CANADIAN DIVERSITY

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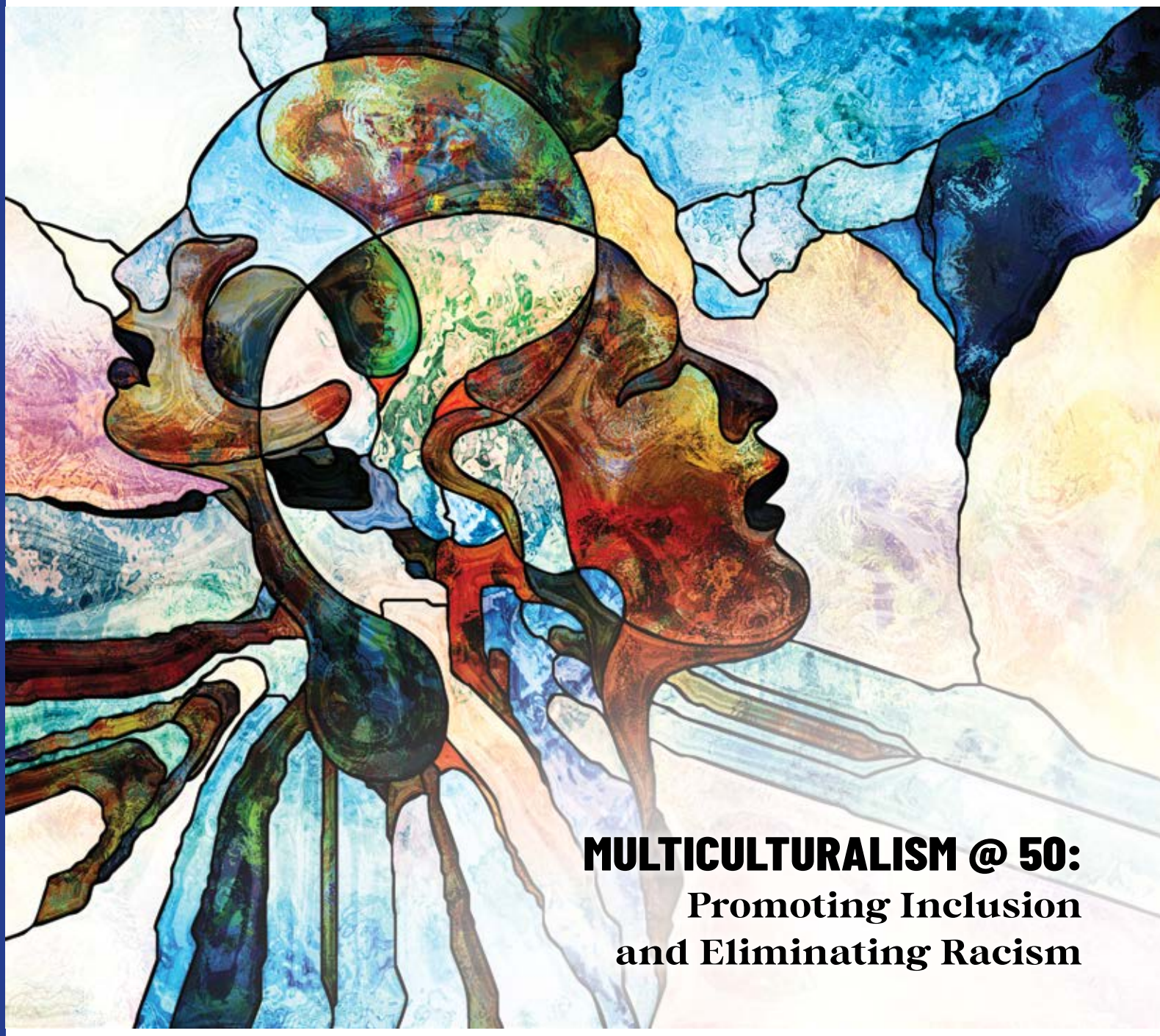

MULTICULTURALISM @ 50:
Promoting Inclusion and Eliminating Racism

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LETTERS

Comments on this edition of *Canadian Diversity*? We want to hear from you!

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INTRODUCTION

50 YEARS OF MULTICULTURALISM: PROMOTING PROGRESSIVE CHANGE, LEGITIMIZING INJUSTICE, OR BOTH?

Will Kymlicka is the Canada Research Chair in Political Philosophy in the Philosophy Department at Queen's University in Kingston, Canada, where he has taught since 1998. His research interests focus on issues of democracy and diversity, and in particular on models of citizenship and social justice within multicultural societies. He is co-director, with Irene Bloemraad, of a new CIFAR program on *Boundaries, Membership and Belonging*. He is also the co-director, along with Keith Banting, of the Multiculturalism Policy Index project, which monitors the evolution of multiculturalism policies across the Western democracies. Will's most recent work in this field focuses on issues of solidarity in multicultural societies.

> "After fifty years, multiculturalism in Canada is no longer an "experiment", but rather has become a sedimented and normalized feature of social life, part of everyday understandings of Canadian identity, and embedded in a wide range of institutional norms and practices."

For many years after multiculturalism policy was introduced in Canada in 1971, right-wing critics argued that it was a misguided experiment that was generating unstable and unsustainable social dynamics, and was therefore doomed to collapse.[1] Today, commentators are likely to rather emphasize the stability, even banality, of multiculturalism. After fifty years, multiculturalism in Canada is no longer an "experiment", but rather has become a sedimented and normalized feature of social life, part of everyday understandings of Canadian identity, and embedded in a wide range of institutional norms and practices.[2] Indeed, for many left-wing critics, the problem with multiculturalism is not its instability, but precisely its stability and immobility. Multiculturalism has become so fixed in the Canadian policy landscape and political imagination that many Canadians are unable or unwilling to recognize the need for genuinely new and transformative approaches to the way we think about diversity, citizenship and rights.

The need for such transformative change is noted by all the contributors to this special issue. However, they differ both about what they see as the main inadequacy with actually existing multiculturalism, and about whether these inadequacies can be addressed within a renewed multiculturalism, or whether they require replacing multiculturalism with some post-multicultural alternative.

The authors review a long list of inadequacies within actually existing multiculturalism, including:

- the failure to address the requirements of decolonization and reconciliation with Indigenous peoples (e.g., Eisenberg);

1 Phil Ryan's *Multicultiphobia* (2009) documents how widespread and enduring this argument was on the right in Canada predicting the imminent collapse of multiculturalism.

2 Billig famously argued that social scientists pay too much attention to "hot" nationalism – the political moments when nationalism is explicitly and emotionally appealed to – and not enough attention to "banal" nationalism – the moments when it is quietly but pervasively in the background (Billig 1995). In Kymlicka (2021), I argue that a similar analysis applies to multiculturalism. For most Canadians, most of the time, multiculturalism is banal, in part because it is now absorbed into Canada's version of banal nationalism.

- the failure to address systemic anti-Black racism (e.g., Dhamoon);

- the failure to address growing social inequality due to neoliberal capitalism (rendered particularly visible during COVID) (e.g., Abu-Laban; Carlaw; Winter);

- the failure to acknowledge the realities of global mobilities and ties, and hence the need for a more transnational or cosmopolitan perspective (e.g., Ghosh; Fleras); and

- the failure to acknowledge the specificity of the Quebec experience (e.g., White).

> "European ideologies of racial supremacy underpin both anti-Black racism and the colonization of Indigenous peoples, and the growth of inequality under neoliberalism has racial (and gender) dimensions."

While these inadequacies can be listed separately, they are connected in practice. European ideologies of racial supremacy underpin both anti-Black racism and the colonization of Indigenous peoples, and the growth of inequality under neoliberalism has racial (and gender) dimensions. Several of the authors discuss these interconnections, and the need to situate all of these issues of injustice in a broader historical and global frame.

They disagree, however, about whether multiculturalism can be reformed to address these challenges. To oversimplify, we might say there are three broad positions on this question:

- For some commentators, multiculturalism has at its core a progressive impulse, challenging inherited hierarchies and demanding a more inclusive conception of belonging and citizenship. This progressive impulse is all too often unrealized and blunted, not only due to concerted opposition from powerful actors whose privileges are challenged by multiculturalism's progressive impulse, but also from complacency amongst the public, and from 'policy drift' amongst bureaucrats.[3] But this progressive impulse endures beneath the surface, and is available for activists and advocates who want to push multiculturalism in a more transformative direction to address the challenges we currently face.

- For other commentators, multiculturalism initially had a progressive impulse in 1971, but it is no longer adequate. The challenges we face today simply cannot be addressed using the conceptual or legislative tools of 'multiculturalism'. Multiculturalism arose as a challenge to the ideology of "Anglo-conformity", and in particular challenged the expectation that immigrants should culturally assimilate as a requirement for good citizenship. Against this unjust pressure for cultural assimilation, multiculturalism (legitimately and appropriately) defended the value of ethnic and religious diversity, and more specifically defended the idea that there were many different ways of being a good Canadian. But today's problems are not solely or primarily about making space for cultural diversity. Rather, we face issues of settler colonialism, structural racism, growing social inequalities, and the development of transnational ties and globalized political challenges, and none of these can be solved in the register of "respect for cultural diversity". Indeed, addressing these issues through the lens of multiculturalism is likely to lead us astray.

- For yet other commentators, multiculturalism never had a progressive impulse: it was always intended to distract citizens from structural injustice, and hence to block or subvert mobilization for more transformative change. Carlaw cites Himani Bannerji's famous version of this view: "We demanded some genuine reforms – some of us even demanded the end of racist capitalism – and instead we got 'multiculturalism'" (Bannerji 2000, 89). Far from being a good-faith attempt to address the claims of those excluded by Anglo-conformity conceptions of Canadian citizenship, multiculturalism was instead an attempt to preempt those claims. Genuine reforms are only possible if we reject the state's efforts to conscript Canadians into a narrative of multiculturalism.

I think we can see these three positions defended in the various articles in this collection, although I also suspect that some authors feel torn between them.

> "Emancipation and control are intertwined in evolving and complex ways, with the balance between them varying over time, and depending on the issue and group."

This debate is tied to a long-standing dispute about the relation between the "emancipatory" and the "control" elements of multiculturalism. Is multiculturalism a "a tool of civic voice for historically excluded and oppressed people" to challenge inherited hierarchies, as Matt James (2013) puts it, or is it "a broad technology of state control of difference" and a "tool

3 On the importance of policy drift in relation to multiculturalism policies, see Banting and Kymlicka 2013.

of domestication", as Katharyne Mitchell (2004) proposes? This remains a lively source of discussion in the literature, although I think there is an increasing consensus that it is both. Emancipation and control are intertwined in evolving and complex ways, with the balance between them varying over time, and depending on the issue and group.[4] Fleras captures this dynamic when he says we should reject "either/or" formulations, and instead recognize that multiculturalism has the "capacity to generate positive social changes, yet simultaneously reproduce the original conditions that necessitated the change in the first place".[5]

Acknowledging this complex interweaving of emancipation and control is an important step towards a more adequate diagnosis of the first fifty years of multiculturalism in Canada. But it leaves unanswered the question about the future of multiculturalism. Can actually existing multiculturalism be renewed in a way that helps address the challenges we face in 2021, or does transformative change require leaving multiculturalism behind? Put another way, can multiculturalism be renewed in a way that significantly expands its emancipatory dimension while reducing its element of control? For example, can we combine a renewed multiculturalism with a more robust commitment to advancing Indigenous decolonization and to addressing systemic racism in policing?

There is no legal or conceptual obstacle to such a transformative renewal: there is nothing in the Multiculturalism Act that precludes a robust commitment to anti-racism or Indigenous self-government. The real issue, it seems, is one of political will. Does the presence of multiculturalism help to build political support for transformative change, or does it weaken and distract mobilization for transformative change?

It is not obvious how we might resolve this question, but Jedwab's article provides some helpful hints. The survey data he discusses shows quite clearly that those who embrace multiculturalism are more likely – not less – to view issues of anti-racism and Indigenous reconciliation as priorities. There's no evidence that embracing multiculturalism blinds people to the realities of discrimination or colonialism: on the contrary, it is those who disavow multiculturalism who are more likely to also disavow the need for transformative change.

This suggests that there may yet be room to combine a renewed multiculturalism with the sort of transformative change Canada requires. Actually existing multiculturalism may at times seem like at best a zombie legacy, having outlived its original purpose, and at worst, an instrument of state control to discipline minorities. But multiculturalism may also nurture hopes for a more just world, and a recognition of how far we are from it. And if so, multiculturalism may yet have a constructive role to play in the next 50 years.

"There may yet be room to combine a renewed multiculturalism with the sort of transformative change Canada requires."

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4 For example, the "control" dimension of multiculturalism was particularly strong in relation to Muslims in the post-9/11 era, when multiculturalism was heavily "securitized", and reoriented to serve state security agendas (Dhamoon 2012).

5 Of course, the same can be said about virtually all social policies in contemporary democracies, including public education, public health, labour law, or family law. They all contain emancipatory impulses while simultaneously reproducing some of the structures that create the need for emancipation in the first place. It would be surprising if multiculturalism did not fit this pattern.

OVERVIEW

Miriam Taylor is the Director of Publications and Partnerships at the Association for Canadian Studies and Metropolis Institute.

This edition of *Canadian Diversity*, entitled "Multiculturalism @ 50: Promoting Inclusion and Eliminating Racism", considers the evolution and public perceptions of Canadian multiculturalism and explores the drive to reframe the policy in a society increasingly aware of the problems caused by embedded social inequities and racism. In his introduction, guest editor and eminent political philosopher Will Kymlicka, questions how best to characterize multiculturalism in its first 50 years – has the policy succeeded in challenging "inherited hierarchies", has it acted, rather, as a mechanism to control differences, or do both assertions have some validity? Building on the consensus of contributing authors that the policy requires revamping, Kymlicka leaves us to ponder the question of multiculturalism's potential to assist in the transformative change required to meet the challenges of the 21st century.

The issue is divided into four sections: (1) Evolution & Progress, (2) Terminology & Perceptions, (3) Inequities & Exclusion and (4) Decolonization & Reconciliation.

Section (1), **Evolution & Progress**, contains two articles by scholars providing an overview of multiculturalism's evolution, highlighting the contradictions in a policy that has guided progress but has also failed to live up to its stated aspirations. Both scholars see the COVID-19 pandemic as a defining watershed moment that has the potential to inspire positive change.

Can multiculturalism be emboldened, asks Yasmeen Abu-Laban, to provide the impetus for the creation of a more solidaristic and equitable society? She finds hope in the increased awareness, novel perspectives and reflective thinking that have emerged in recent years. Ratna Ghosh examines the persistence of controversies around difference and diversity and their negative impact on equality of opportunities. She proposes the development of more complex, multidimensional and global notions of citizenship, in order to combat hate, discrimination and racism.

Section (2), **Terminology & Perceptions**, examines how multiculturalism is viewed, perceived and defined by theoreticians as well as in the popular imagination. Augie Fleras calls for a more nuanced analysis of multiculturalism, rooted in the idea of seeing it through the lens of a riddle, a mystery, and an enigma. While it may be deserving of its popular reputation as a generator of positive change, it has also been a promoter of division and resentment, reproducing "the very conditions that necessitated change in the first place".

Jack Jedwab looks at what motivates both critics and defenders of multiculturalism and particularly at what underlies multiculturalism's ongoing popularity among Canadians. The fact that multiculturalism's biggest supporters are those who most value diversity and the members of the very marginalized groups who most stand to benefit from reform, suggests that the policy does have a positive contribution in promoting equity and inclusion.

In his review of the ongoing debate about the real nature and

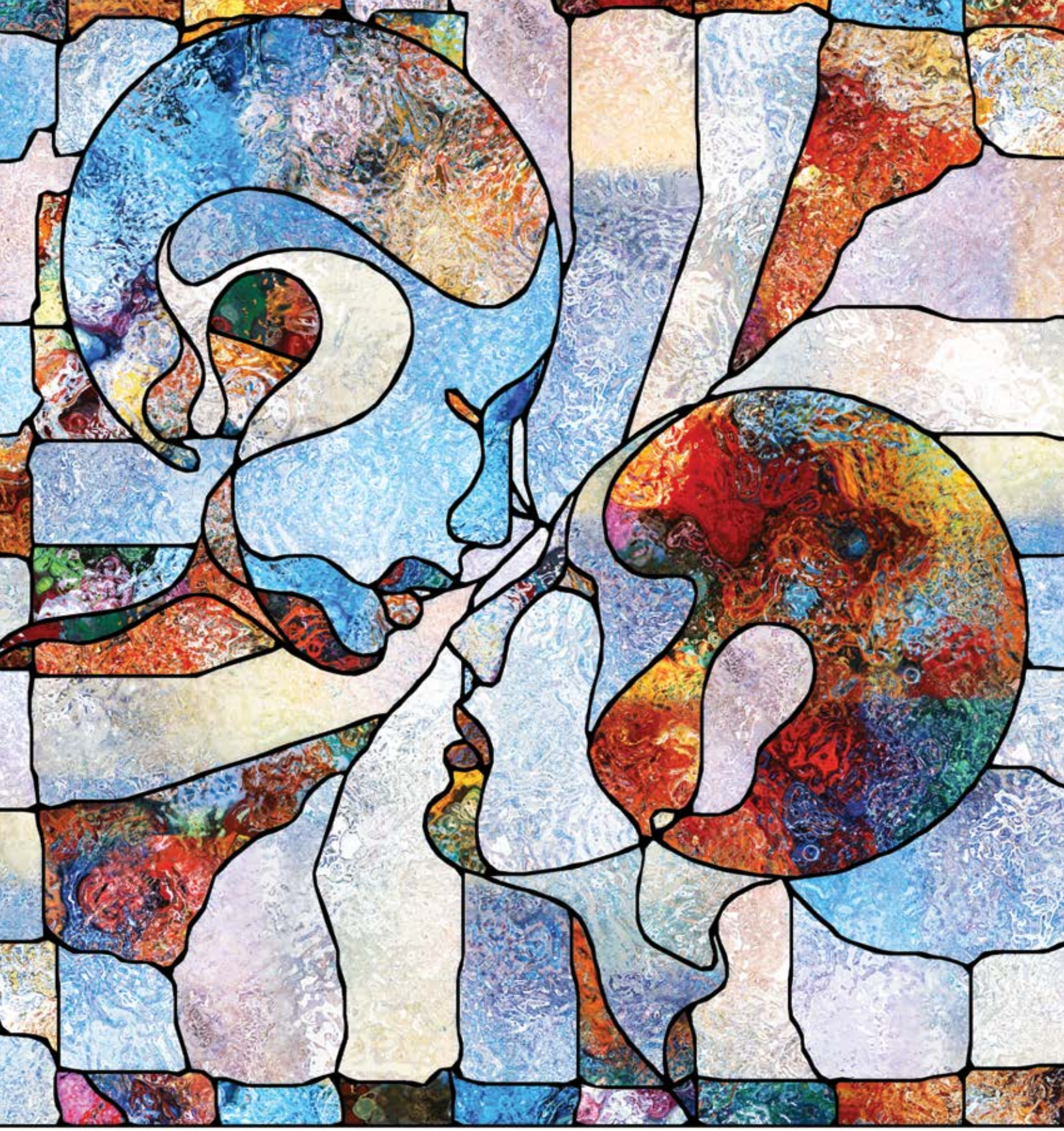
role of interculturalism, Bob White rejects portrayals of interculturalism as either a replacement for multiculturalism or as a mere variant. White suggests it be viewed rather as a unique way of thinking that resists hegemonic frameworks and can inspire a rights-based model of innovation and integration.

Section (3), **Inequities & Exclusion**, considers the way in which neoliberal and neoconservative values have impacted the ability of multiculturalism to give Canadians a fair shake. The rules for citizenship acquisition, argues Elke Winter, are not only symbolically important but determine the demographic future of a society whose growth depends on immigration. That these rules are guided by the "same market-driven logic" as our immigration policies undermines our stated aspirations of racial equality, inclusion and social justice.

John Carlaw discusses the repercussions of a politically pragmatic and creative, but ultimately *disciplinary* neoconservative multiculturalism that pays lip service to a pseudo-pluralist diversity but actually fuels xenophobia and masks the intensification of social inequalities. If we hope to move towards a more emancipatory form of politics, posits the author, we must have the courage to challenge and move beyond the colonial structures that underlie such models.

Section (4), **Decolonization & Reconciliation**, looks at the roots of multiculturalism in the structures and ideologies of the colonial system. Avigail Eisenberg exposes the ways in which Indigenous law and political authority are often central to struggles over land development and resource exploitation, and argues that restoring Indigenous political authority and governance practices requires a readiness to embark on foundational changes that go beyond simple cultural protections.

Rita Kaur Dhamoon finds examples of the embedded nature of racism and discrimination in the greater levels of incarceration, violence, disproportionate health issues, and economic marginalization experienced by BIPOC communities. Without the will to overhaul our laws and institutions, Dhamoon argues, multiculturalism stands little chance of contributing to the resolution of these structural inequities.



EVOLUTION & PROGRESS

MULTICULTURALISM: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE

Yasmeen Abu-Laban is a Professor and Canada Research Chair in the Politics of Citizenship and Human Rights at the University of Alberta and a Fellow at the Canadian Institute for Advanced Research

The 50th anniversary of Canadian multiculturalism coincides with a pandemic that has exacerbated racism and inequality globally. United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres argued in 2020 that the COVID-19 pandemic had unleashed "a tsunami of hate and xenophobia, scapegoating and scaremongering" (United Nations 2020). Although the vaccine rollout in countries of the global North was deemed a success by April 2021, vaccine inequity is projected to impact the global South for years (Katz et al., 2021).

Fifty years of official multiculturalism has not insulated Canadians from racism, hate and inequity. A 2020 Angus Reid survey of Canadians of Chinese origin found 63% had been called names or insulted during the pandemic, 43% had been threatened, and merely 13% felt others consistently saw them as Canadian (Zeidler, 2020). There is no question that the pandemic has amplified deep-rooted inequities and injustices in Canada, feeding an "inequality virus" in health and earnings that negatively impacts women and racialized minorities (Liaqat, 2021). The stories and studies abound. They include the disproportionate impact of COVID-19 on Filipino-Canadians working in jobs deemed essential in the pandemic and living in multigenerational homes (Bascaramurty and Grant, 2021), the higher COVID-19 mortality rates in neighbourhoods with concentrations of racialized ("visible") minorities (Subedi et al., 2020), as well as the higher mortality rates amongst younger immigrants, especially males (Ng, 2021). They also include the job losses experienced particularly by racialized women (Saba, 2021), and the difficulties within many First Nations communities lacking clean water and space trying to meet public health recommendations like handwashing and isolation (Canada, 2021:3).

From the present vantage point of such stark contemporary realities it is poignant to ask what promise, if any, multiculturalism holds for Canada? To answer this question, I will proceed by looking backward and projecting forward. As it enters its sixth decade, multiculturalism in Canada is far from a perfected policy. However, there is tremendous potential for creatives – both in civil society and government – to advance new policy ideas and responses that may foster more equitable outcomes in keeping with multiculturalism's promise.

LOOKING BACKWARD: MULTICULTURALISM'S HISTORY

On October 8, 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau announced a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework of English and French. While largely a symbolic policy, it did also signal Canada's embrace of a more inclusionary model of citizenship, as compared to the founding of the modern Canadian state in 1867 and its history as a white settler-colony (Abu-Laban, 2020). Such settler colonies are

characterized by complex and unequal relations around race, ethnicity, class, language, region, gender and other forms of differentiation, owing to having a pre-existing Indigenous population and repeated waves of immigration (Stasiulis and Davis, 1995).

> "For the greater part of Canada's history, immigration policy was overtly racially discriminatory and the prevailing policy practices and ethos stressed Anglo-conformity."

As a "white settler colony," Canada was modelled after Great Britain politically, economically, culturally, linguistically and even demographically when it came to who was considered the ideal immigrant and citizen (Stasiulis and Jhappan, 1995). As a consequence, for the greater part of Canada's history, immigration policy was overtly racially discriminatory and the prevailing policy practices and ethos stressed Anglo-conformity (Abu-Laban, 2014). This meant that all minority groups – whether Francophone, Indigenous or immigrant – were to adapt to the culture of the dominant British-origin group.

When Canada moved to embrace a more inclusionary framework of identity, belonging and citizenship through multiculturalism, it did so on the heels of the trauma of World War II. In the 1950s and 1960s, there arose new demands from within civil society alongside novel ways of thinking, including regarding the role of governments and the treatment of people. Internationally, there occurred the rise of the human rights revolution. Furthermore, decolonizing movements were achieving success by the 1950s (Abu-Laban, 2018).

In Canada, having an immigration policy that was overtly racially discriminatory was not tenable. In fact, by the early 1960s, and more decisively with the adoption of the point system of selection in 1967, the overt racial discrimination that had governed Canada's immigration policy historically was rejected. In Canada, as in other states, there was the advancement of the welfare state and universal healthcare, while minorities were notably also making demands for greater autonomy and fairness. This was evident in the resurgence of Quebecois nationalism in the early 1960s, which prompted the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. It was apparent in Indigenous claims and responses to the 1967 bicentennial and assimilative aspects of the 1969 White Paper (dealing with "Indian Policy"). Demands for greater fairness also manifested in the challenges raised by second-wave feminists and groups like Ukrainian-Canadians in Alberta who felt that a bicultural understanding of Canada did not account for their contributions (Abu-Laban, 2018; 2020).

All of these claims from civil society were important to the emergence of a different kind of Canadian citizenship – one which had a social dimension. And further still, in 1971 when Canada became the first country in the world to introduce a federal policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework, it also took on a multicultural or pluralist dimension that moved beyond the older Anglo-conformity towards a more inclusionary model. This multicultural citizenship allowed disempowered groups like women and ethnocultural minorities to make claims on the basis of their Canadian citizenship (Abu-Laban, 2014; 2018).

> "This kind of inclusionary and pluralist model for citizenship, identity and belonging also made its way into the highest law of the land."

This kind of inclusionary and pluralist model for citizenship, identity and belonging also made its way into the highest law of the land. *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* balances between supporting the rights of Canadians as individuals and recognition of the multicultural heritage of Canadians (Section 27), and rights of official language minorities (Sections 16–23). Additionally, Section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* recognizes and affirms existing Aboriginal rights.

Multiculturalism along with these elements of a pluralist citizenship provides a *necessary* base for belonging and solidarity within the Canadian context. However, the pandemic has both thrown a light on and exacerbated social inequities lurking beneath the inclusionary model of citizenship that Canada has come to embrace. What the pandemic has clearly shown us is that this base is *not sufficient* for resolving inequities and injustices experienced by specific groups, which have very deep roots in Canada's historic formation as a settler colony.

LOOKING FORWARD: MULTICULTURALISM'S PROMISE

COVID-19 has clearly intensified inequities relating to Indigenous peoples, immigrants, and racialized minorities in ways that have class and gender dimensions. Canada's multiculturalism policy has never dealt with socioeconomic inequalities, and only in the 1980s, as a result of pressures from racialized minorities, was racism mentioned. Even then, its centrality has varied by government; for instance, the Conservatives under Stephen Harper were decidedly reluctant to take up anti-racism (Abu-Laban, 2014, also see Carlaw in this volume).

Can multiculturalism be emboldened? In fact, there are signs of heightened societal and policy-based understanding of inequities, as well as experience with change that may help

potentiate the pluralist model of citizenship underpinning multiculturalism policy. Such new ideas, conversations, and ways of thinking are reminiscent of what led to multiculturalism in the first place.

First, there is the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), whose calls to action urge Canadians, all levels of governments, and institutions ranging from universities to museums, to reflect on what an ongoing process of reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples may mean in terms of practices (TRC 2015). The 2015 calls to action have yet to be fully implemented. Nonetheless, there is a shift in educational institutions, such as universities, that is remarkable for fostering new discussions and understandings that echoes in the popular culture. Given Canada's historic foundation as a settler colony, the fact that this is happening is promising for challenging deep-rooted practices of colonialism and systemic racism. This is relevant for reconciliation, as well for a more solidaristic multiculturalism.

> "Can multiculturalism be emboldened? In fact, there are signs of heightened societal and policy-based understanding of inequities, as well as experience with change that may help potentiate the pluralist model of citizenship underpinning multiculturalism policy."

Second, there is a much more pronounced awareness of racialized inequities and discrimination and their everyday forms as microaggressions, as well as how these may intersect with other forms of difference like gender. Before the pandemic, in 2019, a new federal secretariat of anti-racism was established, aiming to take a "whole-of-government" approach across federal agencies to address the impacts of policies, services and programs (See Canada, Canadian Heritage, 2021:13). The federal anti-racism strategy for 2019–2022 mirrors developments in civil society. In the wake of the murder of George Floyd by Minneapolis police, there were not only demonstrations in support of Black Lives Matter, but there was a veritable explosion of interest in anti-racism and social justice along with deep introspection. As one example, this is indicated in the sales of anti-racism and social justice books, which jumped by 955% between May and June of 2020. Bulk purchase orders of anti-racism and social justice themed books by educators, non-profit organizations and companies continued over 2020 (CBCRadio, 2021).

Third, and not least, we have all shown how much we can change in this pandemic. It is difficult to think of any Canadian institution – from the family to government – that has not been impacted by social distancing and digitalization. The aftermath of World War II ushered in dramatic changes. Similarly, with the pandemic, we are at another worldwide watershed moment, where we are confronted by life and death issues and forced to adapt. The pandemic has revealed the many ways in which there are real and disheartening inequities. But we are also engaging in reflective thinking and in conversations that are novel. Consequently, the prospects for a multiculturalism that is more solidaristic and equitable are before us.

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DIVERSITY AND MULTICULTURAL POLICY IN CANADA

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INTRODUCTION

As a country of immigrants, multiculturalism is central to Canada's identity. After centuries of assimilation, the country has now become very diverse in multiple ways. The Policy of multiculturalism, which is a reversal of assimilation, was intended to build a socially cohesive and just society. Announced by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau in 1971, it was entrenched in the Canadian Constitution in 1984 and provided with a legislative framework in 1988, when Prime Minister Brian Mulroney passed the Multiculturalism Act.

Originally inhabited by several First Nations[1] peoples from East to West, and Inuit in the North, colonizers from France and Britain settled in the country from the 17th century. Over the next two centuries, many newcomers arrived from the United States; they largely compromised Loyalists fleeing the American Civil War (1861-65) and African Americans fleeing captivity.

IMMIGRATION

In the 19th century, unrestricted immigration encouraged "white" immigrants to develop the West. However, while the first Immigration Act of 1869 brought large numbers of European immigrants to Canada, there remained preferences even within this group. Southern Europeans, such as Italians and Greeks, and later Eastern Europeans, were not as desirable as Anglo-Saxons. In the early 20th century, after the First World War, a revised Immigration Act in 1919 excluded certain groups from Canada. Discrimination against people based on class and disability, and later on the basis of race, denied entry to Chinese people and South Asians (who, like Canadians, were British subjects at that time) and to Jewish refugees fleeing Nazi Germany. Although the ban on Chinese immigration ended in 1947, discriminatory policies against non-white immigrants did not end until 1967. The Indigenous population was subjected to violent assimilation tactics, as once again evidenced by the discovery of the unmarked graves in 2021.

What was the picture of Canada after almost a century of immigration? John Porter described the racial hierarchy at that time in his influential book *The Vertical Mosaic* (1965), wherein he used data to demonstrate the dominance of White Anglo-Saxon Protestants (WASP), stark inequalities among ethnic groups, and a "complex reality of Canada as a hierarchical patchwork of classes and ethnic groups" (Helmes-Hayes and Cooper, 2006). Education and class distinction corresponded to a hierarchy based on a classification of race.[2]

1 There are 634 First Nations communities recognized across Canada with over 50 distinct nations and language groups (AFN. n.d.)

2 Scientifically, there are no biological differences among groups of people and "race" has no validity (NIH, 2018). But "race" is very much a social construct and "racism" a social reality.

With a history of racist immigration, how did Canada become so diverse, and ultimately multicultural? The 1967 immigration policy was a watershed in Canadian history because it replaced discrimination by race or nationality with skills. Immigration from countries in Asia, the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa increased significantly (Whitaker, 1991) in response to Canada's increasing need for population growth (given its low birth rate), for skilled labour, and for strategic geographical and trade interests. The complexion of Canadian society began to change dramatically. Following his Multicultural Policy of 1971, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau introduced a new Immigration Act in 1976 which established for the first time that Canada was to be a diverse society not only demographically, but also culturally and socially. The Act also defined refugees (mostly non-European) as a distinct group of immigrants for the first time, and by 1980 five classes of immigrants had been established.

MULTICULTURALISM, DIVERSITY AND DIFFERENCE

Clearly, multiple ethnic groups who had come to Canada had all been expected to assimilate into a society based on British culture and values. While I do not discuss the special position of Quebec in this paper, it is worth mentioning that Quebec's assertion of francization is a response to this pressure, although multiculturalism did not satisfy their need to maintain the French language in the province. But Multicultural Policy and the Multiculturalism Act, along with several legal and administrative reforms focused on diversity in the country, recognized the changing racial make-up of immigrants from Asia (particularly China and India) replacing Europeans as the largest source of immigrants to Canada. However, the concept of multiculturalism, which may be seen as building on diversity as an asset (rather than a problem) by attempting to remove barriers to full integration of people seen as "different", remains unclear and controversial, and even contradictory.

> "Multicultural Canada which had focused on ethnic diversity is now confronted with religious diversity (Angus Reid, 2017). Religion has become one of the most controversial domains of multiculturalism."

The 9/11 terrorist attack in the USA in 2001 prompted a new *Immigration and Refugee Protection Act* (2001) and religious diversity became an important marker of difference. North America was gripped with Islamophobia – a disproportionate fear or hatred towards Muslims (or persons often mistakenly identified to be Muslims) leading to violence and systemic discrimination (Kanji, 2020). Multicultural Canada which had focused on ethnic diversity is now confronted with religious diversity (Angus Reid, 2017). Religion has become one of the most controversial domains of multiculturalism (Kymlicka (2010).

And herein appears a contradiction: on the one hand in Canada there is broad support both for immigration and multiculturalism, for which support over the years has even increased (Soroka and Robertson, 2010). On the other hand, polls indicate antipathy towards Islam and Muslims (Tradafilopoupos and Rasheed, 2020) , and denial of religious accommodation in Quebec (Bill 21).

So, what does diversity mean in Canada? The concept implies variety, but it means different things to different people, including variability in ideas, characteristics, values, etc. Demographic diversity usually suggests differences in ethnicity, culture, socio-economic status, gender, religion, language, sexual identity and preference, and dis/abilities. Vertovec (2007) uses the word "super-diversity" to denote the multidimensional complexity within diversity and its intersections of social class, gender, religion, language, as well as ethnicity and culture – resulting in very different experiences so that no one group can be seen in homogenous terms. Super-diversity poses a considerable challenge to policy-makers and educators alike.

Is cultural diversity the same as cultural difference? Bhabha sees cultural diversity as a static concept, as population segments, while cultural difference is dynamic because cultures are always changing (Bhabha, 2006). So, difference is fluid; it appears "differently in different places" in "innumerable forms" (Pandey, 2010:62).

Diversity implies difference. However, these differences do not mean anything in themselves: the meanings given to differences (in negative or positive terms) are social constructions and change over time and space. The meanings based on constructs such as race, ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, sexual orientation, dis/ability, etc. are influenced by history and structures of power. These markers of difference take on specific meanings and importance at particular times because the target of discrimination may shift with time and space. For example, not all Europeans were considered equally desirable immigrants in Canada at one time, but when people of colour began to come, their status changed.

Differences seen as deficiencies lead to discrimination such as racism or Islamophobia. Racism and discrimination always have a negative social, economic, and psychological impact on the opportunities afforded to people.

Human beings have a range of identities which intersect with each other. Multiculturalism encourages us to retain our differences that have no reflection on our abilities. The preamble to the Multicultural Act (1988) states the "importance of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians" (Canada, 1990) to provide Canadians a sense of

> “Differences should have nothing to do with fairness and equity in opportunity and treatment, or with the recognition and validity of our identities. As many scholars have pointed out, the need to belong and be recognized is a basic identity need and non-recognition may be unjust or inegalitarian.”

identity. Differences should have nothing to do with fairness and equity in opportunity and treatment, or with the recognition and validity of our identities. As many scholars have pointed out, the need to belong and be recognized is a basic identity need and non-recognition may be unjust or inegalitarian.

Racial categories are evidently fluid. Interracial relationships are rising, and in the second generations they are as high as 50–75% in Canada (Alba and Reitz, 2021; Todd, 2020). Perhaps because multicultural policy provides a more favourable context for second-generation children (Kymlicka, 1998), interracial children experience less discrimination (Alba and Reitz (2021). In a globalized world,” all forms of culture are continually in a process of hybridity” (Rutherford,1991:211). In post-colonial theorizing, the hybrid identity is in a” third space” (Bhabha, 1994), an ambivalent site where cultural meaning and representation are not fixed.

DIVERSITY, GLOBALIZATION AND COSMOPOLITANISM

The nature of international migration has changed because we not only have immigrants but, increasingly, refugees of various categories and asylum seekers. Furthermore, globalization involves information, capital, technology, etc., all of which create transnational networks of peoples and cultures transcending traditional borders through interconnectivity, so that the entire environment is changing radically and rapidly. In this there is contradiction: the tension between violence and rivalry against each other, but simultaneously interdependence and collaboration between nations, as highlighted during the pandemic. One way to reconcile this conflict is to understand history and the interrelationship of historical events. Most of all we need to understand that we are one world and as Gandhi said: “An eye for an eye only makes the whole world blind”.

Interestingly, multiculturalism has been focused on post-colonial migration and, in Canada, dominant groups have not seen themselves as part of Multicultural Policy. Unsurprisingly, in education, the curriculum remains largely Eurocentric. Growing social inequality within and among countries is viewed without an understanding of colonialism, imperialism, and slavery; although recently, the Black Lives Matter movement has focused our attention on such global events and issues. Several contemporary transnational phenomena that defy national borders such as terrorism, natural disasters, displacement of peoples, rising inequalities and several health pandemics have seen concerted action. The focus of multiculturalism on post-colonial immigrant societies needs to be broadened to include international understanding and global problems that involve humanity and its survival.

In her book *The Cosmopolitan Tradition*, one of the world’s most influential contemporary philosophers, Martha Nussbaum (2019) urges us to focus on the humanity we share rather than all that divides us. COVID-19 has shown us that we are one world. We need to fight together and recover together – “The only way that you are going to adequately respond to a global pandemic is by having a global response” (Anthony Fauci).

> “Simplistic and single-levelled approaches to citizenship are giving way to multidimensional approaches reflecting the complexities involved in activities at the local to global levels.”

The new politics of cultural difference focus on cultural and political identity as central to a changing idea of multiculturalism, transforming it to new forms of diversity, multiplicity and heterogeneity that provoke new understandings relevant to the global space we share. With cultures blending, people simultaneously have multiple identities and local, national, and global allegiances. Multiculturalism (diversity) does not theoretically prevent the development of a national identity, but it also indicates a movement towards cosmopolitanism (global identity). Cosmopolitanism does not exclude citizenship in one’s country. It simply means we rethink the concept of citizenship through a “cosmopolitan lens” as a global field of negotiated practices (Jahanbegloo, 2007). Simplistic and single-levelled approaches to citizenship are giving way to multidimensional approaches reflecting the complexities involved in activities at the local to global levels.

CONCLUSION

The COVID -19 pandemic is a defining moment globally. As we start on a new era, we have the opportunity to effect change at the level of consciousness of people to envision a kinder, gentler society without hate, discrimination and racism. Globalization has made cosmopolitanism a necessity due to the increased interconnectivity of people from disparate nations. The growth of the non-white population threatens to alter power relations as the historical advantages

of whiteness change. In Canada, the legislative foundations for an inclusive society continue to be built and the concept of multiculturalism is both fluid and broadening to include cosmopolitan perspectives. The blurring of ethnicities through intermarriage will contribute to faster integration and future generations will be increasingly interracial and certainly more open-minded to an interdependent world and the urgency of a sustainable planet.

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TERMINOLOGY & PERCEPTIONS

50 YEARS OF CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM: A RIDDLE, A MYSTERY, AN ENIGMA

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INTRODUCTION: A MIXED MILESTONE

Fifty years of official multiculturalism puts pressure on reassessing its role and worth as a Canadian icon (Paikin 2021; Adams 2021; Cardozo 2021). Despite international praise and domestic popularity, Canada's official multiculturalism continues to receive a mixed assessment that amplifies its ambiguous status as a solution in search of a problem. Multicultural success stories are offset by program failures; its popularity conceals substantial pockets of indifference or resentment; and its impact is not nearly as progressive or comprehensive as widely believed. The ambiguities, paradoxes, and ironies that inform 50 years of Canada's official multiculturalism point to the necessity of a discursive reassessment (Fleras 2021a). Instead of framing multiculturalism in the language of "is" or "ought", or around the binaries of "good" or "bad", perhaps it's time to reframe it around its puzzling and paradoxical dimensions as both progressive and transformative, yet also contradictory and obfuscatory (also Barrett 2015). When searching for a turn of phrase that captures multiculturalism's complexities and contradictions without falling into the trap of carping negativity or fatuous platitudes, what comes to mind is Winston Churchill's oft-quoted assessment of pre-Second World War Russia as "a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma." Framing an official multiculturalism along similar lines – as a riddle, a mystery, and an enigma – yields a new interpretative lens that offers fresh insights into a stale topic. What is the meaning of an official Canadian multiculturalism ("riddle")? How does it work ("mystery")? Has it made a difference in remaking Canada ("enigma")? In short, the deeper we delve into the murky depths of Canada's official multiculturalism as minority governance and diversity management, the greater the urge to refract it through a prism that conveys its mixed and messy status.

CANADIAN MULTICULTURALISM AS RIDDLE: WHAT DOES IT REALLY MEAN?

Canada may be the world's quintessential multicultural society (Guo and Wong 2015). Yet successive Canadian governments have never tried to define an official multiculturalism for the benefit of the general public (Thurairajah 2017). Any reference to multiculturalism reflects a largely unplanned and ad hoc trajectory bereft of conceptual clarity or ideological precision – a situation that, paradoxically, may work to Canada's advantage (Kymlicka 2015). Multiculturalism rarely means what it says or says what it really means ("polysemous"); as a result, it can mean everything ("a floating signifier") yet nothing ("an empty signifier") (B'beri and Mansouri 2014), or whatever the context allows it to mean ("a sliding signifier") (Hall 2017). Misperceptions abound because the term itself remains

a misnomer. For example, an official multiculturalism is not about making Canada more multicultural and diverse, as implied by the term "multi" + "cultures". Rather it's about making it more inclusive through minority accommodation and migrant integration in ways doable, necessary, and fair. A commitment to multiculturalism is not about supporting expressions of cultural diversity but of precluding them in public to abort the possibility of messy ethnic entanglements. Consider how Canada's multicultural model eschews the promotion of differences, preferring, instead, to *depoliticize* diversity by channelling it into harmless outlets. Nor is it about promoting ethnicity per se. The rationale behind an official multiculturalism is to capitalize on peoples' ethnodiversity as a stepping stone to facilitate their integration on terms that work for them. In saying one thing but doing something else, an official multiculturalism exemplifies a classic case of *double talk*. Canada may be at the forefront in consolidating a principled multicultural society. Yet, paradoxically, it also epitomizes one of the world's most successful integration regimes (Rao 2007).

MULTICULTURALISM AS MYSTERY: IS IT WORKING?

Considering multiculturalism as a mystery triggers a set of questions that elude any simple response. Is an official multiculturalism working? Who says so? For whose benefit? Does it work to improve the settlement and integration of newcomers to Canada or, alternatively, to whitewash a largely racialized status quo, with its prevailing distribution of power and privilege? On what grounds can such an assessment be made? Is success even measurable? If multiculturalism is a causal factor in a multicultural makeover of Canada, is it possible to disaggregate it from the mix to determine its input? Will a state-centric multiculturalism continue to work with the onset of a more unruly and contested post-multicultural world (Fleras 2019)? Finding answers to those difficult questions constitutes the mystery of Canadian multiculturalism.

