

CONTEXT AND INTEGRATION :  
THE ALLOPHONE COMMUNITIES  
IN QUÉBEC

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Contemporary liberal theorists continue to wrestle with the moral and practical dilemmas induced by cultural pluralism. The debate between liberals and communitarians that began in the early 1980s has broadened subsequently into a wide-ranging attack and defense of liberal theory and liberal democratic practices<sup>1</sup>. And yet, contemporary

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1. The debate between liberals and communitarians has given rise to an analysis of liberal theory, which grants the autonomous individual the enjoyment of rights. Ronald BEINER

theorizing on liberal democracy exhibits a “binary conceptual picture” rooted in and derivative of the liberal/communitarian and universalism/particularism framework<sup>2</sup>. While binary oppositions can be useful analytic and heuristic tools, they can also be an impediment to the understanding of multifarious reality. This difficulty is no less apparent in the

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provides a brief overview of the debate in *What's the Matter with Liberalism*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1992, pp. 15-38. The detractors of modes of liberal democratic government maintain in particular that practical reality infringes every day on the basic democratic parameters – equality, public debate and participation. For example, the current means of obtaining consent, which consists in aggregating individual choices (and forms the most important basis of the legitimate exercise of power in liberal democratic regimes), is sparking increasingly severe criticism. Democratic debate is lacking as a result of the procedures of political participation and the substance of such debate. This poses an even greater problem when citizens must debate the very nature of the political community, its identity and its fundamental principles.

2. This is expounded on by Mary G. DIETZ in “Merely combating the phrases of this world: recent democratic theory”, *Political Theory*, vol. 26, n° 1, February 1998, p. 114.

current normative and explanatory defense of civil political culture/identity with its emphasis on citizenship. Political theorizing on nationalism turns on an analytic dichotomy that counterposes civic nationalism and ethnic nationalism. This conceptual dichotomy can be a powerful tool for analyzing the boundaries of the nation/national identity as they are contested, defended and amended over time. However, it is useless if we fail to recognize that at any given time and to varying degrees, national identities embrace elements that are both civic and ethnic. Any vision of civic nationalism demands a definition of the essentials of citizenship. Two opposing discourses dominate contemporary models of citizenship : a liberal-pluralist theory and a neo-republican or communitarian theory<sup>3</sup>. These abstract binary oppositions

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3. Beiner distinguishes three theoretical perspectives : liberal, communitarian and republican. He associates the communitarian model with exclusivism and particularism wherein membership is defined by belonging to a particular

clarify alternatives and suggest limits within which liberal democracy can accommodate cultural diversity without seriously jeopardizing cohesion and allegiance.

Admittedly, these remarks oversimplify the nuances of a rich and multifaceted body of work. Nonetheless, there does appear to be broad acceptance that the associative grounds for pluralist liberal democracies and the principled limits of accommodating diversity are to be found in a civic political culture<sup>4</sup>. In

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cultural or ethnic group. The republican model emphasizes civic bonds and is presented as an alternative or “third way” between the procedural/universal vision (liberal) and the substantive/particularistic vision (communitarian). However, for Beiner, this “third way” may be theoretically incoherent and practically impossible. R. BEINER, *Theorizing Citizenship*, Albany, State University of New York Press, 1995, pp. 12-15.

4. For example, see : Michael IGNATIEFF, *Blood and Belongings : Journeys into the New Nationalism*, Toronto, Penguin Books, 1994 ; Will KYMLICKA, *Multicultural Citizenship*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1995 ; Yael TAMIR, *Liberal Nationalism*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1993 ; Jeff SPINNER, *The Boundaries of Citizenship : Race, Ethnicity,*

embracing and celebrating cultural diversity as a source of enrichment, liberal political theorists have rediscovered and identified civic political culture or nationalism as a prerequisite for avoiding exclusion and fragmentation, the twin threats to stable and effective liberal democracy. Civic nationalism or culture reaffirms basic liberal principles or universally valid principles of justice. These abstract principles – individual rights, equality of opportunity, rule of law, respect for difference and tolerance, democratic government – must transcend all manner of differences and competing conceptions of the good if individuals are to be free to choose and perhaps revise their ways of life. A civic political culture holds out the possibility of eliciting allegiance without demanding

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*and Culture*, Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994. This argument is advanced by Adrian FLAVELL, "A politics that is shared, bounded, and rooted? Rediscovering civic political culture in Western Europe", *Theory and Society*, n° 27, 1998, pp. 209-236.

cultural uniformity. Moreover, the idiom of citizenship remains “untainted”, devoid of reference to ethnicity, race or gender, blurring incommensurable identities, differences and dominant hegemonies. However, political principles cannot generate a sense of belonging, allegiance and community. Fulfilling the legal criteria and discharging the obligations of citizenship does not make a citizen “one of us”.

I do not offer a reappraisal of the theoretical grounds of civic political culture. Instead, my subject is the integration policies devised by the Canadian and Québec states in response to the normative imperative to tolerate cultural diversity and the pragmatic imperative to affirm the boundaries of their respective political communities. There is a reasonable correspondence between these policies and current theoretical endorsements of a shared citizenship that would transcend ethnocultural differences without abandoning either basic liberal democratic principles or

tolerance of cultural diversity. I argue that the context within which these policies have been devised and deployed defines the allegiance to which both states aspire. Distinctive political and historical legacies shape particular forms of exclusion in the Canadian and Québec context despite recourse to universalistic formulations of the grounds of inclusion.

