Chapter 5
Immigration Policies and Integration Models in Canada: Conflicting Approaches and Converging Trends

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Abstract This chapter deals with Canada's immigration policies and integration models, with a particular focus on the divide between the predominantly French-language province of Québec and the mainly English-speaking rest of the country. After portraying the origins and evolution of the immigration legal framework in Canada, particularly in the light of nation-building and the path that led from a highly restrictive admission policy to an extremely open one through the adoption of the "points system", the chapter describes the tension between the two competing models, multiculturalism and interculturalism, that coexist in the Canadian context and that reflect two narratives and two practical approaches to the integration of newcomers. These differences stem from Québec's unique status within the national context and, in particular, from an agreement signed between that province and the federal government that recognized its "distinct identity" and gave Québec full authority to select its "economic" immigrants. The final section dwells on some of the recent and current changes in immigration policy that seem to signal, in both English Canada and Québec, a major shift in their view of diversity, as new criteria applied to the selection of immigrants appear to heed to economic pragmatism and might entail a more restrictive conception of what a "desirable immigrant" is.

Keywords Canada • Québec • Immigration • Integration • Policies

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5.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I focus on Canada's immigration policies and integration models. Contrary to the centralized character of such matters in most countries, any analysis of Canada's governance and public policy needs to take into account the reality of a highly decentralized federal system and, more fundamentally, the split between what amounts to two diverging identities: one based in the predominantly French-language province of Québec and the other established over the mainly English-speaking rest of the country (Armony 2014). Canada was created in 1867 as a "pact between two founding peoples", the French, mostly Catholic early colonists of New France, and the British, mostly Protestant settlers, who arrived after the Treaty of Paris was signed in 1763. Currently, more than one Canadian in five (22 %) is a native speaker of the French language (i.e. "francophone"), a decreasing proportion of the total population (they represented almost 30 % of all Canadians in the 1950s), but a very significant one nevertheless, all the more so because of its concentration in one single province. Canada's institutional framework reflects that original duality, which unsurprisingly has both generated tensions between the two groups and encouraged the construction of innovative mechanisms for mutual accommodation and political compromise. It goes without saying that history and mother tongue are not limited to reckoning facts and demography, but they embody—maybe even more importantly—a potent vector of cultural categorization and a vital aspect of majority-minority relations (Cardinal 2012).

Therefore, given the particular nature of the Canadian case, internal comparisons make more sense, at least in some respects, when they are based on the twofold—bilingual, bicultural, even binational to a certain extent—structure of the country. But this divide is to be considered in combination with Canada's unique constitutional design regarding federal-provincial relations. In most federations, the areas of governmental action that are usually associated with key national goals or principles stay in the realm of federal politics, even when decentralization occurs. Canada, on the other hand, instead of leaving to provinces "residual powers" (as is the case with the US model), constitutionally assigns specific powers to provinces and allows for devolution of federal authority to provinces in "shared jurisdiction", and immigration is one of them. Moreover, since the late 1950s, the tendency has been towards a "steady attrition of the power of the central government" (Watts 1987). In this context, the French-language province of Québec has gained extraordinary autonomy—extremely unusual compared to any subnational entity in the world—over immigration and integration policy. For similar reasons—the Québécois' own nation-affirming struggles—and regardless of their political leanings, all that province's "governments resist the centralizing and nation-building efforts of Ottawa" (Béland and Lecours 2007) in other critical areas as well, including education (an exclusively provincial power).

In the first section of this chapter, I describe the origins and evolution of the immigration legal framework in Canada, particularly in the light of nation-building, by examining the path that Canada followed from a highly restrictive admission

policy to an extremely open one. In the second section, I focus on the divergences regarding immigration and integration between the French-language province of Québec and the rest of the country ("English Canada"), a situation that stems from the country's past but also from rather different conceptions about national identity and the politics of majority-minority relations. In the third section, I dwell on the tension between two competing models—multiculturalism and interculturalism—that coexist in the Canadian context and that reflect two narratives and two practical approaches to the integration of newcomers. In the last section, I present some of the recent and current changes in immigration policy that seem to signal, in both English Canada and Québec, a major shift in their approach to diversity.

5.2 Immigration Policy and Nation-Building in Canada

In spite of its reputation as a very open country, Canada has a dark side to its history with respect to immigration and minorities. Some events have become symbols of past injustices and are commonly addressed in history school textbooks: the shameful "Chinese head tax" established in 1885 with the aim of discouraging immigration from China, the "None is too many" infamous comment by an immigration agent at the end of Second World War referring to the government's systematic rejection of Jewish refugees between 1933 and 1948 and the forced relocation of all people of Japanese descent living in Canada to internment camps "as enemy aliens" between 1941 and 1948. While these (and other) well-known examples reveal deep streaks of intolerance among Canadian political leaders at least up to the mid-twentieth century, prejudiced attitudes towards certain minorities pervaded as well the general population, both of British and French origin. Many Canadians still remember the "Jewish quotas" at Montreal's English-language McGill University from the 1920s to the 1960s (similar to those at Harvard and other Ivy League schools in the United States during that period). While this reflected a more elitist practice of discrimination in British Canadian society (not only against Jews but to most other groups too, including the Irish and the French Canadians), some forms of populist, street-level prejudice took grasp in Québec: for example, in 1938, an astounding 128,000 citizens in that province signed a petition demanding a stop to "all immigration and specially Jewish immigration". Religious and language tensions obviously played a role in shaping people's attitudes and government's policy measures (i.e. French Canadians perceived foreigners and non-Catholics as a threat to their cultural survival), as well as the fact that Canada was still a "dominion" in the British Empire (i.e. subject to London's geopolitical goals and needs and dominated by a defensive mindset vis-à-vis the United States). These are all rather well-known historical facts. What is less known (even by many Canadians), however, is that the legislative framework itself was, for many years, clearly and effectively discriminatory, even explicitly racist. In other words, Canada's intolerant approach to diversity for almost the entire first century of its existence was not limited to the behaviour of an anxious populace, certain high-class

institutions and some narrow-minded officials but was rather a sanctioned and deliberate state policy, implemented and upheld by the judiciary and the public service.

Canada's first immigration law, adopted only 2 years after the Confederation (the birth of the country in 1867), established—at least formally—a very accessible immigration policy, something that was a usual practice among other settler or "frontier" societies (such as Argentina and Australia) eager to have their vast territories occupied and developed. But this initial unrestrictive approach to immigration was indeed deceptive, in that not all groups were equally welcome. Argentina, very akin to Canada at that time, is a quite telling case (and typically duplicitous) in this respect: its very liberal nineteenth-century constitution invited "all men in the world who wish to reside on Argentinean soil" in its lofty Preamble, but then specified in the first part that "the federal government will foment European immigration". Canada's similar preference for certain ethnic groups would be rendered explicit when, in 1919, the Immigration Act was amended. Until then, the capacity to pronounce an "absolute prohibition of any class of immigrants" whenever the government "considers it necessary or expedient" (Article 30 1906) granted the executive branch discretionary powers for precluding specific groups—though not named in the law—from coming to Canada (due notice was to be given to the transportation companies, a proviso that implies a practice of profiling and rejecting banned categories at the port of embarkation). No judiciary overview could interfere with the Ministry of Immigration's decision, and in 1910, a further restriction was included in the law, stating that immigrants deemed to be "unsuited to the climate requirements" (which can be interpreted as a coded reference to non-Nordic peoples) could be denied entry or be deported. In 1919, the racialized approach to immigration became entirely evident through an amendment that gave the government the authority to "prohibit or limit the number . . . of immigrants belonging to any nationality or race . . . or because such immigrants are deemed undesirable owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of life, and methods of holding property". Under this provision, ethnic origin and cultural traits (e.g. religion) could be invoked as reasons for "undesirability". But the same article (13, paragraph c) went even further: immigrants could be banned from Canada "because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated". In other words, any group could be pre-emptively declared "inassimilable". In 1952, the Immigration Act was overhauled, and all mentions of race and ethnicity were removed (while political restrictions were added, particularly concerning "subversive activities"). However, the new law conferred even more discretionary and procedural powers to the Ministry, while doing nothing to remove the restrictions already embedded in the immigration system and its administrative practices. For another decade, race and ethnicity would remain a cornerstone for immigrant selection in Canada.

Finally, new regulations adopted in 1962 eliminated all forms of racial discrimination in the selection process (in line with a Bill of Rights adopted by the federal government in 1960), and the entire policy approach to immigration was now to be geared towards meeting the needs of Canada's economic development. In 1967, the

notorious "points system" (still in use) was established: any person in the world, regardless of race, ethnicity or nationality, can apply. A score is calculated by adding points gained on the basis of education, training, employment opportunities, language skills etc., and if the total tally is high enough, admission as a permanent resident is granted. It goes without saying that this was a momentous shift, and immigration rates soared, with a marked reversal in the origins of newcomers, now mostly coming from Asia, Africa and Latin America. Since then, the Canadian immigration system has been lauded as one of the most generous and fair-minded in the world, and many have proposed that it should be adopted in other countries.[1] But, even if Australia and New Zealand have followed a similar path (albeit not identical, as important differences remain), Canada still stands out as a particular case. Why is that? It may be argued that some structural factors—many of them the result of chance rather than will—play a major role in Canada's exceptional approach to immigration: notably, geography, demography and political history.

Of course, each country is unique in its institutional and sociological makeup, evolution and public culture. Although similar in many respects, Canada is very different from the United States on several crucial aspects. Let's consider geography: Canada is a vast territory with relatively scarce population, most of it concentrated in the south, stretched from ocean to ocean within a hundred kilometres from its only international border. The United States, while attracting millions of Latin American immigrants, shields Canada from any mass population movement, a reality that allows Canada to exert maximum control on who enters the country. This location advantage translates into the ability to develop a rational, highly selective, planned immigration policy, particularly for a country where the legacy of slavery (or colonial rule) has not left insurmountable racial injustices, as is the case in the United States (and, to a certain extent, in former European imperial powers). Ironically, the dark past of restrictive—and often racially motivated—immigration laws that prevailed in Canada until the 1960s contributed to weaken racial tensions within the country (ensuring that the European-descent population kept an unchallenged demographic majority), a context that allowed Canadians to react favourably to a ground-breaking immigration policy that was framed as a vital lever of economic development. Almost 50 years later, Canada remains an outlier, as a country "where one in five persons is an immigrant, and several of the largest cities can claim that half of the population was born abroad, [and] public opinion about immigration is largely positive" (Gustin and Ziebarth 2010).

Not surprisingly, one of the key features of Canadian society is the colossal challenge that it faces in order to simply hold together such an "improbable

[1] The Canadian-style point system was seriously considered by the US Congress in 2007, even if the whole immigration law reform was eventually rejected. The point system was mainly criticized here (including then Senator Obama) because it would seemingly favour higher-skilled, better-educated applicants, shifting the focus away from reuniting families, the main thrust of legal immigration in that country. This criticism is understandable, given the reality of millions of undocumented immigrants and the fact that many Latinos from underprivileged background would not attain the score required in order to be admitted into the Unites States.

