

Богатириць В. В.,

Чернівецький національний університет імені Юрія Федьковича, м. Чернівці

FUTURE PROSPECTS FOR A THRIVING MULTICULTURALISM IN CANADA

Авторка статті простежує ретроспективу виникнення канадської політики багатокультурності, акцентуючи увагу на її важливому конструкті – національній ідентичності, та розглядає подальші перспективи розвитку мультикультуралізму в Канаді на сучасному етапі глокалізації.

Ключові слова: Канада, перспективи розвитку політики багатокультурності, національна ідентичність, глокалізація.

Автор статті прослідковує ретроспективу виникнення канадської політики мультикультуралізму, акцентуючи увагу на її важливому конструкті – національній ідентичності, і розглядає подальші перспективи розвитку мультикультуралізму в Канаді на сучасному етапі глокалізації.

Ключевые слова: Канада, перспективы развития мультикультуралізма, национальная идентичность, глокализация.

The body of the article goes on to discuss the history of multiculturalism in Canada, taking into consideration the concept of national identity, and finally offers some comments on the prospects of multiculturalism in Canada in terms of glocalization.

Key terms: Canada, multiculturalism prospects, national identity, glocalization.

“We have established a distinct Canadian way, a distinct Canadian model: Accommodation of cultures. Recognition of diversity. A partnership between citizenship and state. A balance that promotes individual freedom and economic prosperity while at the same time sharing risks and benefits.” (Stephen Harper)

To begin, I'd like to offer a history of multiculturalism in Canada, then talk briefly about the concept of national identity, and finally offer some comments on the *prospects of multiculturalism in Canada*. It should be mentioned that Canada is the intellectual home of the notion of “multicultural citizenship”. Moreover, both theoretical and practical perceptions of multiculturalism draw heavily upon the Canadian example, using the lessons derived from observing the case to infer the nature and general health of multiculturalism. In general, a plethora of scholars, analysts and politicians pre-suppose that the Canada's multicultural policy is to create a nation that emphasizes the importance and rights of cultural groups; united by a common creation of an office of multiculturalism in October, 1971.

Canada's official multiculturalism policy emerged directly from the findings of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, established in response to Quebec's Quiet Revolution, but also from the post-war search for identity in English Canada. In response to the commission and the emphasis on the “two founding races,” Canadians from established European ethnic communities in Canada, particularly Ukrainian-Canadians, came forward to reject the idea that they were somehow less Canadian than the British and the French. These Canadians, according to the commission, had retained cultural and linguistic links to their heritage without compromising their ability to be fully-fledged Canadian. In its final report, the commission declared that Canada was immensely enriched by the presence of diverse cultural groups and recommended recognizing cultural pluralism as essential to Canadian identity, as well as providing a number of institutional recommendations. The outcome of these recommendations was the Official Multiculturalism Policy. The ethnic and cultural diversity of Canada's population is a major advantage of globalization processes. It should be emphasized that, the Canadian Government is working with provincial and territorial governments, the private and voluntary sectors and individual Canadians to help strengthen institutions, build safer and more supportive communities and reinforce shared values. Canada is enhancing its multiculturalism programming, expanding its anti-racism activities and strengthening its support for other minority groups such as persons with disabilities to help more individual Canadians overcome barriers to their full participation in society. In the context of globalization, multiculturalism and world community it should be stressed that these processes accentuate the long-existing phenomenon of structural racism, generating increasