Cultural Preservation and Liberal Values: A Reply to William James Booth

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William James Booth elaborates three main challenges to my social lineage account (Patten 2011). Conceptually, he finds the proposal to be question-beginning. Normatively, he thinks that it has objectionable implications. And, substantively, he claims that the proposal is unhelpful, in that it fails to explain a case of theoretical importance for multiculturalism. In this reply, I argue that each of these challenges misses the target. The social lineage account continues to offer a promising, nonessentialist basis for normative multiculturalism.

Fear of cultural loss is a familiar anxiety expressed in political discourse around the world. Theorists of liberal nationalism and multiculturalism highlight that fear when they argue for various measures intended to support cultural preservation. They defend rights to self-government and self-determination, justify language rights, and argue for cultural and religious accommodations on the grounds that these and other policies offer protection against the erosion and loss of culture.

Although the anxiety over cultural loss is instantly recognizable, its endorsement by certain strands of liberal thought has seemed problematic to many commentators who share a commitment to the norms and principles of liberal democracy. A conceptual question that has loomed large in recent debates about this issue concerns how to understand the notions of cultural loss and cultural preservation. People who call for cultural preservation rarely think that the culture they care about ought to be frozen in exactly its current state. They insist that preserving a culture is perfectly consistent with changes over time in its character or content. But how exactly are cases of cultural loss to be distinguished from cases of cultural change? How can proponents of cultural preservation judge whether their objective has been satisfied or thwarted? For liberal critics of multiculturalism and nationalism, there is no good account of what cultural loss is that does not undermine the normative desirability of efforts by state institutions to prevent cultural loss from occurring.

A common approach is to conceptualize cultural loss in essentialist terms. Applied to culture, essentialism holds that there are specific traits—typically, beliefs and practices—that constitute distinct cultures. It is the maintenance or disappearance of these essential traits over time that determines whether the culture is preserved or lost. This approach has the virtue of aligning with familiar anxieties of people worried about the loss of their own culture. The maintenance of particular values and practices is one of their common concerns. The essentialist approach also fits with judgments about cultural loss that third-party observers make, such as the judgment that, when an indigenous group has ceased using its language and has abandoned its traditional rituals and practices, a culture has been lost (Terborgh 2002). In addition, an essentialist approach can make room for the distinction between cultural change and cultural loss. Change occurs when members of a culture

revise or abandon nonessential beliefs and practices, while remaining attached to the essential beliefs and practices that constitute the culture. Cultural loss, by contrast, consists in the revision or abandonment of the essential beliefs and practices themselves.

Despite various advantages, essentialist accounts of culture and cultural preservation are deeply flawed. They cannot handle the heterogeneous, contested, fluid, and interactive qualities of culture. If cultures really were defined by generally shared and stable sets of essential beliefs and practices, then few if any of the groups that we tend to think of as possessing distinct and continuous cultures would in fact have such cultures. In addition, for liberals at least, essentialism leaves cultural preservation looking highly suspect from a normative perspective. Because liberal principles protect the rights of individuals to revise their ends, as well as the rights of democratic majorities to contest established societal norms, they seem to be on a collision course with cultural preservation understood in essentialist terms.

Contemporary theorists who defend liberal multiculturalism and nationalism are typically aware of the problems with essentialism, but they seldom spell out or defend an alternative nonessentialist account of cultural preservation. They officially disavow essentialism, but the suspicion among critics is that they tacitly end up depending on it. For the critics, and for many onlookers observing from the sidelines, the implication is that cultural preservation should not be considered important from the standpoint of liberal values and principles.