I begin, by necessity, with the Canadian model of integration as it sets the parameters within which the Québec state can develop plausible strategies to integrate immigrants and their descendants. Both the Canadian and Québec state are committed to creating an inclusive bounded national community, i.e. a community that does not exclude anyone. Their aspirations in this respect, as we will see, are different, if not contradictory. Both states have political and pragmatic reasons for promoting their respective policies that may have little to do with sensitivity to the needs and interests of ethnocultural communities. On the other hand, ethnocultural communities

have their own interests and needs that condition their strategies or responses to the demands made on them. The treatment of the Canadian model of integration is necessary but brief, as I am primarily interested in the ongoing project undertaken by the Québec state to create an inclusive civic culture that would command the allegiance of all inhabitants within its territorial boundaries. I consider this project by privileging the perspective of allophone communities in Québec. The viability of constructing a pluralist French-speaking civic culture is predicated on the inclusion of immigrants and their descendants as full members of the Québécois collectivity. And the viability of this project, I must emphasize, depends on the will and ability to rethink the parameters of the Québécois identity.



## THE CANADIAN MODEL

Integration in every sense (linguistic, political, social and economic) is a process, structured by an array of state policies, mediated by the dominant public myths, historical legacies and social norms of the collectivity, and conditioned by the public and private practices that escape state regulation. In theory, integration is a bilateral process in which immigrants and citizens at birth consent to some changes and some adaptation. In practice, integrative mechanisms are not well known<sup>5</sup>. The term “integration” is now more frequently used than “assimilation” and

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5. Morton Weinfeld and Lori Wilkinson emphasize that, in fact, immigrants are primarily the ones who must adapt. According to them, the integration of immigrants may be an illusion in that adults may never integrate fully and only their children and grandchildren will be able to do so. Morton WEINFELD and Lori A. WILKINSON, “Immigration, diversity, and minority communities” in Peter S. LI [ed.], *Race and Ethnic Relations in Canada*, Don Mills (Ontario), Oxford University Press, 1999, pp. 64, 67.

“acculturation”, which have more negative connotations. The rejection of assimilation is given official sanction in the Canadian policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework. Bilingualism and multiculturalism are policies that enable the Canadian state to demarcate a pan-Canadian identity and effectively allocate or withhold status among competing groups. The Official Languages Act (1969) and the policy of multiculturalism (1971 ; 1988) contributed substantially to the symbolic and cultural transformations of Canada in the post-war years<sup>6</sup>. The policy of multiculturalism emerged within a political context marked by pressures to respond to the reconstruction of the French Canadian political identity, the inter-group dynamics unleashed by the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, and more broadly

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6. Raymond BRETON, “The production and allocation of symbolic resources : an analysis of the linguistic and ethnocultural fields in Canada”, *Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, n° 21, pp. 123-144.

the politicization and revival of ethnicity that swept across many Western states.

If it is difficult to judge the initial degree and intensity of support for multiculturalism among ethnocultural groups, it is evident that the active intervention on the part of the federal government was significant<sup>7</sup>. Prime Minister Trudeau regarded the idea of biculturalism as a serious threat to the project of defusing and defeating the claims of Québec nationalists. As is well understood, the rejection of biculturalism not only denies the principle of two founding peoples, it also

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7. Breton notes that among the ethnocultural groups submitting briefs to the B&B Commission not all were opposed to the terms of reference of the Commission and among the relatively small number of ethnic organizations that did not submit briefs, more than half were from Ukrainian organizations. The federal government provided financial assistance and the mechanisms that allowed ethnic organizational elites to air their views. Raymond BRETON, "Multiculturalism and Canadian Nation-Building" in Alan CAIRNS and Cynthia WILLIAMS [eds.], *The Politics of Gender, Ethnicity and Language in Canada*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 1986, pp. 45-48.

implies an equality of cultures that levels the status of the French Canadians to one ethnic group among many others. The Canadian model of integration endorses an instrumental linguistic dualism and emphatically resists privileging or endorsing an official culture by affirming equality among cultural groups. The conception of language as a “neutral” tool of communication rather than a vehicle of culture logically undermines arguments for special or additional measures to protect and promote the French language in Québec. In rejecting territorial bilingualism, the Canadian state denied the reality of linguistic practices existent in 1969 and in the intervening years, official bilingualism has not reversed substantially this fact<sup>8</sup>.

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8. In 1996 86 % of the Canadian francophone population lived in Québec and 76 % of francophones living outside Québec lived in New Brunswick (accounting for 32.2 % of the New Brunswick population) and Ontario (accounting for 4.7 % of the Ontario population). The onus of bilingualism falls primarily on francophones outside Québec of whom

The disassociation of language and culture would appear to permit the Canadian state to claim to be “neutral” with respect to an individual’s choice of official language or cultural identity. However, Will Kymlicka’s interpretation of the Canadian policy is that a liberal state cannot be neutral when it comes to language and culture. In fact, he argues, the Canadian policy promotes and legally requires immigrants and their descendants to integrate into either the francophone or anglophone

