

# A Clarification of Terms: Canadian Multiculturalism and Quebec Interculturalism

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## **Introduction**

In their report on reasonable accommodations, Gerard Bouchard and Charles Taylor (2008) compared the immigrant integration policies of Quebec and Canada: interculturalism and multiculturalism. They described interculturalism as a paradigm which emphasizes social cohesion and integration through communal values, as well as the respect of differences and diversity (pp. 19-20, 118, and 120-1). On the other hand, multiculturalism favors bilingualism, the protection of multiple cultural identities and a “mosaic” vision of society (p. 214). Bouchard and Taylor insisted that multiculturalism is inadequate for Quebec because it cannot address Quebec’s language preoccupations, its desire to preserve its fundamental culture, and its minority status in Canada (p. 122). This report presents the definitions of interculturalism and multiculturalism, the history of their development, and the scholarly praises and criticisms of multiculturalism and interculturalism.

## **Definition of Multiculturalism**

Canadian multiculturalism has been well established and legislated since the 1970s. Several government documents seek to define and enforce multiculturalism. Canadian governmental documents have described multiculturalism and diversity as fundamental characteristics of Canada. For example, the 1988 Multiculturalism Act seeks to “preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians” (Preamble) and recognizes

multiculturalism as a fundamental aspect of Canada (Article 3). Central to multiculturalism is the idea that Canadians regardless of race, ethnicity, language or religion are all equal. Multiculturalism therefore guarantees equality before the law (Multiculturalism Act (MA), 1988, Preamble and Article 3; Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), 2008). Multiculturalism is concerned with protecting individual rights and overcoming discrimination based on race or ethnicity (MA, Preamble and Article 5).

Additionally, multiculturalism encourages the preservation of cultural identities, and cross-cultural exchanges to promote cross-cultural understanding (CIC, 2008). Though multiculturalism presupposes that individuals share basic democratic values, individuals can belong to any group they see fit, and can maintain, enhance and share their cultural heritage (CIC, 2008; MA, 1988, Article 3). The government must promote interactions of cultural communities to “foster the recognition and appreciation of the diverse cultures of Canadian society and promote the reflection and the evolving expressions of those cultures” (MA, Article 3). Multiculturalism underlines the development of common attitudes among Canadians, and protects the use of English and French, while facilitating the retention of all languages (MA, Articles 3 and 5).

### **Definition of Interculturalism**

There is no official policy of interculturalism in Quebec. Interculturalism can be distinguished through official documents and scholarship (Nugent, 2006). Central to interculturalism is the idea of a reciprocal engagement between the Quebecois majority and cultural communities. Immigration concerns both the host society in its will to welcome immigrants, and immigrants in their will to integrate the social and economic fabric of Quebec, and their respect of communal values (Ministère de l'Immigration et des Communautés Culturelles (MICC), 2008, p.11). The host society can expect immigrants to respect fundamental values but must in turn manifest their appreciation for the contributions of immigrants (MICC, 1991, 19). Therefore, a successful integration requires the efforts of immigrants and of the host society (MICC, 1991, p. 52).

Moreover, according to Quebec's integration policy described as interculturalist, immigrants must develop a feeling of belonging, and a comprehension of Quebec society, with the help of the host society (MICC, 1991, pp. 88-9). To integrate into Quebec society, immigrants must know and respect Quebec's common values (MICC, 1991, 16; MICC, 2008, 18; MICC, 2011, p. 1). The government of Quebec defined Quebec's fundamental values. Equality and the exercise of rights such as the freedom of speech and religion are fundamental to Quebec society. Furthermore, all persons benefit from equal protection of the law, and must obey the law regardless of beliefs (MICC, 2011, pp. 1-2). The use of the French language is also fundamental to Quebec. Indeed, according to a government document intended for new immigrants, “[t]o live in Quebec is to live in French” (MICC, 2011, p. 2). The French language is a symbol of belonging to Quebec society (MICC, 2011, p. 2). Indeed, learning French is necessary for a successful social and economic integration. (MICC, 2008, p. 14; MICC, 1991, p. 17 and 66). Finally, the government encourages full participation of immigrants to political and social life. The degree of participation to various aspects of society is the principal indicator of the extent of immigrants' integration.

The government insists that immigrants must make the necessary effort to participate in public life (MICC, 1991, 18).

In return, in interculturalism, the host society has a role to play to ensure the integration of immigrants. Society must support immigrants' initial socio-economic integration, by encouraging integration to the job market and ensuring equality in job opportunity (MICC, 1991, pp. 71 and 76). The government must also adapt its institutions to overcome linguistic and cultural obstacles to ensure equal access to health and social services for members of cultural communities (MICC, 1991, p. 82). Institutions must also be responsive to demands for religious accommodations (MICC, 1991, p. 84).

Furthermore, cultural pluralism characterizes interculturalism. With increased immigration, the government must adopt measures to promote a positive attitude toward diversity, and valorise different cultures (MICC, 1991, pp. 91-3). Also, despite the need for cultural minorities to adopt communal values and participate in democratic life, members of cultural communities must be allowed to belong to cultural groups and live their cultures (MICC, 1991, p. 19). The government of Quebec also encourages cultural exchange and recognizes diversity as a source of enrichment (MICC, 2). For a successful integration, immigrants and Quebecers of all origins must be open to intercultural exchange and recognize that exchange has the potential to enrich all cultures (MICC, 1991, p. 19).

### **Development of Multiculturalism**

#### **Chronology**

Before the 1960s, Canada had an assimilationist approach to immigration. Groups and people that were seen as incapable of cultural assimilation were rejected for immigration and citizenship (Kymlicka, 2003, p. 1). This reticence was informed by doubts as to whether immigrants from societies dissimilar to Canada (namely, non-Caucasian immigrants) could adapt to Canadian life and be accepted by Canadians (Triadafilopoulos, 2012, p.93). Moreover, it was assumed that the Constitution Act (1867) provided a vehicle for the autonomy of the two dominant populations (Anglophones and Francophones), and that any tensions between the two were essentially resolved (Hosein, 1992, p. 607).

With resurgent Quebec nationalism in the 1960s, the Royal Commission on Biculturalism and Bilingualism was established to study tensions between Francophones and Anglophones and the binary nature of Canadian society, and concluded instead that there were more than two cultures in Canada. The idea of Canadian multiculturalism emerged after the "Bi-Bi" Commission (Hosein, 1992, pp. 607-8; Gagnon, 2000, p. 8; Mansur, 2011, p. 7; Chandra, 2005, p. 16; Tremblay, 2010-11, p. 42; Galabuzi, 2011, p. 69; McRoberts, 2001, p. 706). Additionally, the Point System for immigration was established in 1967 in an effort to eliminate discrimination in the selection of candidates for immigration despite lingering worries brought about by increasing immigration from diverse and culturally different countries. The system was relatively successful in opening Canada to large scale immigration from Asia, Africa and other non-traditional sources of immigrants (Triadafilopoulos, 2012, pp. 97-8 and 102-3).

In October 1971, Pierre Elliott Trudeau officialised a Canadian multiculturalist policy, declaring that there was no official culture in Canada, but two official languages (Thornhill, 1999, p. 82; Mansur, 2011, p. 12; Walcott, 2011, p. 19; Galabuzi, 2011, p. 70). With the establishment of this policy, Trudeau may have had two political goals in mind; first, he may have been trying to secure immigrant votes to gain an advantage over his political rivals (Mansur, 2011, p. 13), or he may have devised multiculturalism as a tool to integrate Quebec Francophones into the rest of Canada (McRoberts, 2001, p. 698). Moreover, the 1976 Immigration Act further solidified the non-discriminatory nature of Canadian immigration policy (Triadafilopoulos, 2012, p. 115).

During the 1980s, the Canadian government reaffirmed multiculturalism through a variety of official documents, such as the Canadian Constitution of 1982, the *Charter of Right and Freedoms* of 1982 and the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 (Hosein, 1992, p. 610; Gagnon, 2000, p. 9; Sondhi, 2005, p. 245; Galabuzi, 2011, p. 71).

### **Is Canada Unique?**

Was Canada unique in undergoing these developments? Diversity, increasing immigration and concerns with the integration of immigrants were (and still are) trends occurring throughout Western democracies. Canada's uniqueness resides in the variety of challenges it has to face (immigration, First Nation demands and the substate of Quebec) (Kymlicka, 2003, p. 1 and 4). Other distinctions include that multiculturalism has been incorporated into Canadian identity, (Kymlicka, 2003, p. 1) and that the challenges of multiculturalism have occupied the public imagination and academic debate for several decades (Comrick and Regan, 2010b, p. 9).

### **Development of Interculturalism**

#### **Chronology**

Before World War II, Quebec was mostly culturally homogeneous, Francophone, Catholic, and rural (Blad and Couton, 2009, p. 654). Immigrants typically integrated the Anglophone community and Francophones regarded immigration as a necessary evil (MICC, 1991, p.5). Anglophones mostly controlled Montreal's commercial infrastructure leading to the chronic underdevelopment of the rest of Quebec (Blad and Couton, 2009, p. 654).

In the 1960s, the Quiet Revolution brought about the breakdown of the conservative-clerical elite and the nationalization of economic assets (Blad and Couton, 2009, p. 655). Immigration became increasingly necessary with the resulting decreased birth rates and increased labour demands. By 1978, the provincial government gained control over its immigration practices and controlled immigration to develop the use of the French language. Immigration was therefore an economic tool and a tool of political and cultural construction (Blad and Couton, 2009, p. 657; MICC, 1991, p. 6; Adelman, 2011b, p. 44).

From the 1980s on, the presence of cultural communities became an increasingly important reality. New challenges emerged, namely ensuring the full participation of immigrants to collective life, and the development of intercultural relations (MICC, 1991, p. 6). The increasing need for immigration coupled with official rejection of multiculturalism and the need for Francophone cultural self-preservation has led to the unofficial development of an integration policy specific to Quebec, interculturalism.

### **Critique of Multiculturalism**

All elected governments of Quebec have categorically rejected federal multiculturalism (Bouchard, 2010-11, p. 462). First, it was perceived that multiculturalism was designed to undermine Quebec and its nationalist aspirations. According to detractors, multiculturalism denies Quebec the opportunity to constitute itself as the principal rallying point of identity for its inhabitants (Gagnon, 2000, p. 16). Multiculturalism treats Quebecers as just another cultural group in the Canadian cultural mosaic instead of as a distinct society and a nation, which delegitimizes Quebec's nation-building policies (Tremblay, 2010-11, p. 44; Bouchard, 2010-11, p. 462; Nugent, 2006; McRoberts, 2001, p. 706; Blad and Couton, 2009, p. 657).

Furthermore, interculturalism is a criticism of multiculturalism's concept of the cultural mosaic. Interculturalism is not assimilationist but not excessively culturally relativistic and fragmentary as multiculturalism is perceived to be. Interculturalism is based on "la tradition de la démocratie parlementaire [...] misant sur la représentation et la délibération."<sup>1</sup> Interculturalism seeks balance between unity, through shared identity points of reference, and the recognition of different cultures (Gagnon, 2000, p. 15).

### **Language and Cultural Anxieties**

Moreover, multiculturalism is seen as inadequate to respond to Quebec's linguistic and identity anxieties. Because of its minoritarian status in North America, Quebec society is concerned with safeguarding the French language. Linguistic integration of immigrants is therefore primordial. (Comrick and Regan, 2010a, pp. 50 and 53; MICC, 1991, pp. 12 and 54). According to Bouchard (2010-11), "it is necessary to develop a form of pluralism that acknowledges that the francophone majority is itself a precarious minority that needs protection in order to ensure its survival and development in the North American environment and in the context of globalization" (p. 441).

The Quebec government has encouraged immigration because the decreasing birth rate of the recent generations has diminished Quebec's demographic weight in Canada (MICC, 2008, pp. 12-3; MICC, 1991, p. 9). Maintaining Quebec's demographic weight in Canada would ensure more resources and autonomy to focus on Quebec's cultural survival.

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<sup>1</sup> "tradition of parliamentary democracy focusing on representation and deliberation."

## **Praises of Multiculturalism**

### **Successful and Expanding**

For Kymlicka (2003), multiculturalism is a successful model with a bright future. Indeed, it is so successful that it has become a victim of its own success, having changed the way people think about society so deeply that the term 'multiculturalism' is no longer needed (p. 8). Chandra (2005) insists that multiculturalism has had some modest success in reducing intolerance in Canadian society. According to Chandra, measures taken by the federal and provincial governments have made Canada one of the least racist countries in the world, and a place where immigrants are treated with dignity and where they can preserve their ethnic cultures (pp. 20 and 23-4). With multiculturalism, immigrants of non-traditional cultural backgrounds are guaranteed equal status with "old-stock" Canadians (McRoberts, 2001, p. 703).