In an earlier article published in this journal (Patten 2011), I sought to answer this challenge by elaborating a nonessentialist account of culture and cultural preservation that is compatible with the normative agenda of liberal multiculturalism and liberal nationalism. I called this the *social lineage account* (SLA). In the reply published in this issue, William James Booth (2013) argues that the SLA fails on conceptual and normative grounds and that it does not account for a key kind of case that is important for multiculturalism and nationalism. Conceptually, Booth argues, the proposal does not succeed at freeing itself from an essentialist understanding of cultures and their continuity. Normatively, the SLA is objectionable because it ignores or downgrades important liberal principles. Finally, Booth suggests that the SLA cannot explain why groups that

were involuntarily incorporated into a larger state or empire at some earlier moment in history might still have strong claims under liberal nationalism or multiculturalism. The upshot, in Booth's estimation, is that attempts to ground multiculturalism and nationalism in liberal political theory remain as mired as ever in the problem of essentialism.

I do not think that Booth's arguments against the SLA succeed. There is no tacit reliance on an essentialist culture concept in the SLA, and that account need not imply any of the problematic normative implications invoked by Booth. In addition, the SLA can account for the cases of historical involuntary incorporation that concern Booth. A path out of the essentialist quagmire remains open. I explain these responses to Booth's critique in the pages that follow. I begin with a brief overview of the SLA and then consider each of Booth's three main challenges in turn.

THE SOCIAL LINEAGE ACCOUNT

The SLA offers an account of both the individuation of cultures and the conditions under which they are continuous. Although Booth's criticisms touch on the SLA's story about individuation, his main focus is the problem of continuity, and I follow him in this regard.

With respect to the problem of continuity, the core suggestion of the SLA is that a culture persists over time when, and to the extent that, members of the culture retain control over a process by which some successor group (the next generation, immigrants) is socialized (Patten 2011, 739–40). The culture of the successor group is a continuation of the culture of the socializing group. A culture is lost, in contrast, when there is no successor group—that is, no group whose socialization is or was controlled by established members of the culture.

Socialization in this proposal refers to the various formative processes that work to shape the beliefs and values of the persons who are subject to them. These processes include participation in particular institutions (the family, schools, workplace, media, government, and so on) and exposure to particular practices and forms of social behavior (language, patterns of discourse, social norms, rituals, and the like). Control over these socialization processes is a matter of who participates in the particular institutions, practices, and forms of behavior in question and who occupies positions of authority in those contexts. The members of a particular culture control the socialization of a successor group to the extent that the institutions, practices, and forms of behavior in which the successor group is socialized are largely populated by members of the culture and to the extent that members of the culture occupy positions of authority. A culture is preserved, on this account, when and to the extent that the culture's members maintain control in this sense over key contexts in which young people and new immigrants are brought up and socialized. A culture disappears when its members no longer control any such contexts, and

instead the formative processes that affect immigrants and new generations are controlled by the members of some different (larger, more dominant) culture.

The SLA's perspective on cultural continuity is nonessentialist in the sense that judgments about continuity and loss do not depend on facts about whether essential beliefs or practices are maintained or abandoned over time. A group can be socialized by another group and not end up sharing the beliefs and practices of that other group. Passive acceptance is one way in which people react to the formative beliefs and practices around them. But they may also react by improvising with and innovating off of the materials they are provided or by adopting attitudes of indifference, opposition, alienation, and, in some cases, hostility and rebellion. All of these reactions are compatible with the basic socialization relation that is at the heart of the SLA (Patten 2011, 742). So long as one generation of a culture is controlling the socialization of a successor group, there is cultural continuity, even if members of the successor group engage in dramatic revision of prevailing values, meanings, and practices. The SLA thus disentangles a conception of cultural preservation from problematic ideas about the "freezing" or reifying of cultures in specific forms.

As a payoff from these theoretical claims, the SLA is able to make sense of some difficult cases that are hard to grasp with an essentialist theory of continuity. An essentialist has trouble explaining how Quebec's Francophone culture survived the Quiet Revolution, when dominant values and practices were revised in fundamental ways. Essentialism also struggles with cases of groups that have abandoned their languages, but have managed to maintain themselves as distinct cultures; the Irish are a partial case in point, as are the Pueblo (Edwards 1985, 53–65; Song 2007, 33). The SLA, by contrast, can handle the Quebec case and the language-loss cases more smoothly. So long as intergenerational socialization mechanisms remain intact, it does not matter for continuity that the groups are undergoing fundamental changes in core beliefs and practices.