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84 % identify themselves as bilingual whereas only 7 % of anglophones outside Québec consider themselves bilingual. Across the country the rate of bilingualism among francophones (41 %) is almost five times higher than among anglophones (9 %). The territoriality of linguistic practices is further reflected in the fact that self-reported bilingualism among anglophone Quebecers (62 %) is almost twice that of francophone Quebecers (34 %). Among the 25 census metropolitan areas, the highest percentage of bilingual people is to be found in Montréal (49.7 %). STATISTICS CANADA, “1996 Census : mother tongue, home language and knowledge of language”, *The Daily*, December 2<sup>nd</sup> 1997, p. 5.

societal culture<sup>9</sup>. This assessment is contradicted by the official state policy that has resolutely refused “to convert the dominant English-Canadian and French-Canadian cultures into an official pan-Canadian culture”<sup>10</sup>. Nonetheless, Kymlicka maintains that a policy of multiculturalism does not mitigate the need for integration into a societal culture; such integration is “part of the ‘nation-building’ project in which all liberal

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9. A societal culture is defined as “a territorially concentrated culture centered on a shared language that is used in a wide range of societal institutions, including schools, media, law, the economy, and government.” Will KYMLICKA, *Finding Our Way. Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada*, Toronto, Oxford University Press, 1998, p. 27.

10. “The ideology of the state has distanced itself from the notion of two ‘founding peoples’ (or ‘founding races’) with its strongly ethnic overtones.” The Supreme Court in the *Mahé* decision (1990) held that “[T]he general purpose of s.23 is clear : it is to preserve and promote the two official languages in Canada and their respective cultures...” Stacy CHURCHILL, *Official Languages in Canada: Changing the Language Landscape*, Ottawa, Department of Secretary of State Canada, coll. “New Canadian Perspectives Series”, 1998, pp. 79-80.

democracies have engaged”<sup>11</sup>. This author considers that the conditions of liberal democracy require “thin” societal cultures, tolerant of diversity of religion, lifestyles, personal values and family relationships. The shared values or principles that constitute the minimal demands for inclusion, implicit in the Canadian multicultural policy, include respect for liberal-democratic norms, including individual rights and sexual equality (embodied in the *Charter of Rights*), respect for difference and tolerance towards others and the acquisition and use of one of the official languages of Canada. In essence, aside from the fact that Canada recognizes two official languages, the requirements for full inclusion are consistent with universally valid principles of justice associated with liberalism and a civic political culture. Practically speaking, the Canadian policy of bilingualism in a multicultural framework has had only partial success in

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11. Will KYMLICKA, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

affirming an inclusive cohesive bounded national community. I will limit my remarks to a few aspects of the Canadian model that have a specific impact on the Québec project.

Official bilingualism has not been able to overcome the initial opposition of many Québécois francophones and Canadian francophobes. For them, multiculturalism and equality of individuals (guaranteed under sections 15 and 27 of the *Canadian Charter*) are incompatible with the objective of promoting the collective rights of language minorities. For Québécois francophones, the crux of the problem lies in Québec's sovereignty in terms of language and cultural policies. This claim is rooted in the conviction that the protection and promotion of French is more the responsibility of the Legislative Assembly of Québec than the Canadian judicial system or government. The language regime advocated by the Canadian state goes against this claim and its consequence: exclusive English Canada-Québec duality.



In addition, not only is official bilingualism rejected by francophone Québécois but the coherency and adequacy of multiculturalism is attacked by, among others, self-described Canadian nationalists as well as some members of ethnocultural groups whom the policy was intended to benefit. For ethnocultural groups, this policy marginalizes or ghettoizes ethnic or racial minorities, while Canadian nationalists disagree with what they consider to be privileges granted to ethnic minorities. There is also a fear that the policy encourages ethnic groups to preserve their own culture to the detriment of societal cohesion and the Canadian national identity<sup>12</sup>.

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12. The most recent national survey on Canadians' view of multiculturalism yielded contradictory findings. The majority of respondents (61 %) support the policy but the survey was unable to determine clearly whether they approve of the actual policy or the general ideals of equality and non-discrimination. The survey was conducted in 1991 by the Angus Reid Group and submitted to Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada in a document titled *Multiculturalism and Canadians: National Attitude Survey, August 1991*. An

In his most recent treatment of Canadian multiculturalism, Kymlicka endorses the thrust of the policy in its current form, but advocates an explicit statement of the necessary limits of accommodating cultural diversity<sup>13</sup>. Once again, he pleads with Canadians to recognize that theirs is a multinational state and reiterates his thesis that liberal democracy has the capacity and obligation to accommodate the rights of self-government for minority nations. Kymlicka sustains the distinction between immigrants or ethnocultural groups and national minorities and defends the

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analysis of the survey findings is provided in Peter S. LI, "The multicultural debate" and Raymond BRETON, "Intergroup competition in the symbolic construction of Canadian society" in LI [ed.], *op. cit.*, chap. 6 and 10.

13. The Economic Council of Canada recommended adjustments to the current multicultural policy, specifically endorsing the motion of a "moral contract" between immigrants and the host society that would make explicit the existence of official cultures in Canada. ECONOMIC COUNCIL OF CANADA, *New Faces in the Crowd*, Ottawa, Supply and Services Canada, 1991.

demands to integrate into the societal culture that can be made legitimately on the former but not the latter. By extension, the demands on immigrants and their descendants within the societal culture that is francophone Québec are no different than the demands made by the anglophone societal culture outside francophone Québec<sup>14</sup>. Kymlicka is clear on this point: he recognizes that pan-Canadian nationalism in the form of nation-wide bilingualism has allowed anglophones within Québec to perceive themselves as having a societal culture and an interest “in being able to ensure that newcomers to Québec from other provinces or other countries can integrate into their societal culture<sup>15</sup>.” According to the reasoning of the federal integration policy, the existence of two societal cultures in Québec should enable immigrants to choose

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14. Will KYMLICKA, *op. cit.*, pp. 28-29.