### **Part of Canadian Identity**

Multiculturalism has been integrated as a fundamental part of Canada's character. Diversity, cultural pluralism and welcoming immigrants are now seen as significant aspects of Canada (Sondhi, 2005, p. 246; Roy, 1995, p. 202). Multiculturalism can serve a national purpose by being presented as uniquely Canadian, as Canada's contribution to the improvement of the world (McRoberts, 2001, p. 703). It is therefore safe to assume that multiculturalism will not be replaced by assimilationist practices.

### **Individual and Group Rights, and Collective Identity**

Sondhi (2005) praises multiculturalism for "increasing diversity and maintain[ing] unity by balancing rights and responsibilities in citizenship, and individual and collective rights in its Constitution" (p. 247). Indeed, for Sondhi, Canada has recognized that focusing too much on individual rights belittles individuals' quality as social and moral beings (p. 251). Moreover, Wieviorka (1998) argues that multiculturalism has found a balance between the respect of difference and universal rights and values (p. 246). For Modood and Meer (2012a), "multiculturalism presently surpasses interculturalism as a political orientation that is able to recognise that social life consists of individuals and groups, and that both need to be provided for in the formal and informal distribution of powers" (p. 192).

Moreover, despite its focus on diversity and preserving culture, multiculturalism leaves room for a collective identity, one with a purely civic quality, which, according to Modood and Meer (2012a), is a positive aspect of Canadian society (p. 76). Indeed, contemporary multiculturalism increasingly focuses on civic identity without neglecting its traditional concern with cultural difference (p. 190). Therefore, for these authors, multiculturalism best achieves balance between individual rights, groups rights and collective identity.

## **Criticisms of Multiculturalism**

### **Escaping Clear Definition**

A weakness of multiculturalism is the ambiguity of the concept. Thornhill (1999) argues that "multiculturalism" has many meanings. For some people, it may be a tool to preserve

human rights, an anti-French tool, a demographic reality, a social contract, or the elimination of racism and racial discrimination. Multiculturalism therefore escapes unambiguous definition (pp. 83-5). For Walcott (2011), the only consensus about Canadian multiculturalism is that it has become a fundamental characteristic of Canada; there is no consensus as to what it actually means (p. 24).

### **Cultural Relativism and Majority Rights**

A major criticism of multiculturalism is that it does not clearly define limits to diversity. In multiculturalism, the extent to which society should accommodate difference is unclear (Hosein, 1992, p. 599). Without boundaries, multiculturalism could lead to unbridled cultural relativism, and the legal recognition of radical practices which oppose core values of Canada, like gender equality (Mansur, 2011, p. 24; Galabuzi, 2011, p. 73; Gagnon, 2000). For Goodin (2006), too great a focus on liberal autonomy raises the issue of the tolerance of illiberal cultural practices. Goodin insists that multiculturalism should not tolerate cultural practices “that systematically impair the autonomy of many of their members” (pp. 291-2). Modood and Meer (2012a) argue that multiculturalism (unlike interculturalism) addresses only the needs of minorities, while ignoring the wider framework of culture and the needs of the majority (p. 187).

Mansur (2011) goes further and argues that multiculturalism is a tool of extremism and illiberal cultures, as made evident by the events of September 11<sup>th</sup> 2001 (p. 8). According to Mansur, the multiculturalist strategy for appeasement of Muslims leads to concession to demands without realizing that shari’a law is incompatible with modernity (p. 16). He insists that all cultures are not equal in terms of current viability, but political correctness forbids making such observations (p. 18). For Mansur, Islamists and other enemies of the West hate Western civic culture, freedom and democracy and increasingly find that multiculturalism complements their interests in weakening the West politically and culturally from the inside (p. 25).

Moreover, Mansur (2011) insists that multiculturalism weakens Western cultural tradition by pushing aside the unique culture that evolved in liberal democracies of the West (p. 23). He argues that multiculturalism weakens the idea of citizenship, which is the fruit of Western civic culture, by suggesting that cultural identities immigrants bring with them deserve to be treated with the same respect as citizenship identity (p. 24).

### **Ethnocentrism and Cultural Hegemony**

For Hosein (1992), multiculturalism is ethnocentric. He feels that Canada is dominated by English common law, which much be modified to cater to multiculturalism (p. 599). He maintains that common standards upheld in multiculturalism are actually thinly veiled majority practices (p. 606). For Wieviorka (2012), the ethnocentrism inherent in multiculturalism is evidenced by such realities as the dominance of the English language (p. 225).

Moreover, in multiculturalism, Canadian society and culture are assumed to be culturally neutral, which for some scholars is inaccurate. For James (2011), no culture is truly neutral because

“culture is the way in which the members of any given society or group organize and conduct themselves by using a set of values, beliefs, norms, patterns of thinking, styles of communication, ways of interacting and interpreting the world around them to ensure their survival in any geographic and social environment” (p. 195).

Canadian cultural standards, such as liberal democracy, capitalism, materialism and the desirability of a bourgeois lifestyle are assumed to be neutral or universal values (Galabuzi, 2011, p. 74-5; Hosein, 1992, p. 604). Minorities whose culture does not comply with these standards are seen as different and unequal (Hosein, 1992, p. 604).

Multiculturalism is also criticized as a form of assimilation of immigrants and cultural minorities into the dominant English culture to preserve the state’s national identity project (James, 2011, p. 195). For Galabuzi (2011), multiculturalism is part of a project of Eurocentric Anglo-Franco hegemony maintenance which validates difference while consolidating advantages for the majority (p. 58). Hegemony maintenance is evidenced by three processes: the reassertion of Anglo-Franco dominance through post-9/11 security measures, the reconsideration of reasonable accommodations with Euro-Canadian anxieties, and the deterioration of minorities’ material conditions (p. 59). Multiculturalism did not break society’s white monoculture but extended it to ethnicized subjects, thereby incorporating non-Anglo-Franco people within the framework defining the Canadian national project (pp. 64 and 75). For Sharma (2011), “multiculturalism expand[s] the numbers of those who believed the Canadian state ruled on their behalf,” and legitimizes the subordination of foreigners through a subject/foreigner distinction and an understanding of society as national and sovereign (p. 97 and 100-1).

Moreover, multiculturalism mostly benefits white elites who “come to imagine the space in which they – and their capital – operate as ‘global’” (Sharma, 2011, p. 91). Whites who oppose multiculturalism are often those who are not in a material position to benefit from globalization of capital (Sharma, 2011, p. 91). The 1973 Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program (still in use) exemplifies this reality by authorizing the presence in Canada of temporary, unfree and vulnerable workers, differentiating Canadians from foreigners in the process (Sharma, 2011, pp. 94-5). For Wieviorka (2012), multiculturalism “renforc[e] le pouvoir des notables intéressés aux avantages de l’offre politique qu’il leur propose,”<sup>2</sup> is a force of conservatism, and appears like a policy servicing groups that are already socially well off (pp. 256-7).

### Language and Culture

The bilingual structure of multiculturalism is problematic for some scholar. According to Hosein (1992), suggesting that there is no official culture in Canada while recognizing two official languages denies the link between language and culture. Indeed, “the constraints of official bilingualism are too narrow to allow for the pursuit of a full-fledged policy of multiculturalism which entails the equality of cultural groups” (pp. 609 and 611). Despite the argument that the purpose of official languages is purely utilitarian, Hosein maintains that official languages also represent official cultures. This is particularly evident in the

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<sup>2</sup> “reinforces the power of privileged individuals interested in the advantages of the political opportunity it [multiculturalism] offers”



case of French and Quebec culture, as Quebec promotes both an official language and culture (pp. 613-4). For Blad and Couton (2009), the main difference between multiculturalism and interculturalism is that interculturalism recognizes the clear link between culture and language (p. 660).

According to Hosein (1992), true equality of cultures is impossible because of the indirect promotion of French-Canadian and English-Canadian cultures through official languages and because of the recognition of the French and English populations as founding peoples of Canada. This characterization contributes to the notion of a cultural hierarchy where those who do not belong to the two main groups feel that their social contributions are less acknowledged or important (pp. 616 and 618).