Although the SLA's ambitions are mainly conceptual, the motive for developing the account in the first place is to address a challenge to normative defenses of liberal nationalism and multiculturalism. The SLA does not, by itself, offer a justification for these views, but it does put us into a position to understand why some people care so much about the preservation of their cultures. Even though the SLA does not conceptually guarantee the availability of any particular options to members of a continuing culture, the account is consistent with some of the leading reasons that theorists have invoked to justify the value of culture. I review several of these reasons later in the article and note their compatibility with the SLA.

THE CONCEPTUAL CHALLENGE

Booth's conceptual challenge alleges that the SLA begs the crucial question. He thinks that "one must already have in hand a concept of the enduring culture in order

to identify a lineage (of control persons) as belonging to it" (867). Because the SLA cannot break out of this circle with only its own resources, it has to look outside itself for help. The main candidate for such assistance is an essentialist view of culture. Booth concludes that the SLA "seems not so much an alternative to essentialism as a variant of it" (868).

Before considering Booth's main evidence for this allegation, it is worth clearing away one source of confusion. At one point, Booth glosses the SLA as holding that loss of control over socialization *causes* a culture to be lost (866; my italics). This claim *would* be question-begging. If my proposal were a causal one, then there would need to be some independent account of what *constitutes* the loss (or conversely the continuity) of a culture, and it might be necessary to turn to essentialism to fill in *that* account. But if this is what lies behind Booth's challenge, then there is a basic misunderstanding at work. The SLA does *not* say that loss of control over socialization *causes* a culture to be lost. It addresses the constitutive question, not the causal one. On the SLA, cultural loss just *is* the absence of any successor group whose socialization is or was controlled by members of the culture.

Booth offers several reasons in support of the conceptual challenge, however. He claims that "socialization describes a process whereby individuals are inducted into a culture *understood to be theirs*" and offers the examples of religious formation for a Bar Mitzvah or a Catholic Confirmation (867; my italics). And he says that the socialization of outsiders "depends on their being a prior 'us' into which we have decided to allow them admission" (867). It is this group of insiders who feel, or ought to feel, a responsibility to transmit the culture, through socialization, to newcomers. It is the failure of Gabriel Conroy (the character in Joyce's "The Dead") to acknowledge this responsibility that makes his casual rejection of learning Irish so jarring. Were someone else to lack an interest in learning Irish—someone not regarded as already culturally Irish—it would be of no consequence.

But although these observations point to some complexities in the SLA, they do not vindicate the conceptual challenge. In fact, they are tripped up by the same conflation of causal and constitutive interpretations of the SLA that I just noted. Consider first the suggestion that socialization presupposes a target group that is antecedently identified as members or proto-members of the culture. It is true that there are socialization processes in which some people but not others are antecedently regarded as "eligible" to receive the formative treatment in virtue of their "incipient" or "proto" membership in the culture.[1] It is also true, however, that there are cases in which socialization involves

no such presupposition. When a Somali family emigrates to the United States and starts attending public schools, joining the workforce, learning English, watching American TV, and so on, they are being socialized as Americans even though there was no sense in which anyone identified them, before their exposure to these formative influences, as already culturally American or proto-American. Of course, immigration officials may have determined that they were "eligible" to live and work in the United States, but this determination did not necessarily depend on applying any culture concept, essentialist or otherwise.

Even assuming that socialization does always work in the way that Booth suggests, it would be wrong to conclude that the SLA is question-begging. Widely held beliefs about who is properly one of "us" can play a *causal* role in determining *to whom* the relevant formative treatment is administered. But this does not contradict the *conceptual* claim that it is administration of the relevant treatment that determines who becomes a member of the culture. The conceptual claim does not rely on any account of who is properly eligible to be socialized into the culture. So this portion of Booth's argument is relevant to understanding which cultures are *likely* to continue, and perhaps which ones *ought* to continue, but it does not make contact with the core thesis of the SLA.