15. Will KYMLICKA, *op. cit.*, p. 157. See also recommendations of the *Task Force on English Education* (1992).

freely between them. Generally speaking, the rest of Canada does not offer immigrants this choice. In this respect, Québec sovereignists consider the Canadian policy a constraint that hinders the efforts made by the Québec state to encourage the establishment of the exclusive ties of loyalty to which it aspires<sup>16</sup>. This thinking must be taken further in order to determine how immigrants can integrate into francophone societal culture, regardless of whether the people of Québec opt for independence in the future. The Canadian policy provides a good example of the limitations of the theory that the State can prescribe a sense of belonging.

Secondly, both Wayne Norman and Will Kymlicka have argued compellingly that shared values or abstract principles in themselves are insufficient grounds in a multina-

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16. For sovereignists, the solution is to establish a sovereign Québec. See Michel SARRA-BOURNET, "Comment devient-on québécois?" in *Le pays de tous les Québécois. Diversité culturelle et souveraineté*, Montréal, VLB, 1998, p. 143.

tional state to secure solidarity and allegiance to an overarching political identity<sup>17</sup>. Collective myths, symbols, ethnicity, a shared history and memory are stronger sources of identity and have a greater purchase on allegiance than shared values. Nonetheless, shared values are precisely what Kymlicka identifies as sufficient grounds for forging a collective political identity or centripetal bond that would bind immigrants and their descendants to the dominant societal culture. On the one hand, the ability to reason through differences would require a degree of commonality or consensus. On the other hand, universal or abstract principles are combined in distinct ways with particularistic societal cultures whose self-images – the legacies and

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17. Wayne NORMAN, "The ideology of shared values : a myopic vision of unity in the multi-nation state" in Joseph H. CARENS [ed.], *Is Québec Nationalism Just ? Perspectives from Anglophone Canada*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1995, chap. 6 and Will KYMLICKA, *op. cit.*, chap. 13, particularly pp. 171-173.

representations of their historical and cultural personalities – reinforce the hegemony of the dominant culture. This hegemony can limit significantly the impact that ethnocultural communities can have on dominant representations and discursive practices and by extension their acceptance and inclusion in the societal culture. Additionally, we need to take seriously what can and cannot be shared. Let us not deny the formidable barriers imposed by collective memories and the distances to be overcome for the outsider simply to access (let alone identify with) the world of the insider<sup>18</sup>.

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18. “How indeed can a social and symbolic link be forged between individuals detached from the traditions and memories of the franco-Québécois? [...] And how can people who have newly arrived connect with this history, since *a priori* they are concerned strictly with the present and not the past of the society in which they live?” Free translation of Jocelyn LÉTOURNEAU and Jacinthe RUELLE, “Nous autres les Québécois”, in K. FALL, D. SIMEONI and G. VIGNAUX [eds.], *Mots et représentations. Enjeux dans les contacts interethniques et interculturels*, Ottawa, Presses de l’Université d’Ottawa, 1994, p. 302. This dilemma is particularly stark in the context of Québec but no less relevant in Canada or other liberal democracies.

Thus, even if the conditions of integration do not explicitly make reference to ethnicity, integration requires validation in everyday life and can never be reduced to mere individual choice. I will now examine the efforts recently made by the Québec state to define the dimensions of a common civic or public culture.

#### THE QUÉBEC MODEL

The model of integration promoted by the Québec state has undergone a number of substantial refinements since 1978. The one constant is that they have all been formulated within the framework of the primary social contract between the Québec state and the Québécois nation. The *Charter of the French Language* more than promulgates an official language, it constitutes a moral contract that binds the Québécois nation to the Québec state. By ascribing a moral responsibility upon the state to secure the continued existence of the nation, the nation constructs a standard of

authority by which to measure the state and its actions. Thus, both legitimacy and allegiance are subject to the capacity of the Québec state to fulfill its moral obligations to the nation. In an early assessment of the consequences of the Charter of the French Language, S. Arnopoulos and D. Clift stated that “[T]he monolithic character of society, largely derived from its minority status in Canada, will have to become pluralistic in light of the majority status it is asserting within Québec<sup>19</sup>”. Indeed, this is precisely what francophone Québécois intellectuals and the Québec state in its official policy statements have been advocating since early 1980s. The direction of state policy has been to expli-

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19. S. MC LEOD ARNOPOULOS and D. CLIFT, *The English Fact in Québec*, Montréal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1980, p. 191. They refer to Bill 101 as a “Trojan Horse”. The assumption would appear to be that the culture of francophone Quebecers is so weak that it can only hope to survive if it is hermetically sealed from outside influences. It also presupposes an essentialist conception of both “traditional” and contemporary culture.



citly divest ethnic origin as a source of privilege or authority and to disassociate language and ethnicity in a conscious attempt to redefine the boundaries of Québec. Decision-makers would like the term “Québécois” to extend beyond its more specific and politicized meaning to refer to all people who live within Québec’s borders, regardless of their ethnicity and political convictions. And yet, the gradual broadening of the meaning of Québécois to denote a civic identity has not overcome its elemental association with the French-Canadian nation in Québec. The construction of a civic Québécois identity is mired by the “simultaneous presence and absence” of ethnic identity<sup>20</sup>.