country", as the cliché goes[2]. Canada is a highly decentralized federation with constitutionally enshrined bilingualism and multiculturalism. The link that bonds together the ten provinces is much more tenuous than the one that connects the American states.[3] For some years now, Canada displays the highest per capita immigration rate in the developed world. In 2011, Ottawa delivered 280,000 immigration visas and has received a quarter of a million newcomers each year for the past two decades (proportionally, twice the number of legal immigrants admitted in the United States). Today, more than 20 % of the Canadian population is foreign-born, and it will reach 25 % by 2030, compared to 12.5 % currently in the United States. Despite this reality and given Canada's notoriously weak national identity, it is actually surprising that internal diversity has not generated any serious social or political rifts. Furthermore, the province of Québec, with almost one quarter of Canada's population, has acquired a quasi-state status over the past four decades, becoming a sort of "nation within the nation", formally recognized as such by the federal parliament. As we will see in the next section, the government of that province, supported by a majority of the French Québécois people, imposes restrictions on the choice of language of business and education, openly rejects Canadian-style multiculturalism and enforces different selection and integration criteria for immigrants, based on Québec's particular interests rather than Canada's. This raises the question: how such a disjointed, fragmented country can even exist, never mind be an example of tolerance and peaceful cohabitation where "compared to other countries there appears to be a relatively smooth integration of immigrants into the mainstream", who themselves "have become an integral part of the Canadian community, and their social and cultural contributions are frequently celebrated" (Reitz 2014)?

A historical fact, seemingly removed from current affairs, might nevertheless prove extremely relevant to today's issues of immigration and integration: Canada did not fight an independence war or a civil war. Among all the major countries in the Americas, Canada is alone in not having a collective memory of founding armed acts of emancipation, revolution, nation-building or territorial conquest. There is no "Canadian Revolution" to speak of, as there is an "American Revolution" or a "Mexican Revolution". It can be argued that it is one of the reasons why Canadians lack a powerful narrative on the basis of which strong expressions of patriotism could have been built or even a sense of national destiny (as opposed to the overwhelming sense of "manifest destiny" in the United States). As I mentioned, the birth of the Canadian Confederation is, to a large extent, the result of a "pact between two nationalities"—the British and the French. This has a clearly beneficial effect: politics as a game of compromise is built-in throughout Canada's

[2] For example, Thomas Walkom, a *Toronto Star* columnist, recently wrote: "It's been 141 years since this improbable country was created from a collection of disparate British colonies, with little linking them other than the fact they were not the United States. And yet we persist" (May 24th, 2014).

[3] For example, Canada does not have a federal Department of Education, because education from kindergarten to university is under exclusive provincial jurisdiction.

institutional design and civic culture. While some view this as a phenomenal achievement (i.e. a centrist politics of moderation as civic religion), others blame this soft, somewhat relativistic approach for Canada's less assertive, less aspiring national character. This has a direct bearing on the issue of diversity: "culture wars" and social polarization on values are much less prevalent in Canada (than, say, in the United States), because of its weaker national core, thus opening up space for diversity itself. But it can be argued that it also congeals the widely held idea of Canada as a work in progress, as something to be assembled in the future rather than an essence to be searched in its past. In brief: a collective mindset that naturally encourages the rise of "multiculturalism" and may epitomize what some call "Canadian exceptionalism" (Kazemipur 2014).

5.3 Diverging Policy Approaches: Québec vs. English Canada

Multiculturalism in Canada refers to a vast variety of social, political and legal aspects of collective life. Countless books and studies have been devoted to its history, significance and effects. The term lends itself to numerous interpretations and debates, both theoretical and ideological. Multiculturalism has variously been described as a "national myth", a "doctrine", a "state of mind", a "Canadian value" etc., but it has also been either promoted or analyzed as a specific policy orientation, a constitutional rights issue and a dimension of interpersonal trust. Is Canada's multiculturalism first and foremost an "idea"—may be a shared ideal or, conversely, a collective self-delusion—a substantial institutional framework (made of state agency, bureaucracies etc.), a mode of governance (i.e. how things are actually done, a "style" of management) or all of the above? Is multiculturalism a constant in Canada's past half-century, or has it fundamentally changed, perhaps weakened and deviated from its sources? Is multiculturalism good for Canada? If so, can it be exported to other countries? This chapter is not the place to expand on such complex and diverse questions (even if all of them are relevant). The focus here is rather set on the contrast between a widely supported model of diversity management at Canada's federal level and in the nine English-language provinces, on the one side, and Québec, on the other. A foreign observer would be struck by both the impressive strength of multiculturalism across most of the country and at virtually all levels (from local communities to the central governments) and Québec's vigorous and very widely held opposition to Canada's brand of multiculturalism. The same types of questions as before arise: are most Québécois against multiculturalism as a reality (they would feel uneasy with a growing ethnic diversity), as a government approach (they would rather favour a more integrationist model) or as a symbol of Canadian identity (they would reject it as a vehicle of "Anglo" national dominance).

Of course, multiculturalism has its detractors in English Canada as well, and it can be even argued that the Conservative government led by Stephen Harper between 2006 and 2015 has made Ottawa a much less friendly place for multicultural ideas (more on that later). But a fundamental divide remains nonetheless between a decisively pro-multicultural English Canada and a markedly anti-multicultural French Québec. This is reflected in political discourse and in public opinion: "Canada is far more open to, and optimistic about, immigration than its counterparts in Europe and the United States", its "federal government [is] bullish about migration—and has been for quite a while", and "this national ethos is supported by government policies of multiculturalism, anti-discrimination laws, and settlement programs that promote integration through public-private partnerships" (Bloemraad 2012).[4] This is in marked contrast with most OECD countries, where "people tend to take a negative view of the economic and cultural impact of migrations and of policies designed to increase migratory flows".[5] A report by the Migration Policy Institute published in 2010 noted that "according to the German Marshall Fund's Survey of Transatlantic Trends, the share of people who considered immigration more of a problem than an opportunity increased between 4 and 9 percentage points between 2008 and 2009 in France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, the United States, and United Kingdom". Against that general trend in the wake of the global financial crisis, survey data by Angus Reid showed that "since September 2010, the proportion of Canadians who think immigration is having a positive effect in the country has increased by five points".

As Reitz (2012) points out, Canada's immigration and integration policy is based on three pillars: multiculturalism as the guiding, but mostly symbolic and ideal, the point system of selection for skilled workers and significant provincial autonomy with respect to settlement programmes, "partly because many activities are proposed and operated by local community agencies". This description is, of course, accurate, but only as long as this is applied to the country in general or, more precisely, to Canada at the federal level and to the nine English-language provinces and three territories. It does apply to Québec in some ways, but the reality of each pillar is significantly different from the national norm: as we will see in the next section, the guiding ideal is called "interculturalism" instead of multiculturalism; the selection of immigrants is effected in a different manner and produces a different outcome; and the funding, principles and delivery of settlement programmes are different as well. These differences stem from Québec's unique status within the national context and, in particular, from a historic agreement signed between that province and the federal government in 1978: the Cullen-Couture Accord. As a recognition of "the distinct identity of Québec" and taking into account "the federal and bilingual character of Canada", the Accord gives Québec full authority to select its independent immigrants (and the federal

[4] Ontario boasts itself as "the most multicultural province in Canada where half of all new immigrants make their home" (http://www.ontarioimmigration.ca).

[5] OECD International Migration Outlook 2010

governments admits them unless they are inadmissible by virtue of health or security concerns). Moreover, the federal government withdraws from settlement programmes and compensates Québec through a fixed financial transfer (not dependent on immigration levels) so the province can provide all reception and integration services to newcomers. Both Canada's and Québec's governments "undertake to pursue a policy that will allow Québec to receive a percentage of the total equal to the percentage of Québec's population compared with the population of Canada", with the aim of maintaining that province demographic weight within the federation.

Thanks to the Cullen-Couture Accord, Québec handles the selection of its own "skilled workers" (70 % of all immigrants in that province) with a similar system than the one the federal government uses, but with different weighing assigned to language skills (giving preference to the French language) and other priorities (such as the provincial labour market needs). Overall in Canada, the top country sources of immigration in 2012 include China, the Philippines, India, Pakistan and South Korea; in Québec, among the ten top sources, four are in North Africa (Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia) and two in Latin America (Colombia, Haiti). Naturally, given these national origins, the largest minorities in English Canada are South Asian and Chinese, whereas in Québec the largest are Black, Arab and Latin American. The most spoken non-official languages in English Canada are Cantonese, Punjabi and Mandarin, while in Québec the most spoken non-official languages are Arabic and Spanish. Integration patterns are also different, usually revealing a harsher reality in Québec. Settlement services are highly centralized: in that province, it is estimated that no more than 10 % of public spending on integration programmes is done by the NGO sector, while that proportion reaches 70 % in the rest of Canada (Meinhard et al. 2012); Québec's government delivers 93 % of language training (7 % by NGOs), and most support to immigrants is channelled through the ministries of immigration, education, employment and health (Reichhold 2011). However, in spite of the considerable resources available (received from the federal government as compensation), Québec's ample autonomy in setting the integration policy and the high degree of coordination between agencies and civil society actors, the outcome is generally seen as rather underwhelming. For example, the unemployment rate among immigrants with foreign postsecondary credentials was, in 2010, 13 % in Québec, compared to 9.7 % in Ontario and 7.6 % in British Columbia (Boudarbat 2011). According to Statistics Canada's 2011 census, the prevalence of low income among members of "visible minorities" (non-White) was 21.5 % overall in Canada, compared to 30.3 % in Québec. What is the explanation for such gaps? Some point to Québec's defensive ethnic-based nationalism (which would foster xenophobic attitudes in the job market), while others to Québec's less dynamic economy and (comparatively to English Canada and the United States) overbearing state interventionism, or to the fact that, particularly in Montreal, bilingualism is de facto required, penalizing French-speaking immigrants with insufficient knowledge of English (which is the case of many Arab skilled workers selected by Québec). Either as an underlying cause or as a reflection of social relations and attitudes, the interculturalist

approach, envisioned as an alternative to multiculturalism, is undeniably a factor in the disparity between Québec and the rest of Canada. Majority-minority relations are key to grasp such a complex reality.

Section 23 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms—which is part of the Constitution Act of 1982—deals with "Minority Language Educational Rights" and stipulates that Canadian citizens "whose first language learned and still understood is that of the English or French linguistic minority population of the province in which they reside, or who have received their primary school instruction in Canada in English or French ... have the right to have their children receive primary and secondary school instruction in that language in that province". Put simply, if you are a francophone—because French is your mother tongue and/or you went to a French-language elementary school anywhere in Canada—you have the right to send your children to a publicly funded French-language school anywhere in Canada. However, this is not an absolute right, as its application is conditional on the "number of children of citizens who have such a right" and which would justify (or not) the use of public funds to that end.

The term used in Section 23 is "where numbers warrant", and its precise interpretation has resulted in political controversy and judicial disputes. The burden of proving the existence of a substantial linguistic minority that would warrant the use of public funds for minority-language education tends to rest with the minority itself and particularly with the parents wishing to educate their children in that language. Also, given the dwindling number of francophones living outside Québec, and the decline of (English/French) bilingualism across English Canada, it becomes politically harder to commit public funds to minority education in communities already suffering from limited resources (all the more in contexts of economic crisis and budget cuts). Of course, there are different situations and diverging approaches among provinces, often linked to their particular history and demographic patterns.

The largest Canadian province, Ontario, has a substantial French-speaking minority: over half a million individuals have French as their mother tongue or about 4.5 % of that province's population. Its dominant place within the Confederation has led Ontario to go well beyond the constitutional requirements regarding minority language rights. The province has legislated on the government's mandate to provide services in French and generally recognizes the rights of Franco-Ontarians (e.g. making both English and French the official languages of the provincial courts of justice). The province provides services in French in designated areas in which francophones amount to 10 % of the population or represent 5,000 people or more. Such thresholds can be said to be relatively low, particularly regarding what they imply in terms of cost and management.