### **Symbolic Ethnicity and Problematic Equality**

Another major criticism of multiculturalism is that the cultures it preserves are rendered fixated, static and folkloric, instead of focusing on true socioeconomic equality. According to Thornhill (1999), multicultural education focuses only on the superficial celebration of culture through festivals, cultural days, and “ethnic costumes” (p. 87). Gagnon (2000) also decries the folklorisation and transformation of culture into merchandise (p. 11). With this perception of culture in mind, Brotz (1980) compares Canada to an ethnic zoo, where “multiculturalism turns out to be a choice of pizza, wonton soup, and kosher ‘style’ pastrami sandwiches” (p. 44). Moreover, Galabuzi (2011) argues that multiculturalism constructs and essentializes race, ethnicity and culture away from the members’ agency (p. 64). Canadian members of cultural communities worry about always being cast as immigrants, stereotyping, fossilizing cultures into folk memories, reducing difference to song, dance and food, and about being pushed to the margins of Canadian culture as non-Anglo and non-Franco people (Roy, 1995, pp. 202-3). Wieviorka (2012) denounces multiculturalism for perceiving culture as static, when cultures (including Canadian culture) change constantly (p. 227).

A related concept is that of symbolic ethnicity. For Galabuzi (2011), multiculturalism “focuses mostly on symbolic cultural retention and celebrations at the expense of true equality of access to full participation in Canadian life for ethnic minorities, immigrants, and refugees” (p. 74). According to Roberts and Clifton (1982), multiculturalism only supports symbolic ethnicity, or the adoption of a bourgeois democratic lifestyle without abandoning aesthetic aspects of one’s culture. With symbolic ethnicity, one does not belong to a “genuine ethnic group – one which possesses a social structure capable of applying effective, systematic pressure for conformity to community standards” (p. 90). The cultural ‘mosaic’ model advocated by multiculturalism is not actually viable because ethnic groups in Canada lack coherent social structures to perpetuate their culture; effectively, members of cultural minorities fall under the umbrella of Canadian bourgeois democratic cultural while preserving tokenistic aspects of their original culture. For Roberts and Clifton (1982), the expression of culture is a more realistic objective than multiculturalism’s goal of culture maintenance (pp. 91-2).

Another problem with multiculturalism is colorblindness. According to James (2011) multicultural discourse masks the effects of race on minorities lacking race

privilege. James addressed the suggested establishment of Afrocentric schools and the rejection of the proposal because of colorblind discourse and the failure to recognize the impact of institutionalized racism and monocultural education on the school performance of minority youths (p. 192).

Furthermore, multiculturalism does not adequately address socio-economic inequalities (Modood and Meer, 2012a, p. 176). Multiculturalism fails to distinguish minority groups' socioeconomic demands from cultural demands, and their economic needs from their political, moral and cultural values (Wieviorka, 1998, p. 238). According to Wieviorka (1998), multicultural policy is maladapted to the economic and social difficulties of groups for which cultural preservation is not necessarily the main priority (p. 257).

### **Quebec, First Nations, and Multinationalism**

That multiculturalism does not resolve Quebec's situation is also a common criticism, even among English-Canadian commentators. For Hosein (1992), multiculturalism is inappropriate for Quebec because it fails to recognize the link between language and culture (p. 622). For Brotz (1980), the French population of Canada and First Nations, for historical reasons, are not in the same situation as, say, the Chinese community of Toronto, and to blur the differences between these populations with multiculturalism is dishonest (p. 45). Simply put, multiculturalism does not recognize and adequately respond to Quebec, as well as First Nations nationalism (Gagnon, 2000, p. 11; Modood and Meer, 2012b, p. 236; Nugent, 2006). Quebec and First Nations want to be treated as nations within a multinational state, and not as minorities within a mononational state (Modood and Meer, 2012a, p. 180). It has been increasingly evident that Canada is multinational, but there has been no progress in settling the institutions of multinationalism (McRoberts, 2001, p. 694).

### **Individual Rights, Group Rights and National Identity**

Some commentators denounced that multiculturalism privileges group rights over individual rights (Nugent, 2006). As such, it offends classical liberalism (Hosein, 1992, p. 601). In response, there have been attempts to fit group rights into liberal theory by insisting that cultural membership is an inherent part of individualism (Hosein, 1992, p. 602). Mansur (2011) adamantly denounced official multiculturalism for going against the liberal principle that when a conflict arises between an individual trying to exercise their freedom of conscience and collective demands that they bend to the wishes of the group, the rights of the individual should take precedence (p. 14). Instead, multiculturalism encourages cultural groups to bring individual members into the fold. Mansur (2011) insists that, as such, multiculturalism denies the individual the "freedom to liberate themselves from their own traditions" (p.21). For Mansur (2011), recognition of the group leads to oppression of the individual (p. 21).