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20. “[...] ethnicity has come to signify an outdated, traditionalist image of French-Canadianness. That the very word ‘ethnic’ has been articulated against ethnicity, when the two operate in tandem – are not only some of the strategies that flip ubiquity into absence.” Greg ELMER and Bram ABRAMSON, “Evacuating ethnicity in *Québécois*”, *Québec Studies*, vol. 23, Spring 1997, pp. 13-28.

The model of integration currently promoted takes the form of a moral contract between immigrants or ethnocultural communities and Québec society defined as francophone, democratic and pluralist<sup>21</sup>. Immigrants are asked to commit themselves to democracy, individual rights and liberties (including sexual equality), tolerance of cultural diversity and the French language as the common and official public language. In return the state commits itself to promoting tolerance and accommodating cultural diversity throughout intercultural policy. The Québec state defines its integration objective as midway between a policy of assimilation and a policy of multiculturalism. The intercultural policy has two broad goals : the integration of allophones into mainstream Québec society and the promotion of openness within Québec society towards members of cultural

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21. See *Énoncé de politique en matière d'immigration et d'intégration*, Québec, Ministère des Communautés culturelles et de l'Immigration, 1990.

communities<sup>22</sup>. In effect, the intercultural policy and the Canadian policy of multiculturalism are substantially similar and recent calls to firmly define the limits of diversity (i.e., what is non-negotiable) by clarifying the commitments immigrants must make to Canada would further reinforce the correspondence between them. To the extent that the moral contract makes explicit the limits within which cultural diversity is to be accommodated and defines the duties of citizens to actively participate in the political life of the community, it diverges from the Canadian multicultural policy<sup>23</sup>. The Québécois state

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22. For example, these goals are to be achieved by promoting equality of opportunity, a command of the French language and through education for democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society. See the policy proposal entitled *A School for the Future: Educational Integration and Intercultural Education*, Québec, Ministère de l'Éducation, 1997 and *Un Québec pour tous ses citoyens. Les défis actuels d'une démocratie pluraliste*, Conseil des relations interculturelles, 1997.

23. The Québec policy includes approximately 309 measures and engages 43 ministries and agencies. Coordination

has constructed the boundaries of the political community through the policies of official unilingualism, interculturalism and the *Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms*. While the Canadian policy of multiculturalism denies a special status to the French Canadians, the Québec state officially and legally distinguishes between ethnocultural groups, anglophone Quebecers and aboriginal nations. The latter two are recognized as having unique historical rights and claims. Québec has formally recognized eleven First Nations within its territory with rights to self-

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and harmonization are difficult, a challenge that is shared with its Canadian counterpart. The frontline ministries responsible for ensuring the acquisition and promotion of the use of the French language among immigrants and the socio-economic integration of immigrants and members of ethnocultural communities are the Ministère de l'Éducation and the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration. The latter is given responsibility for developing harmonious intercommunal relations. *Bilan du plan d'action gouvernemental en matière d'immigration et d'intégration (1991-1994)*, Québec, Ministère des Affaires internationales, de l'Immigration et des Communautés culturelles, October 1995.

determination and granted exemptions from the requirements of Bill 101 to the Inuit, Cree and Naskapi nations. The anglophone community, recognized as an historic minority, has acquired legal guarantees to social and medical services in English and anglophones are exempt from the language of education provisions of Bill 101 (granted in 1984 under the so-called "Canada" clause)<sup>24</sup>. Moreover, laws and regulations must be drafted in English and French to have the force of law and English can be used in both the National Assembly and in court proceedings. The hierarchy that differential rights, privileges and immunities establishes is an admission that not all citizens are expected to relate to the collectivity in the same way.

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24. Access to English language schools is made available to a child of a Canadian citizen who received most of his/her elementary or secondary instruction in Canada or a child who is a temporary resident. Community organizations, certified private establishments and ambulance services also are available in English.

The extensive data collected by the state to gauge whether the *Charter of the French Language* is having the desired effect attests to the priority the state attaches to linguistic practices. On the side of intercultural relations, the data and research is far less extensive. Nonetheless, the policy statements and plan of action developed and refined over the last decade (the most recent plan of action, "Zero exclusion", put forth by the Ministère de l'Éducation (MEQ) and the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration (MRCI), focuses directly on racial and ethnic discrimination) are genuine attempts to confront the difficulties of accommodation and the need to sensitize the public and those who work closely with immigrants and their children to the demands that pluralism makes on the dominant culture. The Québec state, as reflected in its policy statements and programs, has committed itself to nurturing a sense of belonging through a common citizenry based on shared liberal democratic

principles and a shared commitment to French as the common public language. For all the laudable efforts to promote what is essentially a civic political culture and a robust citizenship, how plausible and effective is this project? One way to begin to fashion an answer to these questions is to attempt to assess the choices that the allophone communities appear to be making with regard to language use.