For some, reference to "it works" is reflected in the popularity and support of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism works by advancing a Canada that no longer openly champions the primacy of a white supremacist society, rejects flagrant expressions of racism and discrimination, espouses respect for cultural differences, and endorses principles of inclusion (Cardozo 2021; Adams 2021). For others, multiculturalism works in Canada but rarely elsewhere because it represents a low-risk option for integrating migrants and accommodating minorities, most of whom have arrived through legal channels, possess liberal values, and are labour-ready for participation in the modern economy (Kymlicka 2012). Others still find multiculturalism works because it legitimizes a racialized-in-whiteness social order by concealing those uncomfortable truths that conveniently whitewash a monocultural regime (Bannerji 2000). Still others believe multiculturalism works because it keeps Canada afloat by depoliticizing the potency of diversity to fragment, divide, or ghettoize (Fleras 2019). To complicate matters, minority perceptions of what works differ from the mainstream. For example, new Canadians may perceive multiculturalism as a platform for maintaining multiple identities, including an involvement in homeland politics. Yet this perception may be dismissed as un-Canadian by the mainstream who insist newcomers park their past at Pier 21 (figuratively speaking) as the price of admission into Canada (Thurairajah 2017).

> "Yes, multiculturalism may be associated with the transformation of Canada along more inclusive lines, yet its overall impact has proven difficult to measure except, perhaps, to make Canadians more self-consciously aware of Canada as a multicultural domain."

Fifty years of multiculturalism as official policy have made one thing abundantly clear: we don't fully understand how or why it works. Yes, multiculturalism may be associated with the transformation of Canada along more inclusive lines, yet its overall impact has proven difficult to measure except, perhaps, to make Canadians more self-consciously aware of Canada as a multicultural domain. Positives associated with an official multiculturalism may reflect other factors such as:

- the internationalization of human rights agenda;
- a progressive and highly selective immigration program that admits the brightest and best;
- a commitment to aggressively pursue the settlement and integration of newcomers; and
- relatively open pathways to citizenship through naturalization (Hansen 2017).

Or, if multiculturalism is acclaimed for creating a more inclusive and equitable society, such an assessment may tap into Canada's status as one of the world's most immigrant-friendly countries (US News 2021). Perhaps its true value lies in fostering a social climate that, not only endorses diversity initiatives in general (Adams and Omidvar 2018), but also legitimizes a controlled immigration program that works to Canada's advantage (Fleras 2014; Hansen 2017). Popular support for multiculturalism equips immigration policy-makers with considerable latitude ("political capital") in implementing immigrant policies and settlement programs, without fear of public criticism or electoral backlash (Reitz 2014). The conclusion seems inescapable. Any claim of success for an official multiculturalism may be spurious and correlational rather than causal and direct, nearly impossible to measure, or

difficult to operationalize except in terms so vague as to border on baseless.

MULTICULTURALISM AS AN ENIGMA: HAS IT BEEN WORTH IT?

Has 50 years of official multiculturalism had an appreciable impact on Canada and Canadians? Responses tend to polarize. For some, Canada has evolved into a truly multicultural society that abides by the principles of multiculturalism, despite some lingering monocultural residues from past. For others, Canada remains a predominantly monocultural regime, despite a half-century of multiculturalism, with a few multicultural bits thrown in for good measure to foster the illusion of inclusion? Aligning responses along this continuum contribute to the enigma that is multiculturalism.

> "While many regard multiculturalism as a catalyst in advancing a more equitable Canada, in reality, many racialized minorities are inclined to disagree as they struggle with the inequalities of exclusion, alongside an amplification of anti-Black racism, anti-Asian pandemic-related hate, Islamophobic violence, and continuing anti-Semitism."

Consensus is lacking in deciding whether 50 years of official multiculturalism has proved a deal breaker. To one side, a multicultural Canada in 2021 is positively different from the Canada that prevailed in the decades prior to 1971 (Paikin 2021). Open expressions of racism are no longer acceptable under an official multiculturalism, diversity is sourced as Canada's strength, minorities and migrants are confirmed as integral to Canada-building, a commitment to multiculturalism is central to national identity, and mainstream institutions increasingly accept a duty to accommodate (Adams 2021; Cardozo 2021). To the other side, 50 years of multiculturalization has made little difference in reconfiguring Canadian society. Canada may be more multicultural in lip-service, add-ons, and window dressing, yet it remains rooted in the monocultural assumptions of white supremacy, the foundational principles of a Eurocentric constitutional order (Fleras 2021b), and the fundamental duality of its French-English core (Haque 2012). True, multiculturalism as an aspirational ideal may commit to a rethinking of what Canada is and what it means to be Canadian. Nevertheless, the monoculturalism of a settled whiteness continues to blanket the national agenda in defining what is normal, right, and desirable. Finally, while many regard multiculturalism as a catalyst in advancing a more equitable Canada, in reality, many racialized minorities are inclined to disagree as they struggle with the inequalities of exclusion (Block and Galabuzi 2018; Fleras 2017), alongside an amplification of anti-Black racism, anti-Asian pandemic-related hate, Islamophobic violence, and continuing anti-Semitism (CRRF 2021).

CONCLUSION: A RECKONING WITH MULTICULTURALISM

Let's problematize 50 years of Canadian multiculturalism as diversity discourse and governance framework. Applying the lens of a riddle/mystery/enigma nexus to an analysis and evaluation of official multiculturalism exposes how the idea and the practice are more contested and contradictory than widely perceived. Championed yet maligned, idealized as well as demonized, official multiculturalism simultaneously evokes a multifaceted preference for change yet stasis; of conformity yet diversity; of control yet emancipation; of exclusion yet participation; of hegemony yet resistance. Neither the benefits nor the costs of multiculturalism should be underappreciated in any analysis or assessment. As Paul Barrett (2015:9) points out, reframing multiculturalism in terms of its "simultaneously disabling and enabling quality" empowers activists with leeway and legitimacy to call out Canada for not living up to its obligations, thus reflecting the ability of the powerless to repurpose the very tools of control into levers of resistance and change.

> "Multiculturalism as a progressive tool as well as an instrument of division and danger – ups the ante for a more nuanced analysis than many are willing to concede. Canadian multiculturalism as a political project for engaging minorities and managing diversity should not be discursively framed as an either/or proposition. More value can be gleaned by framing it as a both/and discourse – namely, as a platform for resistance and oppression as well as a resource for reform and repression – with a capacity to generate positive social changes, yet simultaneously reproduce the very conditions that necessitated the change in the first place."

Such a mixed assessment – multiculturalism as a progressive tool as well as an instrument of division and danger – ups the ante for a more nuanced analysis than many are willing to concede. Canadian multiculturalism as a political project for engaging minorities and managing diversity should not be discursively framed as an either/or proposition. More value can be gleaned by framing it as a both/and discourse – namely, as a platform for resistance and oppression as well as

a resource for reform and repression – with a capacity to generate positive social changes, yet simultaneously reproduce the very conditions that necessitated the change in the first place. An official multiculturalism may be slow in advancing the ideal of a lived inter-existence (Fleras 2019), yet it also embodies a work in progress in advancing innovative possibilities for living together differently (Ghosh 2011). Assessing 50 years of official multiculturalism as a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma provides a timely reminder of how the idea of multiculturalism as governance may be mined for new insights that shed light on old orthodoxies.

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THE 'TERMS' OF MULTICULTURALISM

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When it was first introduced in 1971, perhaps the biggest challenge encountered by advocates of multiculturalism was to explain to Canadians what it meant beyond a celebration of the country's evolving diversity. That year, Prime Minister Pierre-Elliott Trudeau observed that Canadians came from a wide variety of cultural backgrounds, and that all cultures have intrinsic value. He thus concluded that while Canada had two official languages there could not be two official cultures, and this called for a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework. Translating this idea into policies and programs has presented some important challenges over the 50 ensuing years of multiculturalism.

Over this period, the term multiculturalism has been employed in various ways. It is perhaps most widely used to describe our basic demographic reality by referring to the ethnic diversity of the Canadian population. Policy-makers, academics and civil society tend to reflect on the evolving policies and programs arising from multiculturalism. While it is politicians, academics and journalists that often talk about the message and/or ideology of multiculturalism which has been the object of much conversation and varying interpretations.

A quick look back at the origins of the term multiculturalism reveals that it gained traction in the 1960s with the deliberations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (RCBB). The mandate of the RCBB was to inquire into, and report upon, the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada, and to recommend ensuing steps towards developing the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between those of English and French descent. Given growing concerns about the country's historical record of assimilation of French Canadians, and the historic animosities to which this had given rise, it was felt that a new paradigm was needed to counter pro-assimilationist sentiment. Meanwhile, Canadian policy-makers and thought leaders' hope to offer an alternative to America's support for cultural assimilation was embodied in the concept of the melting pot. For some time, the term multiculturalism was an extension of the idea that Canada was a mosaic of cultures.

Some worried that the idea of the mosaic would further contribute to the country's persistent ethnic group inequities. In his seminal work, The Vertical Mosaic, eminent Canadian sociologist John Porter argued that income inequality in Canada was connected to protracted rates of cultural retention on the part of ethnic groups. His work was a precursor to some of the emerging criticisms of multiculturalism. However, despite all the empirical data presented in *The Vertical Mosaic*, it offers

no causal evidence in support of the idea that cultural retention prevented economic mobility (Porter. 1965).

But Porter's work serves as a good example of the type of criticism that Canadian multiculturalism has regularly faced. It is the contention that multiculturalism is the solution to a wide range of social, cultural and economic challenges such as economic inequality, minority empowerment and racism. This exaggerates the individual impact of multiculturalism to resolve these complex issues. Any serious look at the relatively minimal resources invested by the federal government in multiculturalism policies and programs over the past five decades throws such assertions into question.

There is a fairly wide spectrum of opinion expressed about multiculturalism. On one end, a group of thought leaders are convinced that the message/ideology is inherently positive and encourages its strongest adherents to be open to diverse cultural expression, to promote equality and to combat prejudice and discrimination. On the other end of the spectrum are the most vehement critics of multiculturalism who tend to insist that the promotion of difference is an ominous threat to social cohesion, discourages a shared sense of values and belonging, and undermines relations between majority and minority groups (an argument that is more commonly evoked by Quebec thought leaders). In the middle of this spectrum of opinion one finds a number of thought leaders that offer conditional support to multiculturalism, and/or critics that are cautious in their condemnation of it.

A somewhat less nuanced way of framing the debate pits advocates of multiculturalism against supporters of a French republican vision. Republicans criticize multiculturalism as undermining national identity by not affirming that it is the singular dominant marker of identity to which all others must be subordinate. However, not doing this promotes the ethnic and cultural differences that are presumably the source of discrimination. In the view of French republicans everyone is first and foremost a citizen of their country. Republicans worry about strong communal identities which they say lead to "communitarianism" – a buzzword that is frequently used to attack the formation of communities to which multiculturalism purportedly gives rise. As French scholar Michel Wieviorka (1996) has pointed out, "*pour éviter les écueils d'une société fragmentée, voire même le spectre du multiculturalisme où chaque communauté vivrait repliée sur elle-même et où il n'existerait pas de culture commune.*"

Wieviorka has suggested a more nuanced way of considering the debate, arguing that "*…cette opposition extrême entre deux modèles exclusifs pourrait être mortifère pour la démocratie. Car elle ne laisse le choix qu'entre deux options inacceptables : ou bien l'universalisme abstrait de la République… ou bien un multiculturalisme sans frontière, facteur de tribalisme et de déstructuration politique, et négation, à terme, de toute autonomie individuelle.*"

THE FAILURE OF MULTICULTURALISM: WHERE'S THE EVIDENCE?

Much of the policy and academic discussion of multiculturalism suffers from a relative lack of empirical evidence to support affirmations on either end of the spectrum. Critics often insist that multiculturalism represents a challenge to social cohesion and/or to shared values, to immigrant integration, to the preservation of the French language, to secularism, etc. Rarely if ever do they offer any empirical evidence to support such claims. One simply can't make the claim that racism is persistent that multiculturalism, as causal evidence would be required to validate such a claim.

Furthermore, much of the work on this topic is couched in discourse and terminology that is rarely defined by the authors. By consequence, supporters and detractors alike have often made affirmations that essentially require us to simply take them at their word. Quebec columnist Mathieu Bock-Côté (2021) engages in regular diatribe about multiculturalism and writes about the "*délires et dérives du multiculturalisme*". Regrettably, some critics like to make the unacceptable connection between multiculturalism and such things as honour crimes, thus depicting multiculturalism as an attack on what they characterize as "our values" (We'll leave aside the worrisome stereotyping that underlies this type of criticism).

The inadequate evidence to demonstrate that multiculturalism threatens social cohesion and/or shared values is symptomatic of a lack of intellectual rigour that has characterized the debate over several decades. Even from a conceptual standpoint there are sound reasons to question these oft-repeated statements. Will Kymlicka (2000) has correctly described social cohesion as "…a catch-all term for a wide range of often unconnected phenomena. In its maximal form, social cohesion means something like a 'harmonious' society, in which people cherish each other's identities and differences, and in which there are no conflicts or misunderstandings or fears related to ethnic diversity. The multiculturalism policy in Canada has certainly not produced such a society, but in my view, this sort of 'harmony' is not only unrealistic, but inappropriate as a goal of public policy. There always will be tensions and disagreements over how best to accommodate diversity… So, accepting multiculturalism entails rejecting the fantasy of "harmony", which can only be achieved by suppressing our real diversity.

For his part Joseph Heath (2003) explains, '…there is no reason that politicians on the campaign trail should not appeal to "shared values" among Canadians. But we should not let this kind of talk mislead us into thinking that citizens of Canada – or any other liberal democratic society – actually have shared values. Such an assumption is at odds not only with everything that we know about the pluralistic character of our country, it is also in tension with some of the basic principles that govern our public institutions, not the least of which is the commitment to respect the rights of individuals'.

Several Quebec policy-makers and thought leaders asserting that the population rejects "federal" multiculturalism (something they never substantiate with polling data) insist on the presumed alternative of interculturalism. They endlessly repeat variations on the idea that multiculturalism encourages bonding between ethnic groups while Quebec interculturalism encourages bridging, notably between minorities and the ethnolinguistic French majority. That argument from a look at the federal multicultural policy which explicitly states that "...the government will promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups in the interest of national unity" (House of Commons, 1971). Paradoxically, similar cross-cultural programs are not provided by the Quebec government despite this occasional postulating about interculturalism.

But perhaps the best test of Quebec's intercultural approach is the extent to which minorities, and the majority, say they interact with persons outside of their group. In this regard, surveys reveal that Quebecers are markedly behind the rest of Canada when it comes to "intercultural contact". Unsurprisingly, some Quebec officials would probably blame that on "federal" multiculturalism.

According to Tariq Modood "statements of and advocacy for interculturalism always seem to begin with a critique of multiculturalism and aspire to offer a new and alternative paradigm of diversity and citizenship." (Modood, 2017) He suggests that the critique targets popular misperceptions about multiculturalism. He concludes that interculturalists fail to appreciate the limitations of their critique and of their claim to novelty. It is best understood as a version of multiculturalism rather than as an alternative paradigm. While there may be some merits to that argument, the reality remains that interculturalism has enjoyed little uptake outside of the academy and some policy circles, as evidenced in Table 1, a scan of citations in mainstream media from January 1, 2021, to September 30, 2021.

The numbers are indicative of the relative absence of any meaningful public discussion of the term intercultural, either in policy or in practice (see Table 1).

That interculturalism has not succeeded in engaging Canadians, whether in Quebec or elsewhere in Canada, is further corroborated by a September 2021 Leger poll for the Association for Canadian Studies which reveals that only 3% of Canadians prefer to use the term interculturalism when thinking about the different identities in our society (7% amongst the country's francophones). If any term is competing with multiculturalism as an important part of public discourse it is *diversity*, which the survey reveals surpasses multiculturalism with the 18–34 cohort and with francophones. Indeed, with the increased attention directed at multiple and intersecting identities, multiculturalism may increasingly be seen as an aspect of the broader societal representation of diversity (a conceptual conversation that merits more attention than it has received to date (see Table 2).

TABLE 1: MEDIA SEARCH ON TERMS CONNECTED TO MULTICULTURALISM (JAN-SEPT 2021)

Meltwater search, Jan. 1 to Sept. 30, 2021	English media	French media	Total Citations
Multiculturalism/Multiculturalisme	6020	731	6751
Interculturalism/Interculturalisme	8	14	22
Pluralism/Pluralism	1,710	234	1934

TABLE 2: RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION, 'WHEN SPEAKING ABOUT THE DIFFERENT IDENTITIES IN OUR SOCIETY, WHICH OF THE TERMS BELOW DO YOU PREFER TO USE?

	Total	18–34	35–54	55+	French	English	Others
Multiculturalism	37%	32%	41%	37%	32%	36%	47%
Interculturalism	3%	5%	2%	2%	7%	2%	2%
Pluralism	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	4%
Diversity	33%	39%	31%	32%	37%	32%	31%
None of the above	10%	7%	9%	12%	8%	11%	7%
I don't know	16%	16%	17%	15%	15%	17%	10%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies, September 24–26, 2021

THE EVIDENCE: WHAT DO CANADIANS THINK ABOUT MULTICULTURALISM?

Observers and pundits insisting that most Canadians think that multiculturalism policies have been a failure are incorrect. The September 2021 Leger-ACS poll reveals that the majority of Canadians believe that multiculturalism policies have been a success. Given that many Canadians are not aware of what the policies actually entail, the poll is rather indicative of whether they feel multiculturalism as a message has been successful or not (see Table 3).

To further test opinion in this regard, we examined the extent to which Canadians endorse some of the typical criticisms of multiculturalism. We purposely loaded the statements in positive terms and yet, as seen in Table 4, a majority or a plurality of Canadians refuted nearly all of the criticisms. A majority rejects the idea that multiculturalism is an obstacle to immigrant integration, one in two say they do not see it as an obstacle to reconciliation, and most do not see it as an obstacle to fighting prejudice and discrimination.

The only statement that seemed to resonate with a segment of the population somewhat more was the notion among Quebecers that multiculturalism was an obstacle to the protection of the French language in Quebec. Strangely, they did not feel it was as much an obstacle to the protection of the French language outside of Quebec where it is undoubtedly more vulnerable (see Table 4).

Despite the anti-assimilation message inherent to multiculturalism, there remains considerable ambiguity amongst Canadians when it comes to immigrants maintaining their customs and traditions. That ambiguity is perhaps best reflected in the survey results in Table 5 which demonstrates that while nine in ten Canadians agree that it is important to transmit our customs and traditions to our children just under half of Canadians think that immigrants should give up their customs and traditions and become more like us. Indeed, that view is endorsed by a narrow majority of Quebecers.

One of the areas where the anti-assimilation message of multiculturalism has not been fully understood is surrounding the above dichotomy. Many Canadians likely feel that the process of newcomer adjustment sees retention of customs and traditions evolve alongside immigrants adopting generic or shared societal customs and traditions. That said, it's worth noting that those people who think that multiculturalism is very successful are far less likely (44%) than those who think

TABLE 3: WHEN THINKING ABOUT CANADA'S MULTICULTURAL POLICIES WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THEM AS A TOTAL SUCCESS (PERCENTAGE VERY AND SOMEWHAT SUCCESSFUL COMBINED) OR A TOTAL FAILURE (PERCENTAGE SOMEWHAT AND A BIG FAILURE COMBINED)

	On October 8, 2021, Canada will mark the 50th anniversary of multiculturalism. In thinking about Canada's multicultural policies would you describe them as:						
	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
Total – Success	54%	60%	45%	58%	48%	56%	58%
Total – Failure	26%	17%	30%	23%	28%	29%	26%
I don't know	20%	23%	25%	19%	24%	15%	16%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies, September 24–26, 2021

TABLE 4: SELECTED STATEMENTS THAT CANADIANS REGARD AS TRUE OR FALSE... DO YOU BELIEVE, "MULTICULTURALISM IS AN OBSTACLE TO THE FOLLOWING:

Do you believe the following statements to be true or false... Multiculturalism is an obstacle to the:	Canada		
	True	False	I don't know
Integration of immigrants	19%	55%	26%
Reconciliation with indigenous peoples	23%	50%	28%
...promotion of laïcité/secularism	18%	35%	47%
...fighting discrimination and prejudice	29%	46%	25%
...protection of the French language outside of Quebec	21%	47%	32%
...protection of the French language in Quebec	24%	45%	31%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies, September 24–26, 2021

TABLE 5: VIEWS HELD BY CANADIANS ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PRESERVING CUSTOMS AND TRADITIONS

Agree that:	Total	Atl.	QC	ON	MB/SK	AB	BC
It is important to transmit our customs and traditions to our children	92%	89%	95%	92%	95%	91%	87%
Immigrants should give up their customs and traditions and become more like us	43%	40%	51%	41%	46%	41%	41%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies, September 24–26, 2021

that it's a big failure (67%) to agree that immigrants should give up their customs and traditions.

WHY I WANT MY CHILDREN TO SUPPORT MULTICULTURALISM

Table 6 illustrates what I consider strong evidence of the success of the message of multiculturalism as its strongest adherents (which I refer to as "convinced multiculturalists") are by far more open to religious minorities, indigenous peoples and selected visible minorities, while respondents that have a very negative view of multiculturalism (which I call "multicultural rejectionists") are far more likely to express negative views of those same groups.

The proposition that multiculturalism supports openness and acceptance of differences is further supported by data that reveals that those who think multiculturalism has been very successful are by far more likely to acknowledge such things as systemic racism (78%) compared to those who think that multiculturalism is a big failure, of whom 38% are willing to acknowledge systemic racism. And in regards to indigenous concerns, those who believe multiculturalism has been successful are most likely to support the idea of marking a day for Truth and Reconciliation (90%) in contrast with the 42% support for such recognition amongst those who regard multiculturalism as a failure.

While acknowledging continued criticisms of multiculturalism, Kymlicka (2021) points out that fifty years after its adoption multiculturalism remains popular in Canada. For those insisting that multiculturalism has operated to uphold and exalt the white secular liberal English-speaking settler middle-class, it would be important to explain why members of the most vulnerable minorities tend to widely endorse multiculturalism. Kymlicka suggest that there are "many examples where critical social scientists in Canada have gone looking for those who are said to be excluded or banished from multiculturalism, only to discover that members of these groups often express genuine appreciation, even gratitude, for multiculturalism." This is evidenced in a 2021 Leger-ACS survey suggesting that multiculturalism is more popular amongst visible minorities/racialized groups than it is amongst

TABLE 6: CANADIANS WITH VERY OR SOMEWHAT POSITIVE VIEWS OF MULTICULTURALISM AND SOMEWHAT OR VERY NEGATIVE AND HOW "POSITIVELY" THEY RESPECTIVELY VIEW RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS AND SELECTED VISIBLE MINORITY GROUPS

Total Positive view of the following groups	Multiculturalism – Do you have a very positive, somewhat positive, somewhat negative or very negative view of the following?			
	Very positive (Convinced Multiculturalists)	Somewhat positive (soft Multicultural supporters)	Somewhat negative (soft multicultural opponents)	Very negative (Multicultural rejectionists)
Muslims	93.9%	80.4%	32.4%	22.2%
Jews	94.9%	88.2%	60.5%	58.9%
Indigenous	96.7%	89%	70.8%	53.3%
Chinese	96.6%	91.5%	68%	55%
Black	98.1%	93.9%	76.4%	58.9%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies between June 18 and 20, 2021

persons identifying as white. As revealed in Table 7, a majority of Canadians identifying as visible minorities hold a very positive view of multiculturalism.

VIEWS OF MULTICULTURALISM

TABLE 7: VERY POSITIVE, SOMEWHAT POSITIVE, SOMEWHAT NEGATIVE OR VERY NEGATIVE VIEWS OF MULTICULTURALISM ON THE PART OF CANADIANS IDENTIFYING AS VISIBLE OR NON-VISIBLE MINORITY

	Visible Minority	Not a Visible Minority
Very positive	52.5%	38.3%
Somewhat positive	37.3%	44.3%
Somewhat negative	6.8%	11.4%
Very negative	3.4%	6.0%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies between June 18 and 20, 2021

When asked whether they regard multicultural policies as a success of failure, the September 2021 Leger-ACS results reveal that nearly two in three Canadians identifying as a visible minority regard the policies as a success which is greater than the 53% of those persons identifying as white that consider the policies to be successful.

Critics of multiculturalism have sometimes challenged the formulation of polling questions about multiculturalism that yield positive results, suggesting that it is necessary to provide additional information about the topic (i.e., reflecting their own bias or issues with it) prior to eliciting the opinion of Canadians. At present there is little if any evidence to support those who insist that Black and Indigenous persons in Canada regard multiculturalism as an obstacle to equality. Rather, as observed in Table 9, the Canadians identifying as white are less likely to describe multiculturalism as a source of pride than are respondents that identify as either Black or Indigenous.

CONCLUSION

Fifty years after his father introduced Canada's Multicultural Policy, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau stated (2021) that:

> "This year, we mark an important anniversary. Fifty years ago this fall, Canada became the first country in the world to adopt a policy of multiculturalism, which was later enshrined in law through the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. While since then there has been important progress toward a more inclusive and equitable society, there remains much work to be done. Every day, far too many racialized Canadians, Indigenous peoples, and religious minorities continue to face systemic racism, discrimination, and a lack of resources and opportunity."[1]

It's an important point. There indeed remains much to be done to combat racism and prejudice. The message(s) to Canadians in this regard is crucial, as the evidence suggests that multiculturalism does make a positive contribution. It's a message that surveys suggest has been embraced and modified to better connect with Canadians from the country's rapidly growing

TABLE 8: ARE CANADA'S MULTICULTURAL POLICIES SEEN AS VERY SUCCESSFUL, SOMEWHAT SUCCESSFUL, SOMEWHAT OF A FAILURE OR A BIG FAILURE ON THE PART OF CANADIANS IDENTIFYING AS VISIBLE OR NON-VISIBLE MINORITY

On October 8, 2021, Canada will mark the 50th anniversary of multiculturalism. In thinking about Canada's multicultural policies would you describe them as:	Visible Minority	Not Visible Minority
TOTAL SUCCESS	66%	53%
Very successful	12%	7%
Somewhat successful	54%	45%
TOTAL FAILURE	23%	27%
Somewhat of a failure	14%	17%
A big failure	8%	9%
I don't know	12%	21%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies, September 24–26, 2021

1 https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/statement-by-the-prime-minister-on-canadian-multiculturalism-day-883908094.html

TABLE 9: HOW IMPORTANT IS MULTICULTURALISM AND DIVERSITY IN MAKING YOU MOST PROUD TO BE CANADIAN AMONGST THOSE CANADIANS IDENTIFYING AS WHITE, INDIGENOUS AND BLACK

	Multiculturalism & ethnic diversity... how important in terms of making you most proud to be a Canadian						
	Extremely important	Very important	Somewhat important	Not very important	Not at all important	I don't know	Total
White	30.5%	30.1%	23.0%	8.1%	6.0%	2.3%	100%
Indigenous	36.9%	29.1%	21.4%	6.8%	3.9%	1.9%	100%
Black	64.9%	27.0%	5.4%	1.4%		1.4%	100%
Total	34.8%	29.1%	21.3%	7.3%	5.0%	2.4%	100%

Source: Leger Marketing for the Association for Canadian Studies between June 18 and 20, 2021

visible minority population. But multiculturalism is only part of the solution and it needs to be reinforced with multiple civic, institutional and legislative initiatives that include employment equity laws, cross-cultural dialogue, respect for rights and freedoms, and hate crimes legislation to name a few. Any evaluation of the success or failure of multiculturalism must be considered in conjunction with the successes or failures of these other initiatives.

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THE ONGOING DEBATE BETWEEN MULTICULTURALISM AND INTERCULTURALISM[1]

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Clearly, interculturalism is an -ism like any other. But what interculturalism are we referring to here? Is it the interculturalism of the Indian philosopher Raymond Pannikar, who proposed a critique of Western societies based on a series of meditations on "dialogical dialogue," and who inspired the thinking of the Intercultural Institute of Montreal? Or perhaps the interculturalism of Gérard Bouchard, who regards this model as a means of defending Quebec's cultural rights in the face of the existential threats posed by Canadian-style multiculturalism? And what is the relationship of multiculturalism to these very different visions of interculturalism, as we mark its 50th anniversary this year? Are we right to contrast interculturalism with multiculturalism, or is this a semantic debate only of interest to academics? Are there real differences between the two paradigms, or is this just an attempt to manipulate the debate for political purposes? Why does the debate between these two paradigms persist?

In countries like Canada, where multiculturalism is seen as a pillar of political culture, it is always surprising to learn that for some groups it can be experienced as a form of hegemony.[2] This is the case in Quebec, a French-speaking province within Canada, which, for historical reasons, is wary of multiculturalism, not only as a policy of "diversity management", but also as a marker of identity. This perceived disparity between a *multiculturalist Canada* and an *interculturalist Quebec* is problematic for several reasons. Not only can one find multiculturalism in Quebec and interculturalism in the rest of Canada, but the two models have influenced each other since the inception of multiculturalism in the early 1970s. However, an analysis of the tensions between the two models as worldviews makes it possible to reflect on the paradox of diversity

"Not only can one find multiculturalism in Quebec and interculturalism in the rest of Canada, but the two models have influenced each other since the inception of multiculturalism in the early 1970s."

1 A longer version of this text was published in the journal *Possibles* (see White 2019).

2 According to several research and polling sources, multiculturalism is one of the "Canadian values" most cherished by Canadians of all backgrounds (Rocher and White 2014), despite the distrust it creates in some sectors of the population in Quebec.

that lies at the heart of modern nation-states.