Booth's observation about the need for a prior "us" into which socialization occurs and his related comments about Gabriel Conroy miss the mark in a similar way. It is true that, when the present members of a culture have a strong identity based on that culture—a strong sense of "us"—and when they feel a responsibility to perpetuate the culture, they are more likely to take steps that lead to the socialization of newcomers and new generations in processes controlled by members of the culture. Unlike Misael in my original example (Patten 2011, 739–40), they will not migrate away from the culture's home territory. And, unlike Gabriel Conroy in Booth's example (868), they will learn the language associated with the culture and teach it to their children. But these observations are causal in nature. They concern when cultural continuity is and is not likely to occur. They do not touch the conceptual issue that the SLA addresses and so fail to demonstrate that the SLA is question-begging in any way. They are consistent with thinking that, as a conceptual matter, what matters for cultural continuity/loss is the presence/absence of the basic socialization relationship described earlier.

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[1] Immediately after introducing the claim that the SLA is question-begging, Booth quotes a passage in which I refer to "incipient members of the cultural group" (2011, 740). But there is no support here for Booth's argument. The passage does *not* say that socialization presupposes a target group of incipient members. Instead it characterizes incipient members as persons who have "already received some socialization into [the cultural] group in other contexts" (740). The context is a discussion of the idea of control, not socialization.

Part of what it means to say that members of culture *X* "control" the public education system is that most of the children in the schools come from *X*ish backgrounds. To see the point, compare two children of diplomats, one of whom goes to a local public school filled with children raised in the area, the other to a private school filled with other children of diplomats. All else being equal, the first child is being socialized more intensively into the local culture than the second. Being an "incipient" member in all this is not a matter of belonging to the culture in some mysterious essentialist sense but of having already been socialized into the culture in some other context besides the one where the judgment about who is in control is being made.

To be sure, there is a different sense in which any claim about cultural continuity implies the prior existence of a culture. A culture must exist before any questions about its persistence in time can be raised. So perhaps the concern underlying Booth's remarks is simply with whether the SLA can adequately account for the existence, or individuation, of distinct cultures without falling back on essentialist assumptions.

But if this is what Booth's challenge boils down to, it is a challenge that my article tried to answer in some depth (2011, 741–44). I do not rehearse that answer again here, except to insist that it does not smuggle essentialist assumptions back into the analysis. The existence of a distinct culture is not, according to the SLA, a matter of shared beliefs and practices. Rather, the claim is that people share a distinct culture with one another when they have been formed by a common experience of socialization that is at least partially isolated from the experience of socialization undergone by others. On the SLA, then, a new culture emerges when a group of people begin to be exposed to an influential set of formative conditions that do not have an impact on people outside the group. A culture persists through time when its members control a process in which successor generations are socialized. No doubt there are objections that can be raised against the SLA (we explore several later), but Booth's conceptual challenge does not make the case that the SLA is a mere "variant" on essentialist accounts of culture rather than a genuine "alternative" (868).

THE NORMATIVE CHALLENGE

Booth's normative challenge questions the value of cultural continuity as that notion is interpreted by the SLA. Under this heading, Booth mentions three specific reasons for concern:

(1) The SLA "privileges induction into a tradition over broadly liberal egalitarian understandings of belonging," such as Habermas's idea of constitutional patriotism (869).
(2) The SLA's "control" criterion for continuity is too weak to explain why continuity is valuable. For instance, an authoritarian elite might control the socialization of some group of people, thereby passing on a culture, but we would not think the preservation of that culture to be of much, if any, value (869).
(3) On a liberal view, it is not clear why the "persistence of [a] culture as being 'ours'" should matter in the first place (869).