On the other hand, Modood and Meer (2012a) report that Gagnon and Iacovino (2007) argued that multiculturalism overemphasizes the individual and an individualist approach to culture. Indeed, when the choices of individuals change, the collective culture must change as well within a multiculturalist framework (p. 186).

Another criticism of multiculturalism is that it privileges cultural group rights and encourages cultural fragmentation, resulting in the creation of ethnic ghettos, leading to “mosaic madness,” instead of contributing to national unity (Mansur, 2011, p. 7; Chandra, 2005, p. 17; Modood and Meer, 2012b, p. 236; Nugent, 2006; Roy, 1995, p. 201; Wieviorka, 1998, p. 244). Sharma (2011) denounced that multiculturalism conceptualized racialized communities as having been conceived in isolation from one another and as having a separate existence (p. 96). Mansur (2011) related the musings of Pierre Elliott Trudeau expressing his disappointment “that under [the] Mulroney government and driven by a fear of separatism, the whole multiculturalism policy had been twisted to celebrate a newcomer’s country of origin and not a celebration of the newcomer becoming part of the Canadian fabric” (p. 4).

### **Not Deserving of Public Funds**

For Roberts and Clifton (1982), matters of cultural identity are private and should not be the concern of the government. They feel that the government opens itself to a limitless pool of claims regarding other aspects of personal identity such as age, gender or appearance, with their multicultural policy. Therefore, the government should not concern itself with personal matters or spend public funds on the issue (pp. 92-3).

### **Praises of Interculturalism**

#### **Reciprocal Arrangement**

One of the strengths of interculturalism is that it is based on a reciprocal social contract. Interculturalism upholds a moral contract between immigrants and the host society, based on a communal public culture (Gagnon, 2000, p. 11). According to Gagnon (2000), the main elements of the social contract are the use of French as the communal language, democracy, and openness to diversity within the limits of fundamental democratic values (pp. 12-3). Therefore, the members of the host society expect members of cultural communities to contribute to the development of the social fabric and to the public common culture with their participation (Gagnon, 2000, p. 14).

#### **Less Fragmentation, More National Unity**

Interculturalism rejects the multiculturalist cultural mosaic, focusing more on cultural pluralism based on political participation and representation (Gagnon, 2000, p. 15). Bouchard (2011) argues that interculturalism favors pluralism based on integration, thereby limiting the fragmentation characteristic of multiculturalism. Minorities are integrated to society to strengthen *francophonie* and to ensure its future (p. 450). Interculturalism seeks to find the right balance between a public culture and participation, and individual identities (Canadian Immigration Report (CIR), 2011). For Tremblay (2010-11), the interculturalist framework succeeds in finding a balance between unity and cultural difference (p. 49). Interculturalism is not assimilationist, but not excessively culturally relativistic and fragmentary (Gagnon, 2000, p. 15).

Furthermore, interculturalism is based on the development of a communal culture, national identity and common socio-cultural project (Nugent, 2006). For Gagnon (2000), members of cultural communities can be full-fledged citizens by contributing to the

development of a communal public culture, and to the elaboration of a consensual basis of interaction (p. 16). Bouchard (2011) insists that an official language, legal framework, and a territory are not enough to create a cohesive nation. A symbolic element is required to help foster identity and belonging (p. 440). This national identity is the basis for citizen participation and social justice (p. 452). In the process of cultural interaction, a national culture will emerge and both majority and minority cultures will be changed in the process. In this construction, “the impact of majority culture will be proportional to its demographic and sociological weight, giving it a de facto advantage in ensuring its continuity” (p. 460). Therefore, interculturalism is less groupist than multiculturalism and is “more committed to a stronger sense of the whole, in terms of such things as societal cohesion and national citizenship” (Modood and Meer, 2012a, p. 177).

Moreover, interculturalism encourages cultural encounters, exchange and understanding. For Bouchard (2011), interculturalism connects “cultures as much through their roots as through encounter” (pp. 45-6). Interaction is the best way to counter unease with other peoples (p. 450).