#### INTEGRATION STRATEGIES OF ALLOPHONE COMMUNITIES

Allophones now outnumber anglophones and the possibilities of securing French as the common public language very much depends, as it has throughout post-war era, on the linguistic choices of the allophone population. There are inherent difficulties with this line of inquiry that must make all assertions tentative. In the first instance, the designation “allophone”, originally used in the Gendron

Report<sup>25</sup>, refined and extended the range of social and political identities within Québec. The desire and will among francophone Quebecers to integrate immigrants in the late 1960s was pivotal to the assertion of the hegemony of the French language. The designation “allophone” provides immigrants and their descendants, hitherto unnamed, with a distinctive label, devoid of any content and referents other than the French and English opposition. Immigrants, with ties and by implication allegiance to the anglophone community, “polluted” the traditional English/French duality and created confusion as to who is a “vrai Anglais”. The term “allophone” levels the differences among immigrants, disguising the heterogeneity of their languages and identities as well as their material conditions and interests. Reduced to a uniform condition, immigrants carry the

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25. Commission d'enquête sur la situation de la langue française et les droits linguistiques au Québec, étude 3, Québec, Éditeur officiel du Québec, 1972, pp. 2-3.



potential to “become anything”. Their ambiguity is further reflected in the fact that they are at once potential allies (in the fight to preserve the French language) and potential foes (by aligning themselves with the anglophones or worse still integrating to the anglophone community, they threaten the relations of power between the majority and minority). Moreover, the privileging of language as the determinant of political identity determines who can speak with authority within the collectivity. The referent “allophone” accentuates the linguistic incompetence of the immigrant, who must defer to those who speak well or speak appropriately. And indeed, it was the claim to speak on behalf of the “allophones”, the presumption to appropriate or incorporate immigrants, that placed the allophones in the middle of a rivalry that precedes their arrival ; the “allophone” is invariably the third “person” in a relationship structured by the opposition between Québec and English Canada, between anglophones and francophones. The

linguistic choices allophones appear to be making reinforce their liminality and locate them on the boundaries of the subjective community. Nonetheless, the social and political integration enjoyed by immigrants and their descendants varies widely as does their sense of alienation from and identification with the Québécois collectivity. For these reasons among others, we must resist collapsing the diversity and multiplicity that the referent "allophone" invites.

In its documentation the Québec state employs a variety of terms to name immigrants and their descendants, but the commitment to a common citizenry (as well as sensitivity to criticism) is reflected in the transformations of the Ministère de l'Immigration (1968) into the Ministère des Communautés culturelles et de l'Immigration (1981), subsequently replaced by the Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration (1996). The deputy minister of the MRCI noted that the change in the name of the

ministry reflected a recognition that the term “communautés culturelles” was perceived as a term of exclusion, too closely associated to ethnic origins and culture ; moreover, it implied a denial that culture is dynamic and that the process of migration has multiple influences on cultural identity<sup>26</sup>. The sensibility comes closer to capturing the fluidity and hybridity of identities detectable among the younger generation of allophones.

Measures of language integration are blunt instruments that provide rough indications of trends. Linguistic integration is a complex process but in the context of Québec it is even more so. If, as Kymlicka notes, immigrants readily accept to “integrate into an existing societal culture” and can appreciate that “their life-chances are tied up with

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26. Ernst JOUTHE, Assistant Deputy Minister, Relations civiques, Ministère des Relations avec les citoyens et de l'Immigration, *Allocution prononcée lors du Colloque organisé par l'APEIQ sur le thème “De l'interculturel à la citoyenneté. Un plus pour la cohésion sociale ?”*, Montréal, May 9<sup>th</sup> 1997, pp. 3-5.

participation in the range of social institutions, based on a common language, which define that societal culture"<sup>27</sup>, the situation for immigrants and their descendants is not as straightforward as it would appear to be in the rest of Canada. Linguistic choices are not simply or even primarily a reflection of ill will towards francophone Quebecers. It is widely agreed that one of the effects of Bill 101 has been to make command of the French language increasingly a criteria for employment, and thus a powerful material incentive to acquire proficiency in French. It remains the case, as it probably always will, that the English language is the dominant language of North America. Thus, immigrants and their descendants as well as francophone Quebecers are presented with a powerful incentive to acquire competency in English<sup>28</sup>. The data for

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27. KYMLICKA, *op. cit.*, p. 28.

28. A recent study of earnings differentials among linguistic groups over the past three decades indicates that in 1990 bilingualism for anglophones and francophones (male and

1971-1991 reveals that the steady increase in the percentage of allophones with a knowledge of French has not diminished the percentage of allophones with a knowledge of English over the same period<sup>29</sup>. The most

female, full- and part-time) is highly rewarded in Québec. By 1990, unilingual anglophone males earned less than either bilingual or unilingual francophones or bilingual anglophones. For allophone males knowledge of English alone is more valuable than knowledge of only French, but bilingualism is even more valuable. Daniel M. SHAPIRO and Morton STELCNER, "Language and earnings in Québec: trends over twenty years, 1970-1990", *Canadian Public Policy*, vol. 23, n° 2, 1997, pp. 116-140.