A number of important observations must be made before undertaking any serious comparison of the two models. First, it is important to distinguish between state-based policies or programs and the social realities that they seek to frame. Second, Quebec must be seen as a majority French-speaking province that enjoys a particular status within Canada. Lastly, it must be noted that interculturalism often emerges in plurinational contexts wherein a struggle exists between majority and minority populations. This predicament of a fragile majority – what Rachida Azdouz (2018) has referred to as "manoritaire" – is essential to understanding the importance of interculturalism in Quebec.

It would be easy to fall into the trap of those analysts who give the impression that there is a broad consensus on interculturalism in Quebec. Bouchard makes this mistake repeatedly, not least because his analysis seeks to place interculturalism on an equal footing with multiculturalism. One study identified at least four strands of thought in Quebec that are critical of interculturalism (Rocher and White 2014). Not only do many native anglophones in Québec have difficulty with the model of interculturalism, but also many immigrants and immigrant communities resist interculturalism because they believe multiculturalism (and thus by extension Canada) is "more open to diversity". The same is true of many Indigenous communities, although for different reasons.

In recent years there has been an ongoing debate about the relative value of the two models; this debate has become polarized and ideologically charged.[3] On the one hand, there are those who defend multiculturalism as part of their political heritage, presenting arguments to show the merits and evolution of this public policy. On the other hand, there are those who criticize multiculturalism for contributing to communitarianism and the rise of "parallel lives". For interculturalists, multiculturalism is a thing of the past. Meanwhile for multiculturalists, interculturalism is simply an iteration of multiculturalism, or, in more moderate formulations, a continuation of multiculturalism. From the interculturalist perspective, multiculturalism is a way of undermining Québec; from the multiculturalist perspective, interculturalism simply adds fuel to the fires of populism and intolerance.

In an effort to promote their respective positions, most of the authors who contribute to this debate fall into binary arguments that pit interculturalism and multiculturalism against each other. Some authors take a moderate position in order to demonstrate that each model has positive aspects to contribute to the debate and that there is a certain complementarity between the two models. Others attempt to compare the two models, setting out to maintain a balance in their analysis of the similarities and differences; but often end up being biased, favouring one model over the other. One thing that is certain about this debate, which almost always takes place in English – is that multiculturalists tend to minimize the differences between the two models, while interculturalists tend to emphasize them. In some analyses, such as those of Charles Taylor (2012), each model has its own historical context and trajectory. According to Taylor, interculturalism is the appropriate model for Quebec because it is the model that has emerged over time and embodies the historical consciousness of Quebecers.

> "Here I use the word 'intercultural' in the broadest possible sense, that is, in the sense of an encounter between two or more worldviews, where the root 'culture" refers not to ethnic or racial identity, but to any group identity that can constitute an expression of sociability as well as exclusion among human beings."

From a systemic perspective, both interculturalism and multiculturalism are part of a larger family of political thought, namely pluralism. Multiculturalism and interculturalism share several important principles of pluralist thought including the pursuit of social cohesion, the rejection of assimilationism, the recognition of diversity, and the fight against discrimination. But there are also important differences between the two models (see White 2019). If this analysis is correct, it can be argued that the debate that pits interculturalism against multiculturalism is itself an example of intercultural miscommunication. Here I use the word "intercultural" in the broadest possible sense, that is, meaning an encounter between worldviews, where the root "culture" refers not to ethnic or racial identity, but to any group identity that can constitute an expression of sociability but also a mechanism of exclusion. Much more than merely concepts or political programs, multiculturalism and interculturalism are cultures, with all that the word "culture" implies and fails to adequately explain.

In a recent article on this topic, Tariq Modood presents multiculturalism as a political paradigm that has been the victim of bad press and "misrepresentation" by interculturalists. In the article titled "Must Interculturalists Misrepresent Multiculturalism?", Modood attempts to demonstrate that interculturalism cannot replace multiculturalism as a political paradigm (2017: 5). According to his analysis, interculturalism

3 See *Canadian Diversity* Volume 9(2) (2012), the debate between Ted Cantle and Tariq Modood in *Ethnicities* in 2016, also *Journal of Intercultural Studies* 33 (2), and *Comparative Migration Studies* 2018 (6).

can contribute to the evolution of multiculturalism, but it must somehow integrate multiculturalism, much in the same way that an immigrant seeks to integrate her new host society. Modood's analysis illustrates a tendency in the literature defending multiculturalism to see interculturalism as a derivative (or maybe even a deviation) of the larger multiculturalist framework (ibid: 18). This argument is not acceptable to those who defend interculturalism, largely because, from their point of view, interculturalism constitutes a distinct tradition, with its own thinkers, concepts, and policy perspectives (Emongo and White 2014). For staunch interculturalists, this multiculturalist formulation is an arrogant, even contemptuous argument that deserves a retort along the same rhetorical lines, i.e. "Why Must Multiculturalists Misrepresent Interculturalism?"

In a more recent publication Modood and Mansouri, explain that multiculturalism and interculturalism, which have often been opposed in the past, are now entering a period of complementarity (Mansouri and Modood 2021). This complementarity, at least in the research conducted in the Australian context, is characterized by a particular form of differentiation, where multiculturalism provides macro-level policy orientation and interculturalism addresses the micro or local level issues, a division of labor that would put interculturalism at the service of multiculturalism.[4] This analysis, while based on empirical research in one particular context (Australia), does not hold water. Firstly, it fails to recognize that intercultural thinking often emerges in contexts where minority communities are trying to defend their cultural and linguistic rights (Quebec, Catalonia, Mexico). Before proposing a universal model of the relationship between the two paradigms, we must first examine the nature of political dynamics at the national level. Second, and more importantly, this analysis uncritically reproduces the nationalist discourse of governmental interculturalism (citing Bouchard), without considering the fact that this version of interculturalism is rejected by many actors and communities within Quebecois political life (Frozzini 2014). Finally, the presupposition of an historical linear progression from opposition to complementarity (what the authors refer to as the "4th phase") is simply not supported by the empirical data on interculturalism elsewhere (Emongo and White 2014). We know that there are any number of relationships between the two approaches, that the relationship between the two varies according to the national context, and that complementarity (which is also not defined in this text) is only one possibility among many.

So how do we talk about interculturalism without falling into nationalism on the one hand and essentialism on the other? It is not easy, since each iteration of interculturalism is unique,

"So how do we talk about interculturalism without falling into nationalism on the one hand and essentialism on the other? It is not easy, since each iteration of interculturalism is unique, and intercultural thinking fiercely resists the imposition of hegemonic frameworks."

and intercultural thinking fiercely resists the imposition of hegemonic frameworks. One solution would be the model of intercultural integration proposed by the Council of Europe in its Intercultural Cities program. Starting at the level of local governance and without ignoring the importance of multilevel analysis, the intercultural cities program takes as its starting point the basic principles of human rights culture.[5]

How can we imagine the connection between these two giants of pluralistic thinking without reproducing the two solitudes that were the basis of their emergence as models for managing diversity in the first place (Winter 2011)? Time will tell, but first we must recognize each approach has its own history and that these two histories are interwoven. It is problematic to present interculturalism as a paradigm that will surpass or replace multiculturalism, but it is equally problematic to present interculturalism as merely a a variant of multiculturalism, or even worse, as the local labor that will enable multiculturalism to finally realize its dream of a more just and humane society.

4 One of the most common stereotypes of interculturalism is the tendency to characterize it as a micro-level approach, or even worse, one that is limited to interpersonal dynamics (White 2019).

5 For more information on the evolution of this network in Canada, see the Réseau des municipalités en immigration et en relations interculturelles du Québec (RÉMIRI): www.remiri.net

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INEQUITIES & EXCLUSION

MULTICULTURALISM @50: DIVERSITY & INCLUSION ONLY FOR THE HIGHLY SKILLED?[1]

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Selecting immigrants based on their potential economic contribution to the national economy, integration facilitated by multiculturalism, and relatively easy naturalization have been a Canadian trademark for the past fifty years. However, rules to make Canadian citizenship "harder to get and easier to lose" – implemented under the previous Harper Conservatives, but left unchanged under the governing Trudeau Liberals – have turned Canada's naturalization regime into an extension of its market-driven points system in immigration: facilitating quick and easy access to citizenship for the highly skilled "from all corners of the world," while raising the hurdles for individuals who enter Canada through noneconomic immigration streams such as family reunification and asylum.

> "Naturalization remains a society's most important legal, practical and symbolic expression of inclusion."

While the rules for citizenship acquisition are separate from those that govern multiculturalism – proclaimed as policy in 1971 and made law in 1988 – naturalization remains a society's most important legal, practical and symbolic expression of inclusion. Whom we grant citizenship to and how we welcome them (quickly and easily or, on the contrary, grudgingly with lots of hurdles and delays) can thus serve as a magnifying glass revealing what we want Canadian society to be, and who is likely to be favoured by the rules in place.

In 2019, Canada welcomed more than 400,000 temporary migrants and roughly 340,000 permanent residents (IRCC 2020). Only the latter are eligible for naturalization after a minimum of 3 years of physical and legal residence. They were admitted under the Economic Class (58%), Family Class (27%), and Humanitarian Class/Refugees (15%). Most of them come from the Global South, namely (in 2019) from, India, China, the Philippines, and Nigeria. For the years to come, the government has announced accepting more than 400,000 immigrants/year, most of them in the Economic Class. It also offers a limited number of new paths to citizenship for temporary migrants (63,000 in 2019).

To naturalize, permanent residents must file an application, pay fees of $630/adult, prove their language skills, study the citizenship guide *Discover Canada*, sit and pass the test, attend the citizenship ceremony, and swear an oath of

1 The author gladly acknowledges assistance from SSHRC (Insight Grant), IRCC (data & research facilitation), Mansanga Tanga and Dariya Akhova (research assistance).

> "We must ask what causes these stark scoring differences, what they mean for the individuals at stake, and whether this form of inclusion corresponds to what we want Canadian society to be/become."

citizenship. In 2016, immigrants with the highest levels of education (a Master or a Ph.D. degree) had a citizenship test pass rate of 97.1% (Xu, 2018, p. 4), and those admitted under the Skilled Worker Program had a pass rate of 94.5% (Xu, 2018:6). This contrasts starkly with the difficulties in passing the citizenship test experienced by immigrants with secondary education or less (76.7%), resettled refugees (57.3% for those privately sponsored and 59.5% for those government-assisted), individuals having no knowledge of an official language at landing (77.3%) or individuals born in Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Eritrea and Ethiopia. Individuals admitted under the family class have a pass rate of 81.2%. In all categories, female citizenship candidates score less than men (Xu, 2018; for similar results see Hou & Picot, 2020). Even with these low scores, Canada remains a country of fairly rapid naturalization by international comparison. However, we must ask what causes these stark scoring differences, what they mean for the individuals at stake, and whether this form of inclusion corresponds to what we want Canadian society to be/become.

> "Canada's naturalization regime is operating along the very same market-driven logic that is already driving the country's immigration policies, thereby implicitly articulating Canada's vision of meritocratic immigration onto citizenship."

My research shows that candidates for Canadian citizenship are indirectly tested for human capital: social and professional skills, superb mastery of English or French, knowledge, self-sufficiency and entrepreneurship (Winter, 2018, 2021). These attributes have traditionally been at the heart of the immigration point system but were not at stake in the citizenship application. Currently, however, Canada's naturalization regime is operating along the very same market-driven logic that is already driving the country's immigration policies, thereby implicitly articulating Canada's vision of meritocratic immigration onto citizenship.

For skilled and highly skilled immigrants – with university degrees and often in high-paying jobs – this redefinition of Canadian citizenship does not pose an undefeatable challenge. They rely on their professional experiences to fill the forms, make sure to furnish all documents, and have Excel calculate their days of physical presence in Canada. Being tech savvy, they find and download helpful online tools and "walk the streets of Ottawa" or "skate the canal" listening to *Discover Canada* podcast (CC04). While the prospect of undergoing a test is stressful to most, they can reflect on their student days and subsequently "practice a few questions, at least to know (how) the questions looked (in the past) " (CC16). Even when respondents encounter difficulties in the form of administrative flaws and mismanagement, that tend to affect candidates regardless of economic "merit," they are ingenious and resourceful in finding solutions, such as contacting their local MP, negotiating time off with their employers, or even tracing their files through access to information requests.

The interviewees my team spoke with were aware of their privileged class position. More than half of them expressed concern over the fact that the application process may be easy for them but not for others, especially "people who are not used to managing a lot of documentation, who have oral cultures, who are instead used to speaking to someone and that someone in customer service fills in the forms with them" (CC29). They characterized the citizenship application fee as "an amount, which corresponds for many people to one or two full days of pay" (CC37). They also found that the citizenship test is "made for people who have an education. If you do not have a high education level or a university (degree) , it can be difficult" (CC06). In short, many had friends or family who struggled with the application process or lived the demoralizing, time-consuming, and costly experience of failing the language or citizenship test. Their anecdotal evidence corroborates the statistics provided above and strongly resonates with the dramatic increase in demand for assistance with citizenship applications at community legal aid clinics (Nakache, Stone, & Winter, 2020).

Almost half of our respondents self-identified as being an individual belonging to a "visible minority" group. It is promising that none of them complained about racism directed at themselves by government agents (in the, admittedly, very limited personal interaction during the naturalization process). However, the interviews also showed that skills such as language and demeanour influence naturalization outcomes, and not only in purely functional ways. Some felt "treated more as a Canadian because (their) English (was) better than (that of) some other (applicants) " (CC21). Having lived and worked in Canada for the past years, interviewees were appalled by the citizenship study guide's uncritical portrayal of "Canadian values," and the denial of social divisions within Canadian society, whether with respect to Indigenous Peoples, French Canadians or women. Cultural biases were also detected at the citizenship ceremony. Interviewees commented on the fact that officers were checking lip movements during the oath. Many brushed it off as "really dumb" (CC12), others found it "disturbing" (CC32).

What does this mean for *Multiculturalism @ 50*? To recall, the

> "Those who naturalize most easily are middle-class individuals from diverse ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds with strong social and cultural capital."

rules for citizenship acquisition are an important way to symbolize what kind of society we want to be. They also demographically reproduce this society, as Canada's population grows more through newcomers than by babies born. The current naturalization process contributes to a society of "multicultural" individuals and nuclear families. Those who naturalize most easily are middle-class individuals from diverse ethnic, racial and religious backgrounds with strong social and cultural capital, i.e., they often speak multiple languages, hold international degrees, can adapt quickly to diverse cultural contexts, and are embedded in transnational social networks. They contribute to Canadian society through their jobs and their taxes, and they are able to financially support their households and children. However, because of unequal citizenship acquisition they are also increasingly distanced socially, economically, geographically, and legally from extended kin, friends, and acquaintances who are older, disabled, have less education, different migration trajectories, or otherwise less favourable life circumstances. With this hindsight, it becomes clear that the current naturalization rules undermine social cohesion.

> "Canada's current naturalization process reinforces already existing inequalities within its society."