My article did not explore the normative dimension of the SLA in great detail, and Booth does not engage with the section of the article that did address this dimension (Patten 2011, 747–48). So, in considering these concerns, I do rehearse some points made in the earlier article but also take the opportunity to elaborate on them in certain respects. Once my view is properly set out, Booth's various concerns can be deflected. It will become clear that I do not subscribe to the view targeted by concern (1) and that the SLA does have an answer to the question raised by concern (3). I do think that people raised in a nonliberal culture can have legitimate reasons to value aspects of their culture, so concern (2) draws attention to an implication of the SLA that I would not fully disown. Instead I argue that, placed in the context of a broader, defensible normative framework, there is good reason to embrace this feature of my account.

At the outset it is important to note that the SLA does not purport to offer a new justification of the value of cultural preservation. Instead, the claim is that its conception of culture is consistent with some of the leading reasons for valuing cultural preservation that figure in the normative multiculturalism literature. Those reasons are not fundamentally dependent on an essentialist account of culture, but survive, with some limited need for reformulation, the shift to the nonessentialist SLA.

One such reason is related to the options that are available when the culture is maintained. In one version of the argument, the claim is that members of a disappearing culture would have to struggle to access an adequate range of options in another culture (i.e., the dominant culture), either because they would face discrimination or because they would lack some of the generic capacities (e.g., language proficiency) necessary to access those options. In a second version, the claim is that the dominant culture would not provide particular options to minority culture members that especially matter to them. The particular options in question are more likely to remain available if something like the formative context that produced them in the first place is able to persist. Neither of these versions of the options-based reason for valuing cultural preservation depend on an essentialist conception of culture. The first version highlights the importance of an adequate *range* of options and so is compatible with fundamental changes in the content of particular options. The second version does refer to particular options, but the argument can be cast in terms of *frequency*: The particular options valued by existing members of the culture are more likely to remain available if the culture is preserved than if it is absorbed into a larger culture in which the majority is shaped by different formative influences.

The SLA also leaves plenty of room for people to value their culture intrinsically. It implies that members of a culture share a history of interaction and a common set of experiences and points of reference. In addition, given the centrality of socialization to the account, there is a straightforward sense in which a person's culture helped make her the individual that she is. As a result, the SLA fits comfortably with the observation that people often feel attached to their culture and want to see it survive as a result. And it makes sense of the fact that people often associate disrespectful treatment of their culture with disrespectful treatment of them as individuals. Again, these attitudes regarding the value of culture do not depend on an essentialism.

These are some of the key points that I made about the normative dimension of the SLA in the earlier article. Already the main response to Booth's concern (3) should be coming into focus. The response is to insist that the SLA does point to reasons for thinking that cultural continuity matters to people. These reasons do not fetishize cultural ownership or control as such, but instead highlight contingent and indirect connections between cultural continuity and the ends and attachments that many people are likely to have.

Booth might counter that promoting the ends and attachments that people have is not a particularly liberal concern. I have shown why cultural continuity (as understood by the SLA) might matter to individual members of the culture, but I have not established that it ought to matter from the standpoint of liberal principles. Although it is true that I have not argued for this conclusion, the ambition of the SLA is not to offer a complete justification for normative multiculturalism. Rather it is to show that the justificatory problem does not get *worse* with the shift to the nonessentialist SLA.

Having raised the question of justification, however, let me at least indicate how I think the value of cultural continuity would fit into a more fully specified account of liberal principles. In my view, there is no principle in liberal thought that guarantees people enjoyment of the particular ends and attachments that they happen to value. As a consequence, there is no general right to cultural preservation in liberal principles (Patten forthcoming in 2014, chap. 3). However, liberals should affirm a principle demanding that people have a fair opportunity to pursue and enjoy the ends and attachments they happen to have (Patten 2012; forthcoming in 2014). I call this the fair opportunity for self-determination (FOSD) principle. The FOSD principle is defeasible—other competing principles demand that people be given the opportunity to evaluate and revise the conception of the good that they hold—but it should be given significant weight in a liberal political theory. The FOSD principle supports, in turn, a further principle, which I have called "neutrality of treatment" (Patten 2012). Roughly, the state should extend equivalent benefits to and impose equivalent burdens on the different conceptions of the good favored by its citizens. This last principle has significant implications for claims about cultural preservation. Even if there is no general right to cultural preservation, people who worry about the loss of their culture (and the damage to ends and attachments that such a loss would bring) do have a strong, though defeasible, claim on neutral treatment. As a consequence, they have a complaint when state institutions do not treat their language, or national identity, or cultural traditions in an evenhanded fashion. This is just the sort of complaint that liberal nationalists and multiculturalists have often emphasized (Carens 2000; Kymlicka 1995; 2001; Patten 2003; forthcoming in 2014).