29. The data for allophones in the Montréal region is as follows :

	1971	1981	1986	1991
Knowledge of French :	47 %	62 %	66 %	69 %
Knowledge of English :	69 %	71 %	70 %	68 %
Knowledge of French and English :	33.1 %	44.6 %	47.4 %	46.6 %
Knowledge of French only :	14 %	17.7 %	18.9 %	22 %
Knowledge of English only :	35.8 %	26.1 %	22.3 %	20.9 %
Neither French nor English :	17 %	11.6 %	11.3 %	10.4 %

Data drawn from Comité interministériel sur la situation de la langue française, 1996, p. 274, published by the Office de la langue française, Données démolinguistiques, OLF web site.

recent data indicates that the percentage of allophones in the Montreal region with a self-assessed knowledge of French is slightly ahead of those who claim to have a knowledge of English. With respect to educational choices, the impact of Bill 101 is steadily apparent: in 1971, 90 % of allophone children were enrolled in English language schools; by 1994-1995, 79 % were enrolled in French language schools. Perhaps more revealing is the percentage of allophones with the right to enroll their children in English language schools who choose to send their children to French language schools. The most recent figure of 8.7 % (1990) marks a substantial increase from only 3 % in 1983. Among anglophones there has also been an increase from 8.3 % in 1983 to 9.9 % in 1990. In addition, approximately one-third of all children in English language schools participate in French immersion programs<sup>30</sup>. While not negligible,

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30. Data cited is for the Greater Montréal area that includes Montérégie, Montréal, Laval, Lanaudière, and les

the data does not allow us to conclude that without the restrictions of Bill 101, allophone parents would willingly choose to enroll their children in French language schools.

Demographers regard language transfers or mobility (rate established by comparing reported mother tongue and language used at home) as a useful indicator to measure linguistic assimilation. There is an inexorable intergenerational shift in language use and although the rate of loss varies for different ethnic groups, research suggests that within

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Laurentides. Ministère de l'Éducation, Direction des études économiques et démographiques, fichier élèves-standard, cited by the Office de la langue française, "Langue et Éducation", OLF web site. It should be noted that allophones enrolled in English-language schools are mostly 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> generation Quebecers born in Québec who identify a language other than French and English as their mother tongue. The recent introduction of linguistic school boards may improve the rate of allophone students who continue their post secondary studies in French. Allophones who attended French language schools in the Protestant sector were less likely to continue their studies in French than those who attended French schools in the Catholic sector.

three generations knowledge and use of the heritage language declines dramatically. The 1996 Census indicates that over the past 25 years, the net shifts to French have increased more than those to English<sup>31</sup>. Among allophones, the proportion shifting to French was 39 % compared to 29 % in 1971. Overall there has been a decline in language shifts among allophones from 44 % in 1991 to 40 % in 1996. This is thought to be explained by the higher level of immigration during this period<sup>32</sup>. A

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31. STATISTICS CANADA, *op. cit.* A further word of caution : data on language shifts or transfer is a measure of the percentage of people with a given mother tongue who speak another language most often in the home. The home language data reflects only the language most often spoken, and does not pick up instances where two or more languages are spoken at home (often the case in mixed families or if grandparents reside with the family). Moreover, home language does not in itself tell us if French is used outside the home on a daily basis, i.e. at work, in school, with friends, etc. The use of a language outside the home, particularly at school, serves as an important counterweight to the home language environment.

32. Of all immigrants living in Québec, 14 % immigrated between 1986 and 1990, while 23 % immigrated between 1991



more interesting phenomenon that speaks to the particular context of Québec is the higher rate of transmission of heritage language in Québec rather than in other regions. But here too we need to be cautious, as with all the statistics cited. Individuals reporting ability to speak a language do so on the basis of their own assessment. How should the phenomena of “ethnolects” or what sociolinguists refer to as “interlanguages” be interpreted? Does the substantial borrowing and transformation of English and French words into the spoken heritage language indicate ethnic language retention or is it part of the process of assimilation<sup>33</sup>? Another consideration may be that the bilingualism and trilingualism of allophones

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and 1996. Forty-four percent of the foreign-born population immigrated before 1976. RECENSEMENT 1996, *Données ethno-culturelles*, “Populations immigrées recensées au Québec et dans les régions en 1996 : Caractéristiques générales”, August 1998, p. 11.

33. Marcel DANESI, “Ethnic language and acculturation : The case of Italian-Canadians”, *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, vol. 17, n° 1, 1985, pp. 48-103.

takes the form of *diaglossa*, where languages are used in different circumstances and are associated with different social roles<sup>34</sup>. Jean Laponce explains that *diaglossic* bilingualism (or trilingualism) can be relatively stable when the individual chooses to use a different language in the private domain (perhaps as a way of affirming one's ethnic identity), and in the public domain as an instrument of communication to participate in the wider community. In context of Québec, linguistic practices in the public domain have long been competitive and only relatively recently has the French-speaking majority succeeded in shifting the burden of bilingualism onto English speakers. The linguistic duality and the gradual equalization of the attraction of the two languages is widely held to be a

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34. Jean A. LAPONCE, "Reducing the tensions resulting from language contacts : personal or territorial solutions ?" in Daniel BONIN [ed.], *Vers la réconciliation ? La question linguistique au Canada dans les années 1990*, Kingston, Institut des relations intergouvernementales, 1992, p. 125.

significant contributing factor in the retention of mother tongue and ethnic identity among allophones. However, it should not be assumed that there is a simple or straightforward connection between language and ethnic identity. In a small study of language and ethnic identity among a group of second-generation Quebecers of Italian origin, Anne-Marie Fortier reports that her respondents did not regard the ability to speak Italian as the defining trait of their identity, rather they cited particular practices, values, and cuisine as distinctively “Italian” traits. Of course, these traits reflect the particular social-historical world that Italian immigrants and their descendants have improvised within the context of Québec. Moreover, respondents cited their *multilingualism* in opposition to unilingualism and bilingualism, as a distinctive and positive trait of “allophone” identity<sup>35</sup>.