Indeed, Ontario does not apply the Charter's criteria about "where numbers warrant", in that it guarantees publicly funded education in French regardless of how many children are eligible to receive minority-language education in a given area. According to a report by the Fraser Institute published in 2012, "the total costs of French-language minority services under the FLSA [French Language Services Act] in Ontario are $52 per provincial resident or $1,275 per minority member or

$621 million in total". These amounts are considerable, but no number of measures can supersede the reality of demographic trends: 70.5 % of Ontarians have English as their mother tongue, and immigrants massively gravitate towards English. Indeed, English is undoubtedly Ontario's de facto official language, and French's (legal, even symbolic) special status hardly translates into social or political relevance, all the more in front of the growing weight of immigrant languages (e.g. Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi, Tagalog, Spanish, Arabic etc.).

Québec, of course, has a very different approach to language. French is its only official language, by law, and the Charter of the French Language, which regulates the use of language in many areas of social life, has constitutional status in that province. The English-language population is granted constitutionally protected rights, but they are limited to the extent that Section 23 does not fully apply in Québec. Services may be provided in English in municipalities where more than half of the population—thus, an absolute majority—has English as their mother tongue (and not as the usual or only official language understood—an important distinction that frames the application of such collective rights). English may be used in the legislative assembly, in the courts, in the health system and, of course, in education, but always within very strict and generally highly regulated (as well as closely monitored and enforced) parameters.

The use of French is mandatory in the private sector, under certain conditions (e.g. depending on the number of employees in a business or regarding the relative prominence of the French lettering compared to another languages on billboards and commercial signs), and, at a time, Québec's government even invoked the "notwithstanding" clause in Canada's constitution in order to override some individual rights (i.e. freedom of expression) explicitly protected under the federal charter. Unsurprisingly, language policy and laws—particularly when they infringe on individual rights and coerce people's behaviour and hamper their personal choices—are extremely controversial and politically explosive. Those who support such measures (actually, the majority of Québec's public opinion, although favourable views are naturally less prevalent among non-francophones) argue that in the absence of proactive, state-driven protection of French, a majority language in Québec but a minority one in Canada, and for that matter in the North American continent, demographic and economic trends will eventually impose English. The decline of French in the rest of Canada, even with the existence of protective measures as found in Ontario, is seen as proof of the fundamentally fragile nature of this minority language and the need to safeguard it even at the cost of divisive and identity-based politics.

5.4 Competing Models of Integration: Multiculturalism vs. Interculturalism

Canada's multiculturalism and Québec's interculturalism are what are usually called models of integration, that is, normative and policy frameworks that seek to define and facilitate immigrants' transition towards full national membership. A model of integration is a vastly complex creature, as it interweaves political, legislative and administrative processes at many levels and with different methods and resources, but it also boils down to a relatively simple and coherent conceptual core. In other words, a model of integration is supposed to reflect a society's particular idea of what membership means (or, put more precisely, what the social contract that binds members together mean), which in turn relies on that society's existential bearings: its national identity, beliefs of shared origin and destiny, common values etc.

This does not necessarily mean that the "facts on the ground" are correlated with those basic cultural understandings—actually countless contradictions are commonly observed—but the model of integration nevertheless provides a master narrative with which the government and public opinion make sense of the collective challenges they face. For instance, in spite of the highly dissenting political and ideological viewpoints that make up the current immigration discussion in the United States, most participants still hold the notion that theirs is a "country of immigration" and they tend to describe their current conundrum with the trope of "the system is broken". The cliché of the "melting pot", while discredited since the civil rights movement (that brought awareness of the clear limits of "racial fusion" in US history), still stands in the back of many Americans' mind as an unspoken reference when assessing the integration—or lack thereof—of Latinos into society's fabric. While no one would argue that such images and ideas represent some sort of "essence" from which public policy orientations and social behaviour and attitudes would naturally derive, it can be argued that a country's historical path and reified cultural norms (including memories, symbols, rhetorical shortcuts) underlie institutional structures, government priorities, expert counsel (including scholarly production) and public debates on integration.

Canada's multicultural model occupies a particular place in this country's self-definition. Of course, all bounded national entities establish membership rules and develop their own conception of "nationalness"—who belongs and who does not, what does belonging entail, how one comes to belong (or ceases to do so). This refers not only to civic rights and duties and rules of nationality and naturalization (and loss of citizenship or residency privileges) but also to the ways in which a given country may specifically articulate those parameters. A society that consistently pursues collective self-introspection (i.e. putting the question of "who are we?" at the centre of the public conversation) will write down charters of rights, declarations of common values, guides for newcomers, policy guidelines, "white papers" etc.; it will create consulting bodies, launch educational campaigns, fund citizenship-building initiatives etc.

Much of that body of work generated by elected representatives, government agencies, the media, civil society organizations and academia will consist of discourse. Or put in other terms, the ratio of words to deeds will be very high. It could be argued that this is exactly the case of Canada's multiculturalism. What is done—any factual or tangible measure (actual funds distributed or spent, policies and regulations enforced, actions or processes initiated etc.)—will pale, in numbers, compared to what is said. But should this be the measure with which one assesses the true importance of multiculturalism in Canada? Let's point out that the advocates of multiculturalism (for whom it promotes openness, ensures equality, enriches us all) and its critics (who see it bringing about ethnic ghettos, hurting social cohesion, threatening universal values) mostly clash against each other's abstract idea of what societal membership means and what society should become (and is, and was), rather than about a comprehensive and empirically based set of analyses and programmes.