So contrary to Booth's concern (3), the SLA fits neatly into an account of the value of cultural continuity that can be connected with liberal principles. Booth's concern (1) also misses the mark. For the rea-

sons just discussed, the SLA does help explain why what Booth calls "induction into a tradition" has value and why that value should have some significance from the standpoint of liberal principles. But there is nothing in the SLA that implies a ranking of cultural belonging above membership in a political community. Ultimately, a just political community is the main context in which individuals can hope to have a fair opportunity for self-determination and to enjoy the protection of other liberal principles. Liberal multiculturalists hold that individuals can enjoy multiple forms of belonging at the same time, including cultural, religious, and associational memberships, as well as liberal citizenship. Insofar as it is a guarantor of fair treatment of the other forms of membership and of other liberal principles, liberal citizenship has priority over the others. But the multiculturalist's hypothesis is that this priority leaves at least some space for the enjoyment of the other forms of belonging.

Booth's most interesting normative concern is (2). If the SLA's control criterion of continuity is accepted, he wonders, then how can we say that cultural continuity is generally of value? Would it not be more plausible to think that the continuation of illiberal (e.g., authoritarian) cultures is of no value? And, if that is the case, then perhaps continuity (as understood by the SLA) is not of value after all?

The main answer consists in repeating again that the SLA does not purport to address more than one aspect of the overall justification of cultural preservation. Strictly speaking, the SLA supports some reasons for thinking that cultural preservation is valuable. On its own, it does not explain how the value of cultural preservation is supposed to fit into a larger framework of liberal principles. The brief sketch of the FOSD and neutrality principles was supposed to indicate one possible approach—the approach that I favor—to filling in this additional step.

A further point that has already been noted is that, even if cultural preservation does register in some way as a valid concern of liberal principles, it does not follow that it is the only such concern. There may be other important concerns and principles, including concerns and principles that are more important than the one that relates to cultural preservation. It may be that cultural preservation matters, on a liberal view, only in some limited way and only when other liberal concerns and principles are fully secured. Again this general point is illustrated by the sketch of a liberal account attempted earlier. By locating the rationale for valid claims of cultural preservation in FOSD, the account points to several important limits on such claims. One flows from the fact that FOSD is not the only liberal principle: It is one of several such principles and needs to be balanced and limited by the claims of the others. The other limit arises from within the FOSD principle itself. Claims on behalf of illiberal cultures may, if granted, undermine fair opportunity for the self-determination of vulnerable subgroups within the culture. A liberal argument for cultural preservation does not even get off the ground in these cases because the principle that is appealed to in support of measures

to preserve the culture is not unequivocally served by adopting those measures. So liberal principles leave room for countervailing considerations, as well as for internal limitations on the validity of claims to cultural preservation brought about by the idea of fair opportunity for self-determination itself. And once these points are appreciated, it is far from clear that the SLA does imply the value of preserving authoritarian or illiberal cultures.

So, contrary to Booth's assertion, the SLA does not imply that "pedigreed control trumps other normative concerns" (869). Having insisted on this point, however, I want to close the section by suggesting that there is a slightly different sense in which liberals should acknowledge that there is value in the continuity of even illiberal cultures. The basic point follows Kymlicka (1995, 94) in cautioning against overly sweeping claims about the character of particular cultures. Like any culture, a culture deemed "illiberal" is the precipitate of many institutions and practices—of many formative influences—populated and controlled by different individuals with varying beliefs and values. The culture is considered illiberal because some of the key institutions and practices are dominated by individuals and groups with illiberal beliefs and values. But a culture that is illiberal in this sense may also be associated with institutions, practices, and formative influences that are neither especially liberal nor illiberal—such as language, territory, cuisine, customs of everyday life, and the like. And even the illiberal tendencies within the culture may give rise to internal opposition and resistance. As the critics of essentialism emphasize, cultures are sites of contestation and difference as much as of shared values and beliefs. One of the main objectives of the SLA is to accommodate this insight.

