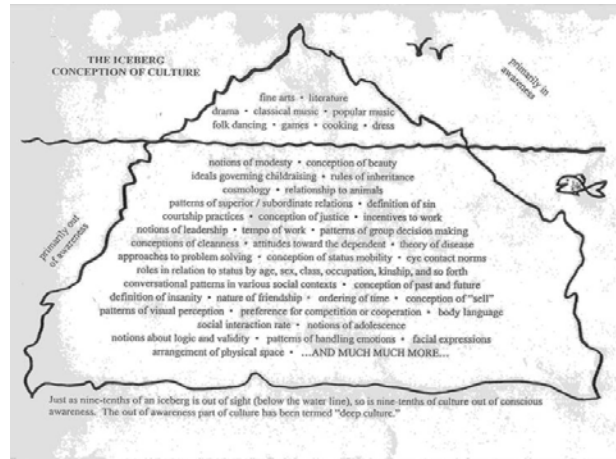
### 1. Conceptual *adequacy*: The *Highland Shortcake* model of multicultural:

- Jamal al-Harith, born 37 years ago in Manchester to a family with Jamaican origins, was held in the Guantanamo camp for two years before his release in March 2004. He recounted his post-colonial life story in the *Daily Mirror* and offered a welcome rebuke to mechanistic conceptions of cultural difference. In between a shocking account of the stupidity, horror and hopelessness of his long ordeal, he explained how much that shortbread that mattered: "We were all obsessed with Scottish Highland Shortbread. We wanted some so much.



(Paul Gilroy, 'Melancholia and Multiculture', *Open Democracy* April 2004.

## Are the formative histories of culture as an idea 'primarily out of awareness'?



## The living library of conceptual history:

“The concept of culture does not represent a fixed entity in an independent object world but is best thought of as a mobile signifier that denotes different ways of talking about human activity with divergent uses and purposes...the concept of culture is plastic, political and contingent (Barker 2002: 84)





## Senses and tensions:

Making,  
and being  
made

Living  
culturally  
and living in  
cultures



## Abstract models of culture

*Where are the real, living  
experiencing meaning-making  
human beings who follow  
particular lifeways?*

## Question 1

**To what extent do you find  
intercultural education conceptually  
adequate?**

## 2. Political adequacy

**Why does camp X-Ray have an  
intercultural policy anyway?**

## Global middle class multiculturalism:

- *Culture is aesthetic:* consumption employs cultural diversity & exoticism to enhance social distinction
- Appreciating culture is **cost-free politics:** 'Eating the other' allows affordable transgression and a solution to inequality if understood as difference



## Question 2:

**How adequate, in your experience, is intercultural education politically?**

### 3. educational adequacy

This is my world, you're just living  
in it

### When is dialogue, dialogue?

- You show me yours, I'll show you mine
- This is my world, you're just living in it (or passing through)
- Power and the 'threshold of tolerance' (the problem of 'illiberal minorities')
- The problem of difference?