But if that is the case with Canada and its own model of integration—a web of norms, policies and practices that are quite standard fare internationally (at least among Western democracies) but which is framed by a "multicultural" self-definition—what makes Canada different from other countries in this regard? Is it only a matter of discourse, that is, Canada "would talk the multicultural talk" more than others, or is there a fundamental difference when compared to, say, Australia Spain or Sweden? If we consider the types and scales of government action (laws promulgated, budgets appropriated) or policy outcomes (e.g. which country shows a better record on the integration of immigrants), we would find some interesting variations, but certainly not a sharp divide between self-defined multicultural Canada and the rest of the developed world. In this regard, let's mention that Queen's University's Multiculturalism Policy Index shows that, other than Canada, Australia, Belgium, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, Spain and Sweden had explicitly affirmed multiculturalism or had created a relevant public entity to implement multicultural policies in 2000 and/or 2010. That is, 11 countries out of 21 examined were deemed multicultural, while, curiously enough, the United States did not make the cut.

Canada may get consistently high scores on the multiculturalism indicators (although not always the highest), and it certainly leads the way on several issues, but it is not entirely atypical within the group. In fact, the gap that separates Canada from other countries that adopted multicultural approaches to diversity (with or without using the label itself) stems, in part, from Canada's—to use Kymlicka's words (2006)—"thinner" or "tamed" model of nationhood. Moreover, if, as Benhabib (2006) puts it, the politics of peoplehood consists of a negotiation between the ethnos ("a shared community of fate") and the demos ("a democratically enfranchised totality of all citizens"), Canada stands out as a particular case among liberal nation-states: not only is its ethnos distinctly weak, for historical reasons (i.e. not by choice), but its leadership and population have largely embraced the idea of civic integration. Of course, other multiculturally inclined countries have done the same, at least to a certain extent, but the notion of an overriding national identity that commands loyalty and, eventually, full assimilation is still

very much present in those places (all the more so in the wake of the current anti-multiculturalism backlash in Europe).

What about Québec? A quite common, albeit flawed, approach to Québec's model of integration has been to oppose it to Canada's model by referring to the tension of ethnos and demos. Québec's separatist thrust would naturally put the emphasis on the ethnic definition of peoplehood, instead of following (English) Canada's path towards civic integration. While certain aspects of this contrast may be founded (historically speaking, much less so politically in today's context), it is important to challenge the simplistic notion that (English) Canada and Québec have contradictory models of integration, as well as the idea that one model is right and the other is wrong. Regarding the latter, it goes without saying that the ethnos needs to be "tamed" for the demos to flourish. However, the "shared community of fate" is also necessary for social cohesion and solidarity to exist. This is a complex debate about a fragile balance that any liberal nation-state in the globalization era is bound to address.

But here I focus instead on the alleged disparity between (English) Canada and Québec: this French-language province has officially adopted an "intercultural" model, which posits interaction and exchange between cultural groups rather than maintaining ancestral identities. Interculturalism also entails that, in spite of their particular cultures, all communities must adopt a common public culture, defined by the use of the French language and by certain fundamental values (such as secularism and gender equality). But doesn't Canadian multiculturalism also promote interaction rather than isolation and seek a convergence in the public sphere around a common language and universal values? Actually, it would seem that there is no significant rift between Canada's multiculturalism and Québec's interculturalism (Winter and Simkhovych 2012), either in principle or in practice, other than in a matter of degree (more or less general tolerance to the manifestation of cultural differences in the public realm), societal context and ideological sensibilities (the use of specific words or historical references). Or, if Québec's interculturalism is indeed significantly different from Canada's multiculturalism, as Bouchard claims, the latter "would appear [as] slowly evolving in direction of the former" (2012, p. 106). In any event, Québec and English Canada do seem to behave like two separate countries regarding the management of diversity, and their respective realities are rather divergent on some levels. Table 5.1 provides a simplified but eloquent overview of such contrast.

Ironically, in spite of Québec's strong nationalist streak, both (English) Canada and Québec share a weak ethnos. This does not necessarily mean that French Québécois national identity is frail—a majority of them feel quite strongly about their "community of fate"—but rather that their group's claim to peoplehood is effectively contested. Put it simply, no one credibly challenges the fact that "France belongs to the French people". But the question "Does Québec belong to the French Québécois people?" is seen by many as a fair one to debate, and not all answers are unconditionally affirmative (as they would be in France's case). It can be argued that Canada's multiculturalism and Québec's interculturalism are not opposed, but rather two variations of the same model of integration, one that favours civic

Table 5.1 Some key differences between Québec and the rest of Canada

	English Canada (provinces and territories outside Québec/ English speakers)	Québec (French speakers)
Official model/ideal of immigrant integration	Multiculturalism	Interculturalism ("multiculturalism... is not a Québec value"[e])
"Canada is a country of three nations: the Québec nation, the English-Canadian nation and the First Nations (aboriginals)"[a]	12 %	40 %
Authority over selection of independent immigrants	Federal government	Québec provincial government
Top ten countries of origin of immigrants (2012)	China, Philippines, India, Pakistan, United States, France, Iran, United Kingdom, Haiti, South Korea	China, France, Haiti, Algeria, Morocco, Colombia, Cameroun, Egypt, Tunisia, Moldova
Federal funding to provinces for settlement programs[b]	Ontario: 40 % of federal funds with 50 % national share of immigration	34 % of federal funds (transferred to Québec government) with 18 % national share of immigration
Main provider of settlement services[c]	NGO sector (Approximately 70 %)	Provincial government (Over 90 %)
Hold a very favorable opinion of Jews, Muslims and Sikhs[d]	39 %/20 %/19 %	11 %/9 %/6 %

Source: The author
[a]Source: Association for Canadian Studies (2013)
[b]Source: Meinhard et al. (2012)
[c]Source: Reichhold (2011)
[d]Source: Association for Canadian Studies (2007)
[e]Louise Beaudoin, Parti Québécois MNA, February 9th 2011

inclusion rather than assimilation, plays down public displays of patriotism, values diversity in itself and judges immigrants' contribution to society as mostly positive.