Once the multivalent character of culture is appreciated, the idea that there is value in the continuity of even illiberal cultures starts to gain plausibility. In general, I am sympathetic with the view that a liberal state should take steps to liberalize an illiberal culture, something that could involve limiting the control that (dominant) members of the culture have over the socialization of successor groups. But liberalization need not mean the complete absorption of the culture or its members into the dominant culture. It means targeting the illiberal norms and structures, even while respecting and safeguarding contexts in which other strands in the culture can continue. Continuity of this kind, even the continuity of a culture that is in some respects illiberal, has value for the same kinds of reasons (sketched earlier) that continuity in general has value.

So my response to Booth's normative concern (2) is somewhat more complex than my reaction to the other normative concerns. The SLA need not imply that there is value in the continuity of the illiberal aspects of cultures themselves. It is open to someone who affirms cultural preservation in general to think that in these instances it is preferable to encourage liberalization, even at the cost of lessening the control that (dominant) members of the culture exercise over socialization. Yet, people raised in an illiberal culture can have legitimate reasons to value continuity in the acceptable aspects of their culture, and it is no embarrassment to the SLA if it implies that there is value in such continuity.

IS THE SOCIAL LINEAGE ACCOUNT UNHELPFUL?

Booth's third major challenge to the SLA suggests that the account is unhelpful with regard to a major problem facing theories of multiculturalism. Proponents of multiculturalism have often recognized that it would be unfeasible and undesirable to extend a full set of cultural rights to every cultural group within a pluralistic society. Given that many liberal democracies are home to hundreds of languages and cultures, there is no way that the language rights or self-government rights that are defended by multiculturalists could be extended to all.

One solution to this conundrum, associated especially with the work of Kymlicka (1995), is to argue for a basic categorical difference between national minorities and immigrants. Kymlicka argues that, unlike national minorities, immigrants can normally be taken to have voluntarily relinquished their claims to certain cultural rights (1995, 95–96). So long as they had the option to stay in their original cultural homeland, there is no injustice in assigning immigrants a less extensive package of cultural rights than is enjoyed by national minorities.

Booth thinks that this solution depends on strong assumptions about the identity or continuity over time of national minorities (870). Kymlicka's picture is one in which immigrants arrive voluntarily, but national minorities were incorporated involuntarily at some earlier moment in history and thus never relinquished the right to preserve their own culture. But, if this is the picture, Booth argues, then a justification is needed for thinking that the historically involuntarily incorporated national minority is the same as (or continuous with) the national minority making claims today. Why think that the contemporary Québécois are in any sense the same group as the French settlers who were conquered by the English at the Plains of Abraham in 1759? And, if they are not, does this not weaken their claims to the rights advocated by liberal nationalists and multiculturalists?

For Booth an interesting test of the SLA is whether it can account for this particular form of continuity needed by the theory of multiculturalism. In Booth's opinion, it cannot. When groups such as the eighteenth-century settlers in New France were involuntarily incorporated into a larger state or empire (in this case, the British Empire) they were thereby stripped of control over their own social reproduction. This is precisely a situation in which the SLA would judge that there has been a disruption of cultural transmission and, as a result, a disappearance of the culture. The SLA is unhelpful, then, in an area of key theoretical importance for multiculturalism.

With this challenge, Booth pulls together some different strands of liberal multiculturalism in an

interesting and creative way. Once again, however, I think that Booth's argument misses the mark. By way of response, I make two preliminary points, which question whether the problem of historically involuntarily incorporated national minorities is a good test of the SLA. I then confront Booth's argument more directly, arguing that involuntary incorporation need not rule out the sort of continuity that is at the heart of the SLA.

The first preliminary point is simply that not all theories of multiculturalism rely on a basic dichotomy between immigrants and national minorities to determine who is owed particular cultural rights. Although few theorists would maintain that a full set of cultural rights can be extended to all cultural groups in a pluralistic society, some would ground judgments about the allocation of rights in criteria that are internal to the justification of the rights, rather than in an categorical distinction between immigrants and national minorities (Carens 2000; Rubio-Marín 2003). Insofar as this sort of view is defensible, multicultural theorists have no need to justify claims about which groups are "voluntary" and which are "involuntary," and it is no embarrassment to SLA if it cannot support such a justification.

I am sympathetic to Kymlicka's general approach on this topic, which does rely on a categorical distinction, so I do not press this first preliminary point further. But this brings me to the second preliminary point, which is that Booth does not properly appreciate the normative logic of Kymlicka's position. It is true that Kymlicka does offer a general schema for classifying groups on the basis of how they were originally incorporated into the state. And he does make an anachronistic reference to the original involuntary incorporation of the Québécois community into the Canadian political community (1995, 12). But, when Kymlicka turns to the discussion of the cultural rights of immigrants, the claims about original involuntary incorporation play no role (1995, 95–100). The baseline is one in which *anyone* with the relevant interests in cultural preservation has a prima facie entitlement to press for cultural rights. The argument is then that immigrants voluntarily relinquish this entitlement with their decision to leave their homeland. Facts about the distant past, and about continuity or discontinuity in the history of the national minority, are not important to this logic, so long as there is no reason to think that members of the national minority voluntarily relinquished the rights in question. The upshot is that the services of the SLA, or of any theory of cultural continuity, are not needed after all. Because the problem is not a real one, the ability of the SLA to help out with it is not a good test of the account's validity or utility.

With these preliminaries aside, let me now say something more direct about the relevance of involuntary acts of incorporation, such as conquest, for the claims about continuity and discontinuity made by the SLA. Focusing on the example of New France/Quebec, Booth claims that acts such as conquest imply a rupture in control over social reproduction and so would imply, for the SLA, a loss of continuity. In my view, however,

Booth is assuming here a far more statist conception of control and continuity than is generally warranted. Institutions of state and government are just one of a number of venues in which members of an existing culture can exert significant formative influences on a successor group. Even if the instruments of state are in the hands of outsiders (e.g., colonial occupiers), they may have a fairly limited impact on family life, language use, religious practice, education, economic organization, popular entertainment, settlement and residential patterns, and the like. If these contexts continue to be controlled by members of the culture, then cultural reproduction will continue relatively unabated.

Of course, there are cases in which conquest and other modes of involuntary incorporation do lead over time to a general disruption of processes of cultural reproduction. It is the vulnerability to such general disruptions that makes nationalists particularly sensitive to questions of political control. But these cases typically involve a conscious and strenuous effort at nation-building that seeks to reconfigure patterns of social interaction across the whole of life. The mere historical fact of conquest is not to be equated with this effort, which is a leading reason why most of the world's states are home to ongoing national minorities. Certainly, in the Canadian case that Booth cites, there was no whole-hearted attempt to assimilate Francophone inhabitants of historic New France into an Anglophone nation. In many key respects the cultural life of the Francophone community in what would become Quebec was allowed to reproduce itself. Booth's own example suggests, then, that the SLA does not struggle as badly with cases of historical involuntary incorporation as he alleges.

CONCLUSION

I am grateful to Booth for engaging so fully with the SLA and for leaving me the opportunity to elaborate the account in several respects. In the end, I do not think that his various challenges to the SLA are successful. He does not show that the SLA is a mere variant of essentialism, nor that the SLA is normatively objectionable, nor that the account is incapable of dealing with cases of historical involuntary incorporation. No doubt there are other challenges to the view to be considered. But for now the ambition of developing a nonessentialist basis for normative multiculturalism remains on track.

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