### **Concerns of the Majority**

Another praise of interculturalism is that it is concerned with the needs of the majority culture. Interculturalism recognizes an official culture, protecting majority culture in the process, while respecting the value of cultural diversity (Blad and Couton, 2009, p. 652). For Bouchard (2011), interculturalism takes into account the context of the majority culture and its legitimate desire for perpetuation (pp. 438 and 457-8). Nevertheless, the interculturalist framework is designed to prevent the excesses of the majority culture on minorities (p. 448). Bouchard believes that “as long as the nature and the reach of ad hoc precedence [of the majority culture] are carefully circumscribed it can avoid the excesses of ethnicism while giving some advantages (or the needed protection) to the majority culture” (p. 451). In a sense, minorities are accommodating the majority (p. 454). Multiculturalism is different in that it does not recognize a majority culture in Canada (p. 463).

One of the ways in which interculturalism protects the interests of the majority is that interculturalism more readily criticizes illiberal cultural practices, therefore better protecting majority values (Modood and Meer, 2012a, p. 177).

### **Not Officialised**

For Gagnon (2011), one of the strengths of interculturalism, as opposed to multiculturalism, is that it is not enshrined in a static, legislative state. As such, it can still evolve with ongoing debates and with changes in society (p. 45).

### **Criticisms of Interculturalism**

#### **Not Truly Distinct from Multiculturalism**

The main criticism of interculturalism is that there is no real difference between multiculturalism and interculturalism. For Peter Leuprecht, director of the Montreal Institute of International Studies, the differences between the two concepts have been exaggerated and both policies stand for the idea that diversity should be accepted while preserving common values (CIR, 2011). The reason for the distinction between the two

concepts is a purely politically-influenced, discursive one. Indeed, despite the similarities between the two policies, the Quebec government could not call theirs multiculturalism because of the official rejection of multiculturalism (Nugent, 2006). According to Levey (2012), “[h]ad the federal policy been dubbed interculturalism, Quebec may well have adopted ‘multiculturalism’ to denote its national status and distinctive approach to cultural diversity” (p. 223). For Tremblay (2010-11), interculturalism and multiculturalism similarly emphasize ethnocultural diversity and accommodation of culture, and reject assimilationism. The distinction is purely political (p. 56-7).

### **Not Well Anchored in Quebec Legally**

Another criticism of interculturalism is that it is not clearly legislated in official policy. For Tremblay (2010-11), Gerard Bouchard and Charles Taylor’s suggestion in their report following the reasonable accommodation crisis that interculturalism as an alternative to multiculturalism pursued the approach Quebec had already followed in the past few decades created confusion because they were proposing breaks where they claimed continuity (p. 75). Bouchard (2011) does recognise that the Quebec government has not aligned its policies with the interculturalist model, and that interculturalism should receive official recognition as multiculturalism received in Canada (p. 466). For Wieviorka (1998), because of the lack of legal recognition of interculturalism, interculturalism is too vague and general, and it is not concerned with setting an institutional framework for integration, only with connecting cultures (p. 230).

### **Majoritarian Bias**

Finally, Modood and Meer (2012a) believe that, when it comes to the integration of minorities, the interculturalist model of Quebec places the onus on minorities, evidencing a majoritarian bias in the model (p. 188).

### **Conclusion**

Obviously, beyond the existence of cultural diversity and the need for a paradigm to ease cultural relations, there is little consensus among scholars when it comes to multiculturalism and interculturalism. One strong trend in scholarship is the criticism of multiculturalism, whereas interculturalism is criticised mostly in comparison to multiculturalism. The more detailed criticism of multiculturalism may be brought about by its relative longevity and the fact that it is deeply anchored in Canadian society and policy. One can also notice contradictory trends in scholarship. For example, for some, multiculturalism emphasizes an individualistic approach to culture; for others, it focuses too much on group rights and not enough on individual rights; and for others, multiculturalism has found a good balance between group and individual rights. Also, the fact that interculturalism is not officialised in Quebec policy is seen as both a good and a bad thing. Therefore, one thing is sure: the opinions of scholars are divided. They will most likely continue to evolve as multiculturalism and interculturalism change over time as well, with the evolution of society.

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