This depiction is supported by abundant research data on Canada and Québec's political and social realities as well as by many media content analyses and opinion polls. This supports the hypothesis that a weak ethnos encourages people to collectively discuss membership rules (the social contract) and, when that happens in a highly democratic setting, making multiculturalism (or interculturalism) the privileged optics through which to tackle diversity. But, ironically, the open debate about society's membership may lead to making choices about who is wanted as a fellow citizen—and who is not.

5.5 Conclusions: Current Transformations – Towards a Selectivist/Restrictionist Turn?

This last section of the chapter deals with recent changes in immigration, integration and naturalization policy in Canada. I focus on the underlying rationale for policy reform in various areas of federal jurisdiction and on the possible causes of what amounts to a major legislative and administrative shift, perhaps the largest in decades. Even though it is extremely difficult to pinpoint the precise causes of policy changes (in any given context), it is nevertheless reasonable to posit a convergence of several contributing factors, direct and indirect, internal and external. These include, of course, the government's preferences (based on the ruling political party's programme and membership) and capabilities (depending on parliamentary strength), the influence of lobbies and social activism, the media and public opinion. But other factors, broader and sometimes more diffuse in their impact, also need to be taken into account: on the one hand, the international context—particularly in terms of global economic forces, migration fluxes and geopolitical trends—and, on the other, the core elements of national identity and models of integration.

The previous Conservative government's approach to naturalization (justified by the "need to reinforce the value of Canadian citizenship"), the new rules regarding the points system (so as to advantage younger workers who have stronger language skills) and the steep increase in the number of temporary foreign workers are changes that can be framed in different narratives that give heed, in some cases, to economic arguments (Canada would need a faster, more flexible and responsive immigration system, particularly in the wake of the global crisis) and, in other cases, to ideological views (e.g. immigrants have a "duty to integrate into Canadian society" by respecting Canada's values). The stunning upsurge in the number of "non-permanent resident workers"—foreign nationals that are admitted on a temporary basis to hold a job in a given occupation or location, usually restricted to a particular employer—permitted to work in Canada in order to address specific labour shortages has changed the country's immigration landscape: it more than tripled between 2002 and 2013, reaching 338,000. In 2008, for the first time in Canada's modern history, temporary foreign workers exceeded the number of landed immigrants admitted that year.[6] Yet, as a C.D. Howe Institute report revealed, the federal government implemented these policy changes even as "the unemployment rate remained the same at 7.2 %" and "there was little empirical evidence of shortages in many occupations" (Gross 2014). That is not the only paradox: we see "poor labor market outcomes for many immigrants while simultaneously there are calls for immigration to meet 'shortage' situations" (Ferrer et al. 2012).

[6] "[In 2012] data from Citizenship and Immigration show 491,547 temporary foreign workers either entered Canada or were still present in Canada that year" (The Globe and Mail, April 22nd 2014).

In their detailed analysis of immigration policy changes in Canada since 2008, Alboim and Cohl (2012) point out some other trends that could be potentially problematic, in the sense of altering the long-standing Canadian approach to immigration, either by themselves or through their cumulative impact or unintended results. They mention, in particular, the federal government's excessive focus on short-term labour market gains by giving priority to "provincial nominees" (economic immigrants designated by provincial governments on the basis of immediate local market needs). Regarding the steep increase in the number of temporary foreign workers, they see the government bent on taking that path "despite evidence showing that federal skilled workers selected for their human capital have better long-term outcomes".

Overall, according to Alboim and Cohl (2012), Canada's "desire for a faster, more flexible and responsive immigration system" puts "just-in-time" economic strategies ahead of any long-term nation-building effort. They also observe that Canada's new immigration policy measures lack coherence and predictability and that many current policy changes are not based on evidence or research data. And even if the economic rationale appears to be paramount, other dynamics must also be considered, all the more so in the light of the current debates on immigrant and minority cultural integration in Canada. For example, new rules in the point system grid will give priority to workers aged 46 and younger and to those who have strong language skills (in either English or French, but knowledge of both will not entail a significant premium). Also, a new "Canadian experience" category will offer a path towards permanent residency to graduates from Canadian universities.

Obviously, these measures can be seen as driven by economic pragmatism, but they may also imply specific constraints to immigrant selection that need to be taken into account. Those who hold a favourable opinion on the current changes will argue that attracting younger English- or French-speaking candidates, ideally with a Canadian education background, will experience an easier and less costly integration process. However, in a more critical perspective, it is possible to understand that approach as a move towards targeting specific countries, cultures or groups as desirable (and less "desirable") sources of immigration. While it is difficult to assert that, as some commentators have suggested, there is a hidden agenda aiming to promote immigration from Western (particularly European) countries and curb immigration from non-Western regions, it is clear that the portrait of the ideal applicant tends to favour certain geographic locations and cultural and social origins. That was the case since the creation of "meritocratic" point system and the progressive strengthening of "a 'human capital' model of immigration that rewarded skills such as education, experience and language ability" (Ferrer et al. 2012), but the current changes may vastly intensify that approach and even create two different routes towards Canada: one for temporary workers in unskilled, low-wage occupations (seasonal agricultural work, live-in care of children and the elderly, minimum-wage jobs in the fast food industry), often with origins in impoverished countries, and the other for "future citizens", that is, temporary skilled workers that are offered access to permanent residency

(an opportunity specifically denied to low-skilled workers) and, of course, to successful applicants admitted through the points system.

In Canada, there are no relevant political or public pressure groups that advocate any drastic reduction in immigration numbers, and those who may publicly discuss or question the makeup of the immigrant population will generally advance economic arguments rather than cultural (or ethno-racial) ones. And we have seen that polls consistently show that Canadians are, in comparative terms, essentially very open to immigration and diversity. However, beneath the strong multiculturalist discourse that permeates Canadian national identity, it is possible to observe a growing malaise in some segments of Canadian society concerning the integration of certain ethnic and religious minorities, Muslims in particular but not exclusively. Canada's Conservative Party, in power until 2015 under Prime Minister Stephen Harper, was born in the 1990s from a populist movement based in the Prairies and the oil-rich provinces (Boily 2007) and has consistently shown some reluctance about multiculturalism, at least in its more liberal forms (seen by some conservatives as a leftist "ideology"), while staying very friendly with certain ethnic constituencies (particularly around socially conservative values and freedom of religion or issues of foreign policy).