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35. Anne-Marie FORTIER, “Langue et identité chez des Québécois d’ascendance italienne”, *Sociologie et société*, vol. 24, n° 2, 1992, pp. 91-102.

Language practices may be read as strategies that affirm the space between the hegemonies of French/English, anglophone/francophone, Québec/Canada. The apparent resistance to unilingualism need not be read as an obstacle to the generalization of French as the common public language of Québec.

It had been assumed that the children of immigrants, as the transitional generation, were caught between two irreconcilable worlds, saddled with multiple identity referents that invariably provoked a crisis of identity. Further, once the “transition” is effected, a uniform and unitary identity would emerge. However, recent research in both France and Québec suggests that children of immigrants express fluid ethnic identities and are comfortable with a plurality of ethnic identities<sup>36</sup>. The

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36. D. Meintel notes that “[...] it is not strictly speaking a question of ‘maintaining’ but rather of continually transforming the characteristics that are still used as ethnic indicators [...] We believe that the Montréal context has not only provided conditions conducive to perpetuating these ethnic

heterogeneity of cultural identity and the interrelationship of diverse cultures is a relatively new area of research in Québec. Such research may yield a more complicated but realistic account of the dynamic interpenetration of the multiple cultures. The diversification and hybridization of lifestyles evident in contemporary urban environments provide individuals with different and complex cultural options. We are still in the early stages of appreciating the instantiation of this phenomenon within the pluriethnic context of Montreal.

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and cultural indicators, but has also offered the conditions of a very specific interethnic place [...] It should be noted that intercultural publications like *Vice-Versa*, *Parole métèque*, *Humanitas* and several others are found only in Montréal...” Free translation of D. MEINTEL, “L’identité ethnique chez de jeunes Montréalais d’origine immigrée”, *Sociologie et société*, vol. 24, n° 2, Fall 1992, pp. 81-82, 85. See also D. MEINTEL, “Transnationalité et transethnicité chez des jeunes issus de milieux immigrés à Montréal”, *Revue européenne des migrations internationales*, vol. 9, n° 3, 1993, pp. 63-79.

The inclination to assign a unifying and unitary identity to ethnic groups is not just convenient nor is it benign. The predisposition of the state to simplify and categorize is an essential means to enhance its administrative capacities and measure the effect of its policies. Nonetheless, these categories or standard designations are static and as such impose both an internal unity and an unqualified difference between cultural groups. The potential blurring of cultures and by extension the construction of identities that stress “both/and” rather than “either/or” is a palpable threat to an unqualified allegiance so valued by the modern nation-state<sup>37</sup>.

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37. Jocelyn Maclure emphasizes the need to recreate the Québécois identity between the comfort of an “authentic” Québec nation and the indifference of cosmopolitanism without roots. I agree with the author’s defence of a profoundly pluralist Québécois identity that would accommodate the hybrid and fragmentary forms of cultural coexistence that prevail in contemporary Québec. J. MACLURE, “Authenticité québécoise. Le Québec et la fragmentation contemporaine de l’identité”, *Globe. Revue internationale d’études québécoises*, vol. 1, n° 1, 1998, pp. 9-35.

## FINAL THOUGHTS

The discourse of civic culture and citizenship has not depoliticized ethnicity nor effaced the relevance of the ethnic relations of powers within Québec (or Canada). The nation is not so easily transformed into a hegemonic culture. The integration strategies of so-called allophones are necessarily marked by resistance, driven by the impulse to overcome social subordination and the sense of political impotence<sup>38</sup>. The invisibility of

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38. The Shapiro and Stelcner study provides evidence that language and ethnicity are related. Controlling for education, age and date of immigration does not change the results that regardless of education or time of arrival in Canada, or ability to speak English and/or French, allophones are still earning less than francophones and anglophones. Their estimates for 1990 indicate that French-speaking allophone men earned 23 % less than unilingual anglophones, 28 % less than unilingual francophones and 36 % less than bilingual francophones. These results do include controls for date of immigration. Earnings differentials among 40 "visible" and "non-visible" ethnic groups in Québec confirmed that several "non-visible" ethnic groups (Greeks, East Europeans and

ethnocultural minorities in educational institutions, the civil service, the media and spheres of public debate undermines the credibility of pretensions to overcome cultural monism. Yet, the full integration of immigrants and their descendants presupposes the will of the majority to open the *center*, to make space for the emergence and elaboration of a heterogeneous pluriethnic culture. Immigrants and their descendants born and raised in Québec are reminded everywhere and often that French is the common language of public discourse. The model of integration promoted by the Québec state seeks to elicit a deeper commitment than the use of the French language; the larger goal is to develop among non-francophones a commitment to the preservation and empowerment of the French language. It may be that the French language

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Latin Americans) incurred large and significant earnings penalties as did "visible" minorities (Arabs, Blacks, Chinese, South and West Asians and Native peoples). Daniel M. SHAPIRO and Morton STELCNER, *op. cit.*, pp. 121 and 130, note 22.



can only be a shared civic good, if it facilitates the elaboration of an open-ended, heterogeneous, multilingual civic identity.