To conclude, an unbalanced and one-sided interpretation of the economic imperatives harms the social contract and undermines the assumption of mutual solidarity upon which Canada, like any modern democratic polity, is founded. Given that holding citizenship status of the country of residence is associated with better jobs, higher salaries, and social recognition, Canada's current naturalization process reinforces already existing inequalities within its society. It thereby penalizes not only those who have suffered persecution and trauma, such as refugees, but also those who enable skilled and highly skilled workers to do their jobs by looking after their families and offering other low-paying services. These latter (im) migrants also contribute to Canadian society, albeit on a different social level. Making them feel less worthy of Canadian citizenship undermines the promise of membership in an egalitarian pluralist society that combines racial equality and ethnocultural inclusion with social justice and social citizenship rights.

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MULTICULTURALISM AND ITS ADJECTIVES: SITUATING NEOCONSERVATIVE MULTICULTURALISM

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After 50 years, the adjectives used to characterize multiculturalism have come to define its substance and meaning. The aim of this article is to contextualize and grasp its twenty-first century neoconservative iteration.

As is well known, multiculturalism as a state policy and a vision of Canada was proclaimed during a period that also witnessed an end to obvious state discrimination in immigration policy. But as a popular ideology and state practice placed within a larger context it has in many ways been complicit with, rather than an alternative to, settler colonialism and social inequality. As Himani Bannerji has remarked in *The Dark Side of the Nation*, what is true for many racialized immigrants, "We demanded some genuine reforms – some of us even demanded the end of racist capitalism – and instead we got 'multiculturalism'" (Bannerji 2000, 89).

A substantive example of this, – of ever greater importance given the vast expansion of Canada's migrant worker programs – occurred not long after the official declaration of multiculturalism and the institution of the point system in immigration policy. The Canadian government entrenched migrant worker programs through the 1973 Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (NIEP), "legalizing the resubordination of many non-Whites entering Canada by recategorizing them as temporary and foreign workers" (Sharma 2006, 22). Multiculturalism also arose concurrently to the government's assimilationist 1969 White Paper on "Indian Policy." For obscuring and failing to address such realities, many Indigenous scholars and others have rejected what Coulthard refers to as the "colonial politics of recognition" (Coulthard 2014; St. Denis 2011; also see Dhamoon in his volume).

> "A backlash to multiculturalism and the country's changing demographics, partly led by the Reform Party in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as well as neoliberal policy shifts, have contributed to the rise of two now dominant variants."

Notwithstanding these observations, as Abu-Laban discusses elsewhere in this issue, progressive *anti-racist* incarnations from below have at times been evident. However, a backlash to multiculturalism and the country's changing demographics,

1 X University is used here in solidarity with Indigenous students, faculty and others who demanded our university's name be changed given Egerton Ryerson's role in establishing the Residential School System for Indigenous children in Canada (Indigenous Students from X University 2021). On August 26, 2021 the university announced that it would accept the Standing Strong (Mash Koh Wee Kah Pooh Win) taskforce's recommendation that it be re-named (Friesen 2021)

partly led by the Reform Party in the late 1980s and early 1990s, as well as neoliberal policy shifts, have contributed to the rise of two now dominant variants.

Over the course of the 1990s and early 2000s, under Progressive Conservative and Liberal governments, a centrist multiculturalism that had arisen alongside the welfare state would be further hollowed out and devolved to its lowest common denominator, namely neoliberal "selling diversity form" (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002; Winter 2014). This dominant form has left considerable room for selective appropriation of multiculturalism, at relatively low cost, by the neoconservative right.

Neoliberal multiculturalism rose as the new, no longer progressive, Conservative Party and its Reform and Canadian Alliance predecessors were learning political pragmatism, the first characteristic of a new *neoconservative* multiculturalism in a country whose changing demographics required outreach beyond the party's white settler colonial base of support. That pragmatism, in addition to Liberal government scandals, helped the new Conservative Party win and occupy national office from 2006 to 2015.

> "Neoconservative pragmatism has meant that party platforms needed to be cleansed of anti-diversity and anti-multiculturalism statements, and its list of "outsiders" rhetorically narrowed."

Neoconservative pragmatism has meant that party platforms needed to be cleansed of anti-diversity and anti-multiculturalism statements, and its list of "outsiders" rhetorically narrowed (Kirkham 1998; Carlaw 2021b). Thus, common sense ideas of multiculturalism and political pluralism may be evoked by the Conservatives in leaders' debates, on Multiculturalism Day, and in "ethnic outreach" efforts (Siddiqui 2011; Flecker 2008). While in power, a multiculturalism sub-ministry could continue to exist regardless of whether the party effectively eliminated it by absorbing it into the larger Citizenship and Immigration Ministry and purging programming of anti-racist content (Griffith 2013, 100, 26-30). Such gestures were necessary as the party's brand required improvement to overcome negative perceptions of it being the party of "Anglo-Saxon Protestants" and "social extremists," "hostile to the concerns of immigrants" (Marland and Flanagan 2013, 965).

Beyond mere pragmatism, neoconservative multiculturalism is also a *creative* and *disciplinary* authoritarian populist project and approach (Carlaw 2017; Hall 1980). Under the Conservative government, it could include acknowledging historic wrongs committed against racialized minorities, while simultaneously disciplining many recipients of funding from such communities to focus their energies away from drawing connections to contemporary instances of racism and discrimination (James 2013; 2015). The party could also reach back to claim an abandoned Red Tory legacy – an abandonment seen in cuts to a health care program for refugees introduced during John Diefenbaker's time in office – while invoking Diefenbaker appointee and Progressive Conservative Senator Paul Yuzyk as *the* "key pioneer" of multiculturalism, despite a Liberal government enacting it (Voices-Voix 2014; Government of Canada 2012; Kenney 2011).

> "Perhaps in contrast to a popular neoliberal version that claims to include and respect the rights of all, neoconservative multiculturalism simultaneously practices politics of xenophilia and xenophobia."

Thus, perhaps in contrast to a popular neoliberal version that claims to include and respect the rights of all, neoconservative multiculturalism simultaneously practices politics of *xenophilia* and *xenophobia* (Honig 2001). Resulting in a xenophilic invitation for those willing to accept neoliberal and neoconservative subjectivities of self-reliance, "law and order" approaches and militarism (Carlaw 2015). Some semblance of belonging is allowed to those who would embrace or acquiesce to the asserted positive legacy of a "liberal British imperialism," and neoconservative foreign policy preferences, and would never fall for the invented straw men of "cultural Marxist" or overly permissive and "cultural relativist" iterations of multiculturalism (Bolen 2012; Press Progress 2015).

Often, Muslims and refugee claimants have faced xenophobic treatment. Neither have been considered proper members of the "Canadian family" in Conservative political communications for reasons of challenges to foreign policy, an insistence on their ability to follow their own interpretation of their faith during the citizenship oath, or for daring to exert their agency by coming to Canada to make a refugee claim.

Consequently, pragmatism along with a more sophisticated mix of xenophilia and xenophobia have been part of what former Reform and Conservative campaign lead Tom Flanagan has referred to as the project of achieving a "minimum winning coalition" of voters that would benefit insiders and exclude outsiders (Flanagan 2011). Substantively, it would also see more difficult and expensive pathways to permanent residence and citizenship, and an explosion in the size of migrant worker programs, largely offering precarity and exploitation rather than the security of permanent immigration status (Carlaw 2021a). In part due to the contradictions and excesses of neoconservative multiculturalism, the Conservatives and their discourses of "barbaric cultural practices" were defeated in the 2015 federal election.

While trying to be politically competitive since then, the party

has continually struggled with its instinctive behaviour and organic links to exclusionary, right-wing civil society elements such as Rebel Media. Perhaps nowhere has this been more evident than concerning Islamophobia, where it took yet another deadly attack on Muslims in June of this year in London, Ontario for the Conservative Party and its leader to finally recognize its existence, though the party's role in fostering it through its discourses, obfuscations and citizenship politics remain largely unacknowledged (Zhou 2021).

Now, under leader Erin O'Toole, and previously under Andrew Scheer, the attempt to present a palatable neoconservative multiculturalism means offers for immigrants and ethnicized and racialized Canadians to take "a new look" at the party, including declarations that there is "no room for racists" in the Conservative Party, despite their alarmist approach to asylum seekers, for example (Scheer 2019; Erin O'Toole 2021). However, the vehicle of a potential new minimum winning coalition frequently offers similar xenophobic and xenophilic appeals and social hierarchies, notably featuring the reflexive defence of controversial historical figures and residential school architects from "cancel culture" and a more inclusive symbolic order (Boswell 2021). Despite the invitation of a "new look," disciplinary neoconservative multiculturalism must not call into question the origins and intentions of the settler colonial state (Breakenridge 2020).

> "Fifty years on – activists, civil society organizations, and the electorate, face neoliberal and neoconservative versions of settler colonial multiculturalism to either manoeuvre within or attempt to move beyond."

Fifty years on – activists, civil society organizations, and the electorate, face neoliberal and neoconservative versions of settler colonial multiculturalism to either manoeuvre within or attempt to move beyond (Ross 2019). It remains to be seen whether more, or less emancipatory societal projects of belonging or adjectives of multiculturalism will define the country's next half-century.

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DECOLONIZATION & RECONCILIATION

MULTICULTURALISM AND DECOLONIZATION

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Over the last five decades, Canadian multiculturalism has been celebrated for transforming public attitudes and government policies towards cultural minorities. It has established a set of public ideals that aim to eliminate minority marginalization and has successfully urged public and private actors to develop institutional practices by which these ideals can be attained.

> "Canada, like many colonizing states, continues to witness intense conflict between Indigenous communities, industry and state actors, notably over projects for land development and resource exploitation."

A similar kind of success cannot be claimed with regards to the policies and practices that aim at improving state relations with Indigenous peoples. On one hand, international and domestic efforts have led to several noteworthy policy reforms. Predominantly, the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (2007) and initiatives, such as Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (Canada, 2015), seek to address the historical injustices of colonialism. On the other hand, none of these initiatives have so far transformed the relations between Indigenous and settler populations. To the contrary, Canada, like many colonizing states, continues to witness intense conflict between Indigenous communities, industry and state actors, notably over projects for land development and resource exploitation. Here, and in many other corners of the world, governments and developers treat Indigenous rights as obstacles to economic development. A colonial mindset has licensed the use of coercion against Indigenous peoples and their supporters who resist mining, logging, and pipeline projects which encroach on Indigenous territories. Despite well-publicized reports of this coercion and Indigenous resistance to it, openly hostile publics continue to deny their responsibility to address the wrongs of colonialism.

> "Multiculturalism's advocates, including myself, have examined Canada's history of injustice to Indigenous peoples partly in terms of its impact on the cultural distinctiveness of Indigenous ties to land and resources."

In one sense, multiculturalism is irrelevant to these disputes. Canadian multiculturalism was not designed to respond to the history of coercive assimilation against Indigenous peoples, who are recognized as "founding peoples", not cultural minorities. Nevertheless, over the last 50 years, scholars and the public have debated multiculturalism and cultural rights

partly in the context of considering the wrongs of colonialism. Multiculturalism's advocates, including myself, have examined Canada's history of injustice to Indigenous peoples partly in terms of its impact on the cultural distinctiveness of Indigenous ties to land and resources (e.g., Eisenberg 2009, chp 6; Kymlicka 1995, especially 79–80, 85–87, 116-20; Taylor 1994, 26, 39–40). In the US, advocates and critics of multiculturalism point to the ways in which the cultural assumptions of dominant groups have distorted legal decisions about tribal rules and Indigenous religious practices (Song 2007). In Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, multiculturalism is often understood to include the accommodation of Indigenous rights (see, e.g., Ennaji ed., 2014; Kymlicka and Pföstl eds., 2014; Sieder ed., 2002).

It is a mistake to conclude that these scholars are unfamiliar with the history and treatment of Indigenous peoples in their countries or that they believe cultural disadvantage to be the central wrong of colonialism. Yet, some of the early scholarship on multiculturalism was primarily interested in how cultural identity anchors a person's self-understanding and is tied to their sense of dignity and self-respect. It pointed to histories in which dominant groups used culture to exclude and marginalize minorities, in order to point out the damage colonialism has done to people's identities. As a result, this scholarship failed to recognize that Indigenous political authority – not cultural identity – was at the heart of many colonial struggles.

> "The aim of colonial restrictions on these cultural practices was to replace Indigenous structures of authority and governance with colonial structures. Restrictions successfully undermined Indigenous governance structures, thus breaking ties between the Indigenous community and its traditional territories, weakening kinship networks and family bonds, and rendering communities financially dependent on settler governments."

Today, it is widely recognized that the aim of historical policies of assimilation, which sought to alter the culture or language of an Indigenous community, was not merely to reshape Indigenous culture. Rather, their intent was to pacify Indigenous communities that actively resisted the imposition of state authority. This pacification sometimes involved undermining familial, political and economic structures of authority by which Indigenous peoples organized their communities. These structures of authority suffered when the "cultural" practices that sustained them were prohibited. On the West Coast, practices such as the Potlach and other official feasts, Spirit Dancing, and whale hunting were means by which political leadership within Indigenous communities was established and political authority managed. The aim of colonial restrictions on these cultural practices was to replace Indigenous structures of authority and governance with colonial structures. Restrictions successfully undermined Indigenous governance structures, thus breaking ties between the Indigenous community and its traditional territories, weakening kinship networks and family bonds, and rendering communities financially dependent on settler governments. Band councils were then introduced as alternative means of governance.

The cultural practices Indigenous communities seek to protect today are often ones that give content and meaning to the traditional legal and political authority structures that communities seek to rebuild. These practices are the means through which community political authority is manifested. Perhaps because of this connection, courts are careful, when they decide to sanction the revitalization of Indigenous languages or cultural practices, not to alter colonial relations of political authority. Judges are careful to distinguish the accommodation of Indigenous cultural identity from the recognition of Indigenous governance authority. Domestic courts in Canada, the United States and Australia typically accomplish this by shifting disputes that involve Indigenous territories or access to resources away from questions about Indigenous jurisdictional authority towards questions about the role of a particular territory or resource in a community's cultural identity. Such shifts transform disputes about jurisdictional authority into questions about narrow legal exemptions for cultural practices. For instance, courts will consider the question of whether an Indigenous community's distinctive identity requires exemption from a state licensing requirement to fish in a particular way or in a particular place. However, they will not consider the question of whether Indigenous jurisdiction over the resource is the practice that makes the culture distinctive (see Borrows 1997-8). An Indigenous community's right to manage a resource, which has been central and definitive of the community's distinctive way of life, is thus transformed into a right to have access to the resource – as deemed necessary by state courts – for limited cultural purposes.