The Harper administration placed a strong emphasis on Canadian citizenship and shared values as the cornerstones of social cohesion, while stressing the British Commonwealth heritage and a closer alignment with the United States. These clearly conservative inclinations (also displayed in issues such as abortion, same-sex marriage, gun control etc.) were combined with a libertarian streak and a pro-business stance. In this regard, it could be argued that the ongoing global financial crisis gives the federal government the opportunity to frame in pragmatic terms—with a rhetoric built around the need to shield Canada's economy during difficult times—what amounts to a paradigm shift in immigration and integration policies based not only on economic grounds but, at least in part, also on an underlying ideological purpose: to favour "good immigrants", implicitly referring to notions of cultural and ethnic proximity (or acceptance) vis-à-vis certain groups.

In recent years, Canada's government has also toughened the rules regarding naturalization (from stricter residence requirements to a higher pass grade in the citizenship exam); has included controversial wording in the citizenship guide (referring to "barbaric practices" brought by some immigrants); has revoked, for the first time in history, the citizenship of thousands of Canadians for "residence" fraud (i.e. they did not stay the required length of time in the country in order to be eligible for naturalization); and has considered withdrawing citizenship rights to dual citizens who "act against Canada" (i.e. trough terrorism). During the same period, several changes and projects put forward in Québec under quite different conditions (and with apparently conflicting ideological motivations and goals) suggest the possibility of a rather puzzling convergence with English Canada's increasingly restrictionist outlook. In 2008, Québec's (Liberal, that is, centre-to-right, federalist) government instructed that all newcomers to the province would be required to sign a "Declaration on the Common Values of Québec Society" (notably

gender equality and separation of state and church) as a condition for obtaining their immigration visa.

Ostensibly, the government wanted to "send a strong message" in the wake of an acrimonious debate on "reasonable accommodations" (the public perception that demands made by some religious minorities could undermine gender equality and secularism in public institutions), so as to signal that settling in Québec "is not a right, but a privilege" (according to the provincial Premier's words) and that immigrants are welcome as long as they integrate into mainstream Québec society. In 2011, mandatory standardized testing of language skills were introduced and an "advanced intermediate" level of French became the standard for "language points" in the selection process of immigrants, significantly raising the bar (thus creating a much stronger preference for French native speakers or those educated in French-language schools). Even if more than three quarters of all immigrants who settle in Québec (about 50,000 each year) already have at least a basic knowledge of French on their arrival, the government declared that an even higher proportion was needed to offset the linguistic imbalance, particularly in the city of Montreal.

In 2013, a Parti Québécois ("sovereignist") government unveiled the project of a Charter of Secularism that would have barred civil servants from wearing overt religious symbols, among other measures. The long-standing aversion towards multiculturalism held by prominent intellectuals (and other members of the French-language intelligentsia: artists, actors, journalists etc.) close to the pro-sovereignty movement (Belkhodja 2008) could be more legitimately articulated—as in justified by concerns about gender equality and the fight against radicalization among the youth—in the wake of the anti-multiculturalist tide sweeping across much of Europe (Ryan 2010). The Parti Québécois government was defeated in 2014 (because it lacked an absolute majority in the provincial legislative assembly), and the controversial (but widely supported by the French-speaking public opinion) proposal was abandoned. However, the new Premier, from the Liberal Party, promised to legislate in order to clarify the limits of accommodation and the importance of secularism in Québec. So, interestingly, it is possible to observe some common trends with the rest of Canada, despite the highly divergent political contexts (a Conservative government in Ottawa between 2006 and 2015 and a separatist, centre-to-left government in Québec City between 2012 and early 2014) as well as significant gaps between the stated goals and the effective or potential consequences of certain policy measures.

Policy shifts regarding immigrants and minorities may follow simple, relatively "conventional" patterns (e.g. an economic crisis creates unemployment, which generates social unrest, giving raise to intolerant attitudes, pushing governments to adopt anti-immigrant rhetoric and legislation, etc.). However, in Canada, with a strong pro-immigrant and multicultural stance, which is deeply rooted in public culture, and a highly decentralized political system, change patterns are extremely complex. Opportunistic strategies and sheer pragmatism, along with principled objectives and ideologies shape the policymaking process. Canada's often noted "exceptionalism" in terms of immigration and integration issues is, in this regard, a fascinating place, where things are not always what they appear to be. On the one

hand, both Canada's and Québec's governments have increased the absolute and relative number of permanent residents selected as "economic immigrants" in recent years; both governments have recently modified the point system selection in order to give more weight to younger applicants (under 46 in Canada, under 35 in Québec), stronger language skills (either official language in Canada, French in Québec) and a better fit with the labour market.

In brief, a more selectivist approach which, ironically, can be justified on economic grounds by both progressive and conservative, federalist and separatist governments. On the other hand, both Ottawa and Québec City have "sent strong messages" about society's "fundamental values" and the "obligation to integrate", clearly deviating from a more pluralistic understanding of immigration acculturation. This restrictionist turn may be seen, as I suggested, under the light of a wider anti-multiculturalist backlash in the Western world, but the Canadian context provides a unique setting: instead of Québec following English Canada's multiculturalist shining example (a scenario expected by many observers), it is in fact the reverse scenario that seems to unfold. But this does not translate into an anti-immigrant view, as is the case in most European countries (and in the United States, to a certain extent): immigration is still viewed as a positive contribution to Canada's development, albeit in terms of the idea that newcomers have to be more "carefully chosen", implicitly referring to "undesirable" immigrants. It is under such type of argument that a darker side to Canada's approach to diversity may transpire.

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