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In the Name of Love

Sara Ahmed
Lancaster University

Where was Hatewatch during 170 million crimes committed against White Americans over the last 30 years? Hatewatch. What an absurd organisation. But aren't they part of the huge parasitic Infestation which is always trying to destroy anyone who loves liberty and disagrees with the Monsters' plan for the degradation and control of the White Americans of this nation? They steal what they can and target us for government gangsterism and drooling media meatpuppet consumption... Love Watch. *The Wake Up or Die Love Watch is a listing of those who love this nation and our White Racial Family and the alternative to the lists of the parasitic propagandists.*

—Elena Haskins' Lovewatch

1. How has politics become a struggle over who has the right to name themselves as acting out of love? What does it mean to stand for love by standing alongside some others and against other others? It has become common for 'hate groups' to re-name themselves as organisations of love. Such organisations claim they act out of love for their own kind, and for the nation as an inheritance of kind ('our White Racial Family'), rather than out of hatred for strangers or others. Indeed, a crucial part of the re-naming is the identification of hate as coming from elsewhere and as being directed towards the 'hate group'; hate becomes an emotion that belongs to those who have identified hate groups *as* hate groups in this first place. In the above quote, the hate watch web site, which lists racist groups on the internet, is juxtaposed with the Lovewatch site, which also lists these organisations, but names them as 'love groups'. Such groups are defined as 'love groups' through an active identification with the nation ('those who love this nation') as well as a core set of values ('anyone who loves liberty'). Love is narrated as the emotion that energies the work of such groups; it is out of love that the group seeks to defend the nation against others, whose presence then becomes defined as the origin of hate. As another site puts it: 'Ask yourself, what have they done to eliminate anything at all? They feed you with, "Don't worry, we are watching the hate groups" and things like this. You know what they do? They create the very hate they purport to try to erase!' (About Hate) It is the very critique of racism as a form of hate, which becomes seen as the conditions of production for hate; the 'true' hated group is the white groups who are, out of love, seeking to defend the nation against others, who threaten to 'steal' the nation away.

2. It is important to track the cultural significance of this use of 'love' within fascist groups. What does that language of love do? How does it work? Psychoanalysis has long shown us the ambivalence of love and hate. But the re-presentation of hate groups as love groups does not make explicit such ambivalence. On the contrary, the narratives works through conversion: hate is re-named as love, a re-naming that 'conceals' the ambivalence that it exercises (we love *rather than* hate). The conversion of hate into love allows the groups to associate themselves with 'good feeling' and 'positive value'. Indeed, such groups becomes the one's concerned with the well being of others; their project becomes redemptive, or about saving loved others. These groups become defined as a positive in the sense of fighting others, and in the name of others. The narrative suggests that it is this 'forness' that makes 'against-ness' necessary. Hence those who identify hate groups as hate groups are shown as failing to protect the bodies of those whose love for the nation becomes a condition of vulnerability and exposure. By being *against* those who are *for* the nation (*anti*-racists, *anti*-fascists etc.), such critics can only be against the nation; they can only be against love. The critics of hate groups become defined as those who hate; those who act out of a sense of 'anti-ness' or 'against-ness' and thus those who not only cannot protect the bodies of white Americans from crimes, but re-enact such crimes in the use of the language of hate. We might note then the slide from the crimes against white people committed by unnamed others ('170 million crimes committed') to the crimes committed by Hatewatch ('they steal what they can') in this narrative.

3. The re-naming of hate groups as love groups, and hate watch as Love Watch, exercises a narrative of love as protection by identifying white subjects as already at risk from the very presence of others. Love does not only enter such narratives as a sign of being-for-others as a way of being for the nation, but also becomes a property of a particular kind of subject. Love, that is, reproduces the collective as ideal through producing a particular kind of subject whose allegiance to the ideal makes it an ideal in the first place. There has been a proliferation of 'hate group' web sites written by and for women, which argue that women have a particular role in the defence of the nation. This feminisation of fascism is significant. (see Bacchetta and Power 2002) One web site includes a post by the former Women's Director of the World Church of the Creator, 'Lessons from the death of Princess Diana', which suggests that:

The second lesson we have to learn, I believe, is the power a woman can have. Women represent nurturing, LOVE, reaching out, touching, bridging a gap, caring for children, and bringing a gentle, diplomatic approach to the problems at hand…. I mean the love borne of deep racial pride, willing to fight and die, but also willing to share a smile, shake a hand, stroke the hair of a young Aryan child. We need beautiful Aryan women, who can move among the people, speaking, entreating, and LOVING them.

4. Love becomes a sign of respectable femininity, and of maternal qualities narrated as the capacity to touch and be touched by others. The reproduction of femininity is tied up with the reproduction of the national ideal through the work of love. Importantly, then, love relationships are here about 'reproducing' the race; the choice of love-object is a sign of the love for the nation. In this posting Princess Diana as 'a woman of such racial beauty and purity' is condemned for her relations with 'non-Aryan men'. Such a narrative not only confirms heterosexual love as an obligation to the nation, but also constitutes mixed-race relationships as a sign of hate, as a sign of a willingness to contaminate the blood of the race. Making the nation is tied to making love in the choice of an ideal other (different sex/same race), who can allow the reproduction of the nation as ideal in the form of the future generation (the white Aryan child).