The driving forces behind decolonization today include efforts to re-establish the authority of Indigenous peoples to govern themselves and their communities through their own laws and governance structures regardless of whether or not this helps to secure lost cultural practices. In fact, some Indigenous scholars go so far as to condemn cultural recognition and intercultural dialogue as pernicious forms of recolonization (see Coulthard 2014a). These scholars point out that Indigenous peoples often do not situate themselves in relation to values such as progress, development, modernization and globalization in the same ways that settler populations typically do. These differences in values and dispositions are then carried into interactions with the state, such as land development negotiations, court cases and intercultural dialogue, where

Indigenous perspectives can end up being viewed by settlers as incomprehensible, unpersuasive, or as confirming that communities are backward and unable to govern themselves (Coulthard 2014b). Those sympathetic with the circumstances this creates for Indigenous peoples, point to the pernicious effects of colonialism that have distorted identities by leading Indigenous peoples to internalize attitudes of inferiority and ambivalence towards their own traditional governing institutions and practices (Tully 2010:244).

> "Today, Indigenous scholars argue that decolonization requires re-establishing Indigenous authority by rebuilding Indigenous political and legal orders and reintroducing traditional practices, customs and languages."

It would be misleading to diagnose these concerns as matters requiring cultural protection, even if cultural differences are implicated in how disputes unfold. Today, Indigenous scholars argue that decolonization requires re-establishing Indigenous authority by rebuilding Indigenous political and legal orders and reintroducing traditional practices, customs and languages (see Asch, Borrows and Tully eds., 2018). For some communities, these are daunting projects that require reconstituting Indigenous legal traditions and governance structures and revitalizing Indigenous languages. Obviously, this requires that states agree to help rebuild some Indigenous cultural practices. But the purpose of these efforts is not only to protect cultural identity. Instead, the point is to reconstitute political and legal orders as legitimate sources of governance for communities, sometimes even if this requires departing from traditional practices and values.

In the context of decolonizing Indigenous-settler relations, reforms that subordinate Indigenous legal orders to state authority, such as proposals to use federal and municipal government structures as templates for self-government, are unsatisfactory. Unsurprisingly, Indigenous communities increasingly reject such reforms or consider them to be temporary way stations on the road to more genuine forms of self-determination (see Coyle 2020). More genuine forms of self-determination require recognition of Indigenous political orders as distinct political entities with legitimate lawmaking authority over communities and traditional territories independent of state concession or the delegation by states of constitutional authority to them (Borrows 2020).

The re-establishment of Indigenous authority structures, in the sense I have described, poses significant challenges to contemporary governance and raises many difficult questions. One question is how can Indigenous legal orders, which directly contest the authority of the state, coexist with the state? Is the sovereign legal authority of contemporary states compatible with Indigenous legal authority? If it is compatible, what measures are required to secure the coexistence of legal orders in ways that make sense to populations throughout the world who live on territories where these authorities overlap? If these different authority structures are incompatible, how far can either Indigenous or settler legal orders go in successfully addressing colonial injustice? These are some of the pressing questions we face today. They are different from the questions addressed by multiculturalism. They implicate cultural difference but, at the same time, are sensitive to the fact that state-based cultural protections can be an obstacle to decolonization.

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MULTICULTURAL COLONIALISM[1]

Rita Kaur Dhamoon is an Assistant Professor of Political Science at the University of Victoria. Her research interests have centred on issues of identity/difference politics and power, including multiculturalism, culture, nation-building, gender politics and feminism, intersectionality, critical race studies, and post-colonial and anti-colonial politics. As well as journal articles and book chapters, she has published a book called Identity/Difference Politics: How Difference is Produced and Why it Matters (UBC Press, 2009).

How does one reflect on the 50th anniversary of Canada's multiculturalism policy in the current context of various racisms and colonialisms? So many of us are consumed by ongoing anxieties about another wave of the COVID-19 pandemic, especially as Black people, people of colour and Indigenous peoples are labouring on the front lines to ensure the health and food security of the nation. Many are also devastated by the news of hundreds of unmarked graves of Indigenous children taken from their families and forcibly sent to Indian Residential Schools. Furthermore, it is a time of heightened collective grief and rage about ongoing state sanctioned violence against Black and Indigenous people murdered by police. This is happening while Muslims/Arabs, undocumented people of colour, Brown international students, and temporary foreign migrants from the so-called global south continue to be subject to technologies of the Canadian and global war on terror.

It is also a time, as it has been in the past, when Indigenous communities are fighting back against more resource extraction and corporate development on their territories (think of Wet'suwet'en, Land Back, Mi'kmaq fisherman, Fairy Creek). It is also a time when Black Lives Matter has put police abolition on the public agenda, and Black, Black-Muslim, and Black-Indigenous people continue to decentre the State through their activism (e.g., creating their own Wildseed Centre for Art and Activism in Toronto); and when anti-Asian racism is being addressed by Asian communities by foregrounding those most vulnerable, including sex workers and the working poor; and when communities of colour and Indigenous communities keep standing with each other, across issues, across this Turtle Island.

In this context, how do I, as a Punjabi-Sikh Brown woman who is deemed a subject of multiculturalism, make sense of even writing a piece to mark the 50th anniversary of Canada's multicultural policy? Was I invited to write a piece because my previous work (over 12 years ago) was on multiculturalism, even though I fundamentally critiqued multiculturalism? I can see that my critique of liberal multicultural conceptions of culture (Dhamoon 2009) remains relevant today, wherein culture becomes narrowly about ethnic/ethno-religious and linguistic minority cultures rather than the problem of authority and rule by dominant majorities, and where culture is treated as a bounded entity, a pre-social identity, a resource that has both individual instrumental value and economic value, a

1 My thanks to Davina Bhandar for the conversation on the state of multiculturalism.

mode of Othering, a proxy for race, a unidimensional (rather than intersecting) signifier of difference, and a site of regulation by State agents.

> "I feel that the Canadian State has failed my communities, that it could never address structural inequities because it is constituted by genocide, dispossession, violence, slavery, and exploitation."

Under the weight of racism and colonialism, and uncertainty about how my Brown ethnic body is being put under the service of multiculturalism, I search the political scientist within me and find myself seeking evidence of what I *feel*. I feel that the Canadian State has failed my communities, that it could never address structural inequities because it is constituted by genocide, dispossession, violence, slavery, and exploitation. I can feel this in my body because multiculturalism has become largely irrelevant to me and my communities. Except now, in writing this piece, I feel the pounding in my head, and "multi-culti" fervour stuck in my throat.

My political science training propelled me to review the annual reports (about 35 reports) on the "Operation of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*" (the Act was passed in 1998). These were presented by the various ministries responsible for the multiculturalism portfolio, which shifted over time from the Minister of State (Multiculturalism and Citizenship), the Department of Canadian Heritage, Canadian Heritage and Status of Women as well as the Secretary of State of Multiculturalism and Canadian Identity, Citizenship and Immigration Canada/Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, Canadian Heritage again, Canadian Heritage and Multiculturalism, and now Diversity and Inclusion and Youth. The shifts in ministries are indicative of the changing priority of multicultural policy for Conservative and Liberal governments, and reflect the changing goals of the multiculturalism policy.

A review of the annual reports also highlights several key features of multiculturalism that remain unchanged, even as specific goals and program activities have shifted over 50 years. First, most reports claim in some way or another that Canada has always been multicultural, effectively erasing the genocidal politic against Indigenous peoples that made Canada possible. Second, while the Act itself makes specific mention that its mandate does not cover institutions of the legislative assemblies or governments of Yukon, the Northwest Territories and Nunavut – which are largely populated by Indigenous peoples – or any Indian Band or Band Council, many of the activities funded under the multiculturalism policy are for Indigenous communities, as if they are another ethnic group rather than First Peoples whose sovereignty is threatened by state-led multiculturalism. Third, while various antiracism activities have been well funded under the multiculturalism policy for a host of different ethnic cultural, religious and Indigenous groups, for the most part these are ad hoc or short-term projects. Certainly, issues of racism and discrimination are named in every report, but the goal is not to make structural and systemic change, but rather to produce short-term project support. Canada's national antiracism strategy, the Canadian Action Plan Against Racism (CAPAR), was only introduced in 2005 but appears in the reports since then; while relatively dormant under the Conservative government and better funded under the Liberal government, multiculturalism and antiracism continue to be conflated. Fourth, multicultural policy has always encompassed an economic, and increasingly a neoliberal, dimension. While initially the focus was on employment opportunities for minorities, this has shifted towards "selling diversity" (Abu-Laban and Gabriel 2002) and evaluating what multicultural subjects can bring to Canada's economy.

Fifth, multicultural policy operates along a spectrum of diversity and unity, regardless of the political party in power. This is most commonly articulated in the requirement that "multicultural minorities" should be expected to learn at least one of the two languages of Canada – namely French or English (no mention of Indigenous languages). In other words, multiculturalism is always scripted through the European dominance of the English and French, who continue to vie for ongoing colonial control (Bannerji 1996). Indeed, Trudeau Snr. introduced the multicultural policy in 1971 to mute Quebecois nationalism by incorporating the demands of Japanese and Ukrainian Canadians who were, at the time, concerned about their place in English and French Canada. As prominently noted in the first few reports, the future of Quebec was a point of contention that concerned those committed to the multicultural policy, especially while constitutional debates and Quebec's possible separation from Canada preoccupied the country.

Québécois anxiety has not gone away, for as recent as September 2020 a private member's bill (C-226) was introduced to Parliament so as not to apply the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* in Québec on the basis that:

> "Multiculturalism undermines Quebec's distinctiveness and reduces it to one ethnic group among many. It undermines the existence of a common culture. Multiculturalism undermines Quebec's very existence as a nation."

While Bill C-226 was ultimately defeated, the insistence on bilingualism remains. This was evident in July 2021, when Canada's official languages watchdog opened an investigation after receiving more than 400 complaints within two weeks concerning the appointment of non-French-speaking and the first Indigenous (Inuk) Governor General of Canada, Mary Simon/Ningiukudluk. Many of these complaints were

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racist and hostile and reinscribed the dominance of English and French as the required "unifying" components of multicultural Canada. The racism against Simon also illuminates the normalized idea that Canadian sovereignty exists de facto, such that the question of returning land and governing authority back to Indigenous peoples is never on the table. Put differently, the nationalist demand for bilingualism provides evidence that multiculturalism is a technology of settler colonialism.

Multiculturalism is deployed to extend whitewashed nationalist narratives about a now reformed nation and mask over ongoing colonialism. The annual reports reveal specific discourses by which multiculturalism is operationalized as a ruling colonial technology. In the reports from the 1980s and 1990s, multiculturalism is articulated through the language of "diversity", "inclusion", and "pluralism" in order to celebrate minority cultures, manage minorities and present strategies of integration of "minorities" into the settler colonial nation that is structured through French and English domination. These values are consistent with liberalism, in which activities focus on increasing participation of ethnocultural communities, intercultural exchanges, human rights, creating equal opportunities for employment, and linking cross-cultural understanding to citizenship. The activities noted in the reports reflect a multicultural era of "saris, samosas, and songs", in which more substantive changes (such as establishing the Canadian Race Relations Foundation in 1997) are domesticated via surface celebration of Othered cultures. Importantly, while in the 1980s and 1990s the creative arts fared well under "song and dance multiculturalism", some have lamented that the arts became less central by the 2000s in favour of other activities geared towards "inclusive citizenship" (Moss 2011).

> "The multicultural program continued to advocate for civic participation and shared citizenship, as well as projects that addressed hate and bias, but through the lens of terrorism."

The annual reports show that the 2000s were shaped by nationalist concerns about security and terrorism, no doubt as a result of the attacks on the US on September 11, 2001. While religion really wasn't a focus before, it became a central focus of multicultural policy during this decade because of (racist) anxieties about Islam. The multicultural program continued to advocate for civic participation and shared citizenship, as well as projects that addressed hate and bias, but through the lens of terrorism. Consequently, the multicultural portfolio was openly used to regulate and scrutinize non-western non-white religions. Multiple reports refer to cross-religious (and not just cultural) understanding, faith group meetings on the role of religion, programs to address so-called religious youth radicalization, and cross-cultural roundtables on security in collaboration with the ministries of Public Safety and Justice to advise the government on how best to secure the nation against Islamic (and to a lesser extent Sikh) terrorism. Now subjects of multiculturalism were being deployed to meet the security needs of the white nation.

The annual reports covering the 2000s and leading into the 2010s continued to narrate the idea that past racist policies and laws had been replaced, and that Canada was now more progressively multicultural. These were the decades of recognition politics, in which apologies and commemorations were rife. The reports are strewn with apologies to Japanese, Chinese, Italian, South Asian, and more recently the Jewish communities for internment, the head tax, and racist immigration exclusion. Such recognition activities were signalled early on with the involvement of the Japanese community seeking redress of internment, and later became formalized through time-limited programs including community and historical recognition programs. As the scholarship on recognition politics has shown, often times these apologies and reparations are made with very little material and structural change in the circumstances of affected communities, and instead seek to provide closure on issues of historical racism for the nation.

Furthermore, multicultural recognition politics is symbolized through a series of dedicated calendar events, which are highlighted in the reports, including: January as Tamil Heritage Month (starting in 2016); January 27 as the international Holocaust Remembrance Day; January 29 as National Day of Remembrance of the Québec City Mosque Attack and Action Against Islamophobia (2021); February as Black History Month (1995); March as Irish heritage Month (2021); April as Sikh Heritage Month (2019); May as Asian Heritage Month (2002), Canadian Jewish Heritage Month (2018), and May 5 as Dutch Heritage Day (2019. They didn't even get a month!); June as National Indigenous History Month (2009), Italian Heritage Month (2010), Filipino Heritage Month (2018), Portuguese Heritage Month (2017), And June 27 as Canadian Multiculturalism Day (2002); the second week of September is Mennonite Heritage Week (2019); October as Latin American Heritage Month (2018), Canadian Islamic History Month (2007), German Heritage Month (2016); and the fourth Saturday of November

is now Holodomor Memorial Day (2008). While from the perspective of liberal multiculturalism these are positive recognition activities, from an antiracist perspective these are ways to merely acknowledge diversity without addressing ongoing structural racisms.

So I return to the question of how to make sense of marking 50 years of multicultural policy in the context of state domestication of racism and colonialism, and various kinds of violence that cut across time (past, continuing and future), across space (Indigenous places and colonial borders), and across the variously situated bodies of those deemed to be multicultural subjects (Indigenous people, Black people, and people of colour, who may or may not have Canadian citizenship status, possibly refugees, temporary foreign workers, permanent residents or undocumented)? So long as the issues of police violence, disproportionate rates of incarceration of Indigenous and Black peoples, detainment and detention of those deemed to be a threat to the nation (whether as a result of the war on terror or border controls), violence against BIPOC women and girls and trans and Two-Spirit and non-binary peoples, worker exploitation, corporate and government sanctioned resource extraction, illness and deaths of marginalized people arising from health inequities and poverty – so long as these issues structure the lives of so many marginalized people and remain embedded in the structures of Canadian laws (such as the criminal code, Indian Act, temporary foreign worker legislation, etc.) and institutions (such as the police, court system, Constitution of Canada) then we should expect nothing more than another 50 years of multicultural colonialism.

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