5. In this paper, I examine how love becomes a way of bonding with others in relation to an ideal, which takes shape as an effect of such bonding. Love is crucial to how individuals become aligned with collectives through their identification with an ideal, an alignment that relies on the existence of others who have failed that ideal. There are of course many types of love (familial, friendship, erotic). My concern is not to define 'what is love' or to map the relation between these different kinds of love. Rather, I want to consider how the pull of love towards another, who becomes an object of love, can be transferred towards a collective, expressed as an ideal or object. I do not want to suggest a one way relation of transference (when love for a particular other comes to 'stand for' the collective, or when our love for a collective 'stands in' for love for a particular other). Rather, I want to examine how love moves us 'towards' something in the very delineation of what it is that is loved; the direction of 'towardness' is sustained through the 'failure' of love to be returned. So we can ask: what are we doing when we do something *in the name of love?* Why is it assumed to be better to do 'the same thing' if it is done *out of love?*

6. Indeed, of all the emotions, love has been theorised as crucial to the social bond. More specifically, love has been theorised as central to politics and the securing of social hierarchy. Love has been understood as necessary to the maintenance of authority, in the sense that love of 'the leader' is what allows consent and agreement to norms and rules that do not and cannot guarantee the well-being of subjects and citizens. As Renata Salecl (1998: 16) asks: 'How does it happen that people subordinate themselves to the logic of the institution and obey all kinds of social ritual that are supposedly against their well-being?'. The crucial paradigm is the love the child has for the parent within the familial, and how this love then gets transferred onto other figures of authority. Or as Jessica Benjamin (1988: 5) puts it: 'Obedience to the laws of civilisation is first inspired, not by fear or prudence, Freud tells us, but by love, love for those early powerful figures who first demand obedience'. I also want to ask the question of how love is crucial to the production of forms of subordination and authority. However, I will not argue that the child-parent love is simply transferred into love for authority or figures of authority. Instead, I want to think about love as an investment which creates an ideal, as the approximation of a character that then envelops the one who loves and the loved ('the collective ideal'). Whilst the love the child has for its care takers is crucial, it will not then be theorised as a primary love from which secondary loves necessarily follow. My argument about the role of love in shaping collectives could seem rather banal or even obvious; love, after all, has often been theorised as a sticky emotion that sticks people together, such as in discourses of fraternity and patriotism. But I want to make a more complex argument, partly by thinking through how love works in places where it has been seen as more benevolent, such as in discourses of multiculturalism. Some attempts to critique discourses of racial purity – of narcissistic whiteness – are about finding a love that does not assume love for one's own kind and which does not lead to hatred for others. But does multicultural love work to expand love to include others? Or does this expansion require other others fail an ideal?

Identification and Idealisation

7. In order to examine how love for difference can still involve processes of idealisation we can turn to Freudian psychoanalysis. Freud offers a theory of love by differentiating between between anaclitic and narcissistic love. In the former, the self is the primary object of love, and in the latter, external objects are the primary objects of love. Whilst love is seen as in the first instance narcissistic – the child's own body is the source of love – for men, love is assumed to mature into object love, whilst women are assumed to remain narcissistic (1934: 45-46). The economy for this differentiation is heterosexual: woman's narcissism involves a desire to be loved (to love the love that is directed towards them), while for men, they love to love women who love themselves. The sexual relation becomes a love relation in which woman becomes the object of her love and the man's love. I will not engage here with the question of whether this describes or prescribes a heterosexist economy, although I will turn in due course to the heterosexual logic of the couple that organises this distinction. I want to examine this distinction between self love and object love, which can also be described in terms of a distinction between identification (love as being) and idealisation (love as having).

8. In Freud's account, identification is the earliest expression of an emotional tie with another person. As he puts it, 'A little boy will exhibit a special interest in his father; he would like to grow like him and be like him, and take his place everywhere' (Freud 1922:

60). In the first place, the boy's identification with the father creates an ideal: his ego ideal. This is the subject the ego would like to be. We should not assume here a linear movement from love to identification (as in the formulation: we identify with those we love). Rather, identification is a form of love; it is an active kind of loving, which moves or pulls the subject towards another. Identification involves the desire to get closer to others by becoming like them. Becoming like them obviously requires not being them in the first place. So identification exercises a distinction between the subject and object of love. At the same time, identification seeks to undo the very distinction that it requires: in becoming more like you, I seek to take your place. But taking the place of the one that is loved is futural: if one was already in their place, then one would not be identifying with them, one would be them. So identification is the desire to take a place where one is not yet. As such, *identification expands the space of the subject:* it is a form of love that tells the subject what it could become in the very intensity of its direction towards another (love as 'towardness'). Identification involves *making likeness* rather than being alike; the subject becomes 'like' the object or other only in the future. The other's death is imagined in the desire to take the other's place only insofar as the other is living in the present.

9. But what is the relation between the boy's identification with the father and his anaclitic love, his love of women as his ideal objects? His secondary love is love for the mother, for what is 'not him': such love works as a form of idealisation, and is based on a relation of having rather than being. Importantly, identification with the father and idealisation of the mother do not take the masculine subject to a different place: the love for the mother is a means by which the identification with the father is performed (one desires what he desires), even if it renders that love ambivalent in its claim to possession. What is at stake then is the apparent separation of being and having in terms of objects, but their *contiguity in terms of subject position:* in order to be him, I must have her, whom he has. In other words, identification with the father requires dis-identification with the mother (I must not be her), and desire for the mother (I must have her, or one who can stand in for her). The heterosexual logic of this separation of being from having is clear. In order to approximate the ego ideal, to paraphrase Judith Butler, I must desire an ideal object that is 'not me' in the sense of 'not my gender', whilst I must become 'my gender' by giving up the possibility of taking 'my gender' as a love object (Butler 1997: 25).

10. The distinction between identification and desire relates to the distinction between sameness and difference: for the heterosexual subject, I identify with what is 'like me' and desire what is 'different to me'. The assumption here is that heterosexuality is love for difference and homosexuality is love for sameness. We can complicate this narrative by re-thinking the relation between identification and desire, which are not about *the nature* of the subject or object that one seeks to approximate in relations of being and having. Just as identification leads to the formation of an ego ideal, so too desire creates an ideal object. As Freud argues, desire for an object, which becomes the ideal object, is not determined by the nature of the object. However, Freud's rejection of the nature of the object as determining love still presumes the primary role of the object in idealisation; he differentiates idealisation from sublimation, and describes the former as the over-valuation or exaltation of the object (1934: 50). But is the object that which is over-valued? Irving Singer also makes the 'evaluative' aspects of love crucial to his definition of love. He argues that love is a way of valuing something, such that: 'it is the valuing alone that *makes* the value' (1984: 5). In this way, love creates the ideality of the object, but this ideality does not 'stay with' but 'returns' to the subject.

11. The investment in the ideal object may work to accumulate value for the subject. An investment involves the time and labour that is 'spent' on something, which allows that thing to gain value or an affective quality (in this case, the 'loveable object'). The idealisation of the object is not 'about' the object, or even directed to the object, but is an effect of the ego. That is, the ideal object, as with the ego ideal, is an effect of the ideal image that the subject has of itself, in which it is invested. Renata Salecl speaks to this fit between ego ideal and ideal object when she says: 'The subject simultaneously posits the object of his or her love in the place of the Ego Ideal, from which the subject would like to see him- or herself in a likeable way. When we are in love, the love object placed in the Ego Ideal enables us to perceive ourselves in a new way – compassionate, lovable, beautiful, decent, etc.' (1998: 13).

12. The subject and the object are hence tied up such that identification and desire, whilst separated by a heterosexual logic (you can't be a man and love a man, or be a woman and love a woman) are connected in their relation to 'an ideal' (what is imagined as loveable or as having value). The ideal joins rather than separates the ego and the object; what one 'has' elevates what one 'is'. One consequence of this argument would be a re-definition of anaclitic love as a sublimated form of narcissism: rather than the male lover being humble, in Freud's terms (1934: 55), his exaltation of his beloved is a means of self-exaltation, in which the 'object' stands in for the subject, as a sign of its worth. As Julia Kristeva suggests, 'The lover is a narcissist with an *object*' (1987: 33).

13. So the idealisation of the loved object can allow the subject to *be itself in or through what it has.* The subject approximates an ideal through what it takes as its loved object. I want to suggest that idealisation may also work as the 'creation' or 'making' of likeness: the lover and the object approximate an ideal, an approximation which binds them together. It is hence not surprising that heterosexual love may be structured around resemblance and likeness, despite the conflation of heterosexuality with difference. After all, heterosexuality can itself be a bond that two *have in common.* The normative conflation of hetero-sex with reproduction means that bond gets structured around the desire to 'reproduce well', which is presented around a fantasy of 'making likeness' by seeing one's features reflected back

by others, whose connection to me is then confirmed (the question that is always addressed: who does the child look like?). We may search for signs of likeness on the body. But likeness may also be an effect of proximity. For example, we can reflect on the lovers pick up each other's habits and gestures, becoming more alike as an effect of desire. As Ben-Ze'ev describes, 'The desire to be with the beloved often becomes a desire to fuse with the beloved and in a sense to lose one's identity. Lovers begin to develop similar likes to those of their partners; for example, to enjoy music to which they were previously indifferent . . .' (2000: 415; see also Borch-Jacobsen 1988: 86).

14. Within familial love narratives, proximity in a spatial sense, as an effect of contact, gets collapsed with proximity as an ideological position ('we are alike on grounds of character, genetics or belief – this likeness become an 'inheritance'), which is crucial to the naturalisation of heterosexual love as a familial plot. At the same time, the transformation of proximity into inheritance is concealed by the very narrative of heterosexuality as love for difference, a concealment which projects sameness onto homosexual love and transforms that very sameness into both perversion and pathology. Commentators such as Michael Warner have critiqued the conflation of homosexuality and sameness (1990: 202), and the way in which this establishes heterosexuality as normative. I am supplementing this critique by suggesting that heterosexuality cannot be assumed to be 'about' difference or love for difference. The distinction between sameness as that which structures homosexual love, and difference as that which structures heterosexual love needs questioning on both sides of the distinction. The Freudian model idealises heterosexuality as love-for-difference by transforming homosexuality into a failure to love difference, which conceals the ongoing (psychic and social) investment in the reproduction of heterosexuality.

15. The distinction of love-as-having from love-as-being works then to secure a restricted domain of loveable subjects, *through the very imperative to idealise some objects and not others*, whose ideality 'returns' to me. That is, the imperative to identify with the one who is nearby – where proximity is assumed to be a sign of resemblance that is 'inherited' – also functions as an imperative to have the objects that the subject one loves is assumed to love. The need for approval of a love object from someone with whom one already identifies shows how value 'can be bestowed' only through others, such that the 'bond' of love leads me to others. If the object becomes ideal only through approval by loved others; idealisation creates both likeable subjects and loveable objects (see Benjamin 1995). The restriction of ideal objects involves a process of identification. In identifying myself with you, for example, I also de-limit who I can love in the sense that I imagine who would be loved by the subject that I would be if I was you. In other words, I ask: who or what would my ideal idealise? The question shows us that relations of having follow from relations of being, even if they take different objects.

16. Within the narrative of love discussed in my opening, identifying oneself as a white woman and as a white Aryan would mean loving not just men, or even white men, but white men who also identify as Aryan, *who can return the idealised image of whiteness back to oneself.* To love and to be loved is here about fulfilling one's fantasy image of 'who one would like to be' through who one 'has'. Such a love is about making future generations in the image I have of myself and the loved other, who together can approximate a 'likeness', which can be bestowed on future generations. Within this economy, the imperative to love becomes an imperative to extend the 'ideal' that I seek to have and to be onto others, who 'can' return this ideal to me. It is clear from the extension of self in love, or the way in which love orients the subject towards some others (and away from other others), how easily love for another slides into love for a group, which is already constituted in terms of likeness.

The National Ideal

17. In *Group Psychology*, Freud offers a theory of how love is crucial to the formation of group identities. Whilst maintaining that the aim of love is 'sexual union', Freud argues that other loves, whilst diverted from this aim, share the same libidinal energy that pushes the subject towards the loved object (1922: 38). For Freud, the bond between a group relies on the transference of love to the leader, whereby the transference become the 'common quality' of the group (1922: 66). Another way of saying this would be to say that groups are formed through their shared orientation towards an object. More specifically, groups are formed when '*individuals…have substituted one and the same object for their ego ideal and have consequently identified themselves with one another in their ego*' (1922, 80, emphasis Freud's). Now, it is here that Freud complicates the relation between identification and object choice, by showing how one form of love can become the other. In particular, he points to how the ego can assume the characteristics of the lost object of love though introjection (Freud 1922: 64).

18. In other words, the loss of the object is compensated for by 'taking on' the quality of the object. Mourning and grief hence become an expression of love; love announces itself most passionately when faced with the loss of the object. Love has an intimate relation to grief not only through how the subject responds to the lost object, but also by what losses get admitted as losses in the first place. If a subject can imagine that the person who was lost 'could have been me', then the grief of others can also become my grief. This 'could have been-ness' is a judgement on whether others approximate the ideals that I have already taken to be 'mine' or 'ours'. So there is an intimate relation between lives that are imagined as 'grievable', in Judith Butler's (2002) terms, and those that are imagined as loveable and liveable in the first place.

19. Indeed, the impossibility that love can reach its object may also be what makes love powerful as a narrative. At one level, love comes into being as a form of reciprocity; the

lover wants to be loved back, wants their love returned (Singer 1984: 6). At another level, love survives the absence of reciprocity in the sense that the pain of not being loved in return – if the emotion 'stays with' the object to which it has been directed – confirms the negation that would follow from the loss of the object. Even though love is a demand for reciprocity, it is also an emotion that lives with the failure of that demand often through an intensification of its affect (so, if you do not love me back, I may love you more as the pain of that non-loving is a sign of what it would mean not to have this love).

20. We can see how love then may work to stick others together in the absence of the loved object, even when that object is 'the nation'. Love may be especially crucial in the event of the failure of the nation to deliver its promise for the good life. So the failure of the nation to 'give back' the subject's love works to increase the investment in the nation. The subject 'stays with' the nation, despite the absence of return and the threat of violence, as leaving would mean recognising that the investment of national love over a life time has brought no value. One loves the nation, then, out of hope and with nostalgia for how it could have been. One keeps loving rather than recognising that the love that one has given has not and will not be returned.

21. We could even think of national love as a form of waiting. To wait is to extend one's investment and the longer one waits the more one is invested, that is, the more time, labour and energy has been expended. The *failure of return extends one's investment.* If love functions as the promise of return of an ideal, then the extension of investment through the failure of return works to maintain the ideal through its deferral into the future. It is not surprising that the return of the investment in the nation is imagined *in the form of the future generation* ('the white Aryan child'), who will 'acquire' the features of the ideal white subject. 'The Aryan child' here becomes the object that is 'put in the place of the ego ideal' (Freud 1923: 80). National love places its hope in the next generation; the postponement of the ideal sustains the fantasy that return is possible.

22. If the failure of return extends one's investment, then national love also requires an 'explanation' for this failure: otherwise, hope would convert into despair or 'giving up' on the loved object. Such explanations work as defensive narratives: they defend the subject against the loss of the object by enacting the injury that would follow if the object was given up. We can see this clearly in the accounts of love in fascist web sites; the nation as loved object has been taken away, and the 'injury' of the theft must be repeated as a way of confirming the love for the nation. In this instance, the fantasy of love as return requires an obstacle: here, the racial others become the obstacle that allows the white subject to sustain a fantasy that without them, the good life would be attainable, or their love would be returned with reward and value. Jacques Lacan (1984) has shown us the way in which the fantasy of love requires an obstacle in his reading of courtly love. By providing the obstacle to national love, racial others allow the fantasy that their love for the nation will be returned. The failure of return is 'explained' by the presence of others, whose presence is required for the investment to be sustained. The reliance on the other as the origin of injury becomes *an ongoing investment in the failure of return.*

23. But if the ideal is postponed into the future, as the promise of return for investment, then how does the ideal take shape? Julia Kristeva examines the relation between the national ideal and ego ideal in *Nations without Nationalism*, when she responds to the 'problem' posed by immigration:

First there is the interior impact of immigration, which often makes it feel as though it had to give up traditional values, including the values of freedom and culture that were obtained at the cost of long and painful struggles (why accept [that daughters of Maghrebin immigrants wear] the Muslim scarf [to school]) (1993: 36).

24. The bracketed sentence evokes the figure of the 'veiled/ Muslim woman' who comes into play as a figure that challenges the values that have become felt as crucial to the nation (including the values of freedom and culture). These values are what the nation can give to others. She becomes a symbol of what the nation must give up to 'be itself', a discourse that would require her unveiling in order to fulfil the promise of freedom for all. Kristeva hence concludes: 'It is possible that the "abstract" advantages of French universalism may prove to be superior to the "concrete" benefits of a Muslim scarf' (1993: 47). Kristeva suggests that the right to wear the scarf (with its multiple meanings) may give the Muslim women less than the rights afforded by entry into the abstract idea of the nation. By implication, the abstract includes everybody as it is not shaped by the concrete specificity of bodies. Others can become a part of the community of strangers on condition that they give up visible signs of their 'concrete difference'.

25. The argument moves from the national idea to a 'national ideal' via an analogy with the ego ideal. The 'Muslim scarf' is not only 'not' the idea of freedom 'won' as the freedom of the nation, but it also challenges the image the nation has of itself: 'That involves a breach of the national image and it corresponds, on the individual level, to the good image of itself that the child makes up with the help of the ego ideal and the parental superego' (Kristeva 1993: 36-37).The trauma of the Muslim scarf for the French nation is here *like* the trauma of 'failing' to live up to the ego ideal. Hence the nation becomes depressed when it is faced with the scarf and this shame and depression is used by the right wing discourse of anti-immigration: 'Le Pen's nationalism takes advantage of such depression' (Kristeva 1993: 37). According to this argument, the task of the radical might to refuse to celebrate or even allow the scarf as this would sustain the psychic conditions that enable anti-immigration and nationalism to flourish. Kristeva hence suggests that 'a Muslim wish to join the French community'(1993: 37) might require the elimination of the source of national shame: the concrete difference of the veil itself. The argument suggests that by eliminating the veil,

which stands in for concrete difference, the abstract national idea can be returned to an ideal that is enlarged by the appearance of others.

26. However, the argument that the national idea is abstract (and the difference of the Muslim woman is concrete) breaks down. The intimacy of the national idea with an ideal image suggests the national idea takes the shape of a particular kind of body, which is assumed in its 'freedom' to be unmarked. The ideal is an approximation of an image, which depends on being inhabitable by some bodies rather than others. Such an ideal is not positively embodied by any person: it is not a positive value in this sense. Rather, it accrues value through its exchange, an exchange that is determined precisely by the capacity of some bodies to inhabit the national body, *to be recognisable as living up to the national ideal in the first place.* But other bodies, those that cannot be recognised in the abstraction of the unmarked, cannot accrue value, and become blockages in the economy; they cannot pass as French, or pass their way into the community. The veil in blocking the economy of the national ideal is represented as a betrayal not only of the nation, but of freedom and culture itself -as the freedom to move and acquire value.

27. Love for the nation is hence bound up with how bodies inhabit the nation in relation to an ideal. I would follow Kristeva by arguing that the nation is an effect of how bodies move towards it, as an object of love that is shared. Or more precisely 'the it' of 'the nation' as an ideal or loved object is produced as an effect of the movement of bodies and the direction of that movement (the loved object as an effect of 'towardness'). But, as a result, the promise of the nation is not an empty or abstract one that can then be simply filled and transformed by others. Rather, the nation is a concrete effect of how some bodies have moved towards and away from other bodies, a movement that works to create boundaries and borders, and the 'approximation' of what can now call 'national character' (what the nation *is like*). Such a history of movement 'sticks', such that it remains possible to 'see' a breach in the ideal image of the nation in the concrete difference of others.

Multicultural Love

28. What happens when love is extended to others who are recognised as 'being different' in their concrete specificity? In this section, I will analyse how multiculturalism becomes an imperative to love difference and how this extension of love works to construct a national ideal that others fail (a failure which is read both as an injury and disturbance). To do so, I will refer to the debates on asylum, migration and the race riots in the UK. It is important to acknowledge that within the UK, the nation is imagined as an ideal through the discourse of multiculturalism, which we can describe as a form of conditional love. The nation becomes an ideal precisely through being posited as 'being' plural, open and diverse.

29. As Renata Salecl suggests, the pleasure of identifying with the multicultural nation means that one gets to see oneself as a good or tolerant subject (see 1998: 4). This identification with the multicultural nation, which shapes the 'character' of the multicultural subject, still relies on the structural possibility of the loss of the nation as object. The multicultural nation can itself be taken away by the presence of others, who do not reflect back the good image the nation has of itself such as intolerant racist others (often conflated with the white working classes, or fascist groups like the British National Party). The nation could also be taken away by migrants or asylum seekers who don't accept the conditions of one's love. *Identifying oneself as British means defining the conditions of the love one can or will give to others.* Indeed, multiculturalism – especially since September 11 - has been viewed as a security threat: those who come into the nation 'could be' terrorists a 'could-be-ness' that extends the demand for surveillance of others who are already recognisable as strangers (see Ahmed 2000). The national project hence becomes: how can one identify the nation as open (the national ideal) through the very conditions required to inhabit that ideal?

30. The new conditions require that migrants 'must learn to be British'; that is, migrants must identify as British by taking 'the nation' as their object of love. This becomes a matter of allegiance and adherence: of sticking to the nation in the formation of the ego ideal: 'New immigrants will soon have to pass English exams and formally swear allegiance to the Crown….The Home Secretary believes it is crucial that newcomers to the UK embrace its language, ethos and values' (Hughes and Riddell 2002: 1). Migrants must pass as British to pass into the community, a form of 'integration' that is imagined as the conditions for love. Importantly, migrants must become British even at home: Muslim women, in particular, have been asked to speak English at home, so they can 'pass on' the national ideal to the future generation. This ideal is not premised on abstraction (the migrant is not asked to lose her body or even her veil), nor on whiteness, but on hybridity as a form of sociality, as the imperative to mix with others. The others can be different (indeed, the nation is invested in their difference as *a sign of its love for difference*), as long as they refuse to keep their difference to themselves, but instead give it to the nation, by mixing with others.

31. The over-valuation of the nation as a love object – as an object that can reciprocate one's love – hence demands that migrants 'take on' the character of the national ideal: becoming British is indeed a labour of love for the migrant, whose reward is the 'promise' of being loved in return. As Bhikhu Parekh puts it:

A multicultural society cannot be stable and last long without developing a common sense of belonging among its citizens. The sense of belonging cannot be ethnic and based on shared cultural, ethnic and other characteristics, for a multicultural society is too diverse for that, but must be political and based on a shared commitment to the political community. Its members do not directly belong to each other as in an ethnic group but through their mediating membership of a shared community, and they are committed to each other because they are all in their own different ways committed to a common historical community. They do and should matter to each other

because they are bonded together by the ties of common interest and attachment…. The commitment to the political community involves commitment to its continuing existence and well-being, and implies that one cares enough for it not to harm its interests and undermine its integrity. It is a matter of degree and could take such forms as a quiet concern for its well-being, deep attachment, affection, and intense love. (1999: 4)

32. Love here sticks the nation together: it allows cohesion through the very naming of the nation or 'political community' as a shared object of love. Love becomes crucial to the promise of cohesion within multiculturalism; it becomes the 'shared characteristic' required to keep the nation together. Here, the emotion becomes the object of the emotion. Or, more precisely, love becomes the object that is 'put in the place of the ego or of the ego ideal' (Freud 1922: 76). It is now 'having' the right emotion that allows one to pass into the community: in this case, by displaying 'my love', I show that I am 'with you'. It is 'love' that the multicultural nation idealises as its object: it loves love.

33. The 'love for love' is bound up with the making of community. Within the white paper, *Secure Borders, Safe Haven: Integration with Diversity in Modern Britain*, integration is defined as crucial to the making of community, understood in terms of building 'firmer foundations' for nationhood. Indeed, the forward to the report suggests that 'confidence, security and trust' are crucial to the possibility that the nation can become an ideal object – 'safe haven' that is open to others, without being threatened by that opening (Home Office 2002a: 3). As such, David Blunkett suggests that 'we need to be secure within our sense of belonging…to be able to reach out and to embrace those who come to the UK'. Here, the nation and national subject can only love incoming others – 'embrace' them - if the conditions that enable security are already met. To love the other requires that the nation is already secured as an object of love, a security that demands that incoming others meet 'our' conditions. Such conditions require that others 'contribute' to the UK through labour, or by showing they are not bogus asylum seekers; when such conditions have been met they will 'receive the welcome they deserve'. The asylum system and discourse of citizenship is justified on the grounds that is only through the intensification of the border that the nation can be secured as an object of love, which can then be given to others.

34. The ideal constructed by multicultural love also involves the transformation of heterosexuality into good citizenship, and evokes the figure of the ideal woman. Take the following quote from *The Observer*:

Genevieve Capovilla's father is West Indian. Her mother is Italian. And she is British. She has golden skin, and soft, even features. She combs her hair into a healthy, curly semi-afro. Her racial mix is ambiguous – neither Afro-Caribbean, nor southern European. It is no surprise to find that she is a model. She has the enviable quality of looking as though she would be at home anywhere in the world. And her look is one that will become increasingly familiar, and – in the worlds of fashion and beauty – increasingly sought after…. Genevieve is the new English rose…. At the turn of the twenty-first century … England's rose has become more of a bronzed, burnished sunflower, equally at home in the Arabian Gulf, the Caribbean or the South China Sea. (Blanchard 2001: 10)

35. This positing of woman as an image of the nation is not new. As critics such as Anne McClintock (1995) have shown us, this conflation of the face of the nation with the face of a woman has a long history and points to the gendering of what the nation takes to be as itself (the masculine subject) through what it has (the feminine object). The figure of the woman is associated with beauty and appearance, and through her, the nation appears for and before others. As the new English rose, Genevieve replaces Princess Diana as an ideal image of the nation. White skin becomes golden skin; blonde hair becomes 'curly semi-Afro'. The idealisation of the mixed race woman allows the nation to accumulate value: as a model, her beauty sells. The exoticisation of mixed-race femininity is also not new, as Lola Young's (1996) work on representations of the mullato in film demonstrates. What is distinctive is how she gets 'taken in' by the nation: 'the exotic' comes 'home' through her bronzed appearance. As an ideal, she will approximate the fantasy the national subject has of itself: somebody who is hybrid, plural and mobile. She in her ideality – 'the new English rose' - has acquired the features of the national character, which fantasies itself as 'at home anywhere in the world'. The nation here can 'be itself' -a hybrid, mobile nation that loves difference by taking it in - precisely through the objects that it idealises as its objects of love. Anne-Marie Fortier's critical analysis of multiculturalism, which also offers a reading of this image of the mixed-race woman, attends to the role of heterosexuality in the reproduction of the national ideal. The object of love is an 'offsring' of the fantasy of the national subject at stake in this ideal'. (Fortier 2001).

36. This ideal image can be described as a 'hybrid whiteness'; the nation's whiteness is confirmed through how it is incorporates and is 'coloured' or 'bronzed' by others. Her ambiguity - 'not quite the same, not quite the other' in Bhabha's (1994) formulation – becomes a sign of the nation, and the promise of the future. This is not to say that mixed-race heterosexual love has become a form of national love. The mixed race woman 'appears' as a fetish object; her value resides precisely insofar as she is cut off from any visible signs of inter-racial intimacy. In other words, the nation remains the agent of reproduction: she is the offspring of the multicultural love for difference.

37. The nation here constructs itself as ideal in its capacity to assimilate others into itself; to make itself like itself by taking in others who appear different. The national ideal is assumed to be reflected in the wishful and hopeful gaze of others: 'millions of people hear about the UK and often aspire to come here. We should be proud that this view of the UK is held all around the world'. What makes Britain ideal is hence also what makes it vulnerable to others. A narrative of loss is crucial to the work of national love: this national ideal is presented as all the more ideal through the very failure of other others to approximate that ideal. Whilst some differences are taken in, other differences get constructed as violating

the very ideals posited by multicultural love. A crucial risk posed by migrant cultures is defined as their failure to become British, narrated as their failure to love the culture of the host nation. The failure here is the failure of the migrant to 'return' the love of the nation through gratitude. (see Hochschild 2003: 105) One tabloid head line after a fire at a detention centre for asylum seekers reads: 'this is how they thank us'.

38. How are disturbances read as the failure to return the conditions of national love? The race riots that took place within the North West of England in 2001, where understood to be a result of a failure to integrate or 'segregation': 'The reports into last summer's disturbances in Bradford, Oldham and Burnley painted a vivid picture of fractured and divided communities, lacking a sense of common values or shared civic identity to unite around. The reports signalled the need for us to foster and renew the social fabric of our communities, and rebuild a sense of common citizenship, which embraces the different and diverse experiences of today's Britain' (Home Office 2002a: 10). On the one hand, the riots are read as a disturbance that disturb the national ideal precisely because they reveal that love has failed to deliver its promise of harmony between others. On the other hand, such an account becomes a demand for love, by suggesting that the violence is caused by the absence of love as nearness and proximity. Rather than segregation being an *effect* of racism, for example, it now becomes the *origin* of racism and violence. In this way, the narrative assumes that proximity *would mean* harmony between others and the incorporation of others into a national ideal. The narrative goes something like this: *if only we were closer we would be as one*.

39. The report into the race riots, *Community Cohesion*, makes integration into a national ideal. While it suggests there is nothing wrong with people choosing 'to be close to others like themselves' (Home Office 2002b: 12), it then concludes: 'We cannot claim to be a truly multi-cultural society if the various communities within it live, as Cantle puts it, a series of parallel lives which do not touch at any point' (Home Office 2002b: 13). This narrative projects sameness onto 'ethnic minority' communities in order to elevate the national ideal into a love for difference. Difference becomes an ideal by being represented as a form of likeness; it becomes a new consensus that binds us together: 'This needs a determined effort to gain consensus on the fundamental issue of "cultural pluralism"' (Home Office 2003: 18; emphasis added). The transformation of pluralism into a consensus is telling. Others must agree to value difference: difference is not what we would have in common. In other words, difference becomes an elevated or sublimated form of likeness: you must like us – and be like us – by valuing or even loving differences (though clearly this is about only about the differences that can be taken on and in by the nation, which will not breach its image of itself). Hence the narrative demands that migrant communities and working-class white communities must give up their love for each other - a love that gets coded as love-of-themselves, that is, as a perverse form of self-love or narcissism - and love those who are different, if they are to fulfil the image of the nation promised by the ideal and hence if they are to be loved by the nation.

40. My earlier critique of the distinction between narcissistic and anaclitic love has bearing here. We can now see that the representation within the report works ideologically on two grounds; firstly, it conceals the investment in the nation within multiculturalism (the nation turns back on itself, or is invested in itself, by positing itself as ideal). That is, it conceals how love for difference is also a form of narcissism: a desire to reproduce the national subject through how it incorporates others into itself. Secondly, the report works to conceal how 'sticking together' for minority communities involves an orientation towards differences; it erases the differences within such communities by positing them as sealed and homogenous – as 'the same' - in the first place. These communities are constructed as narcissistic in order to elevate the multicultural nation into an ideal, that is, in order to conceal the investment in the reproduction of the nation. This positing of the national ideal requires the projection of sameness onto others and the transformation of sameness into perversion and pathology.

41. In such a narrative, 'others', including ethnic minorities and white working class communities, in their perceived failure to love difference, function as 'a breach' in the ideal image of the nation. Their failure to love becomes the explanation for the failure of multiculturalism to deliver the national ideal. At the same time, the failure of 'ethnic minority communities' to integrate – to stick to others and embrace the national ideal – is required to 'show' how that ideal is 'idealisable' in the first place. Multiculturalism itself becomes an ideal by associating the failure to love difference with the very origin of racism and violence. Rather than showing how segregation might be a survival tactic for communities who experience racism, deprivation or poverty – and rather than differentiating between the reasons why people might not mix with others who are already constructed us 'unlike' by scripts of racism – this narrative defines segregation as a breach in the image the nation has of itself, and as the origin of violence. The narrative hence places its hope in the integration of difference or in the very imperative to mix.

42. The implications of this narrative is that if migrants or others 'give' their difference to the nation, by mixing with others, then the 'ideal' would be achieved, and that difference would be 'returned' with love. The promise of multiculturalism is represented as a gift for the future generation (the young mixed-race women); she may embody the promise of love's return. At the same time, the investment in multiculturalism gets intensified given the failure of return: the multicultural nation becomes invested in the presence of others who breach the ideality of its image. They become the sign of disturbance, which allows the ideal to be sustained as an ideal in the first place; they 'show' the injury that follows from not following the ideal.

43. In this paper, I have offered a strong critique of how acting in the name of love can work to enforce a particular ideal onto others by requiring that they live up to an ideal to enter the community. The idea of a world where we all love each other, a world of lovers, is a humanist fantasy that informs much of the multicultural discourses of love, which I have formulated as the hope: *if only we got closer we would be as one.* The multicultural fantasy works as a form of conditional love, in which the conditions of love work to associate 'others' with the failure to return the national ideal.

44. We cannot then equate love with justice. Justice is not about learning to love others, let alone loving difference. Justice is not about 'getting along', but should preserve the right of others not to enter into relationships, 'to not be with me', in the first place. The other, for example, might not want my grief, let alone my sympathy, or love. The idealisation of the social bond quickly translates into the transformation of relationship itself as a moral duty, which others will fail. We saw this will the idealisation of multiculturalism as a social bond: ethnic minorities and white working class communities fail precisely in their refusal 'to mix' more intimately with others. I would argue that the struggle against injustice cannot be transformed into a manual for good relationships, without concealing the very injustice of how 'relationships' work by differentiating between others.

45. But having said all this, I am not 'against love', and nor am I saying that love has to work in this way. Whether it is the dizzy, heady and overwhelming feeling of love for a lover, or the warmth and joy at being near a friend who has shared one's struggles, it is our relation to particular others that give life meaning and direction, and can give us the feeling of there being somebody and something to live for. A politics of love is necessary in the sense that how one loves matters; it has effects on the texture of everyday life and on the intimate 'withness' of social relations.

46. We might note Kaja Silverman's suggestion that the problem is with 'idealisation' and not love. As she puts it: 'We have consistently argued against idealisation, that psychic activity at the heart of love, rather than imagining the new uses to which it might be put' (Silverman 1996: 2). Silverman examines how the screen has (in her terms) colonised idealization, by restricting ideality to certain subjects (1996: 37). Her solution is described in the following terms: 'The textual intervention I have in mind is one which would "light up" dark corners of the cultural screen, and thereby make it possible for us to identify both consciously and unconsciously with bodies which we would otherwise reject with horror and contempt' (Silverman 1996: 81). Silverman is asking that we learn to put ourselves in the place of those who are abject (which does not mean taking their place as we have already recognised them as 'unlike us'), whose lives are 'uninhabitable' and pushed out from spaces that define what means to have a liveable life. Her vision is of 'any-body', including those bodies who appear different in their concrete specificity, becoming part of a community of lovers and loved. But is such a community possible? I have suggested that the idea of a world where we all love each other is a humanist fantasy that informs much of the multicultural and cosmopolitan discourses of love (*if only we got closer we would be as one*). Such an ideal requires that some others fail to approximate its form: those who don't love, who don't get closer, become the source of injury and disturbance.

47. Admittedly, Silverman's vision is more complex than this. It is a vision where one learns to love precisely those bodies that have already failed to live up to the collective ideal. I am not sure how I feel about this solution. Part of me questions the 'benevolence' of such good feelings and indeed imagines benevolent intellectuals reaching out to the poor, the dejected and the homeless and offering them their love. Love is not what will challenge the very power relations that idealisation 'supports' in its restriction of ideality to some bodies and not others. In fact 'to love the abject' is close to the liberal politics as charity, one that usually makes the loving subject feel better for having loved and given love to someone whom is presumed to be unloved, but which sustains the very relations of power that compels the charitable love to be shown in this way.

48. I would challenge any assumption that love can provide the foundation for political action, or as a sign of good politics. But what would political vision mean if we did not love those visions? Am I arguing against a visionary politics? If love does not shape our political vision, it does not mean we should not love the visions we have. In fact, we must love the visions we have, if there is any point to having them. We must be invested in them, whilst open to way in which they always fail to be translated into objects that can secure our ground in the world. We need to be invested in the images of a different kind of world and act upon those investments in how we love our loves, and how we live our lives, at the same time, as we give ourselves up and over to the possibility that we might get it wrong, or that the world that we are in might change its shape. There is no good love that, in speaking its name, can change the world into the referent for that name. But in the resistance to speaking *in the name of love*, in the recognition that we do not simply *act out of love*, we can find perhaps a different way of orientating ourselves towards others. Such orientations may be about inhabiting forms of love that do not speak their name.

Sara Ahmed is a Reader in Women's Studies in the Institute for Women's Studies, Lancaster University, and is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Department for Gender Studies, Sydney Univeristy until August 2004. Her previous publications include *Differences that Matter: Feminist Theory and Postmodernism* (1998) and *Strange Encounters: Embodied Others in Post-Coloniality* (2000). This paper is drawn from her forthcoming book, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, which will be published by Edinburgh University Press (www.eup.ed.ac.uk) in July 2004. Email:

s.ahmed@lancaster.ac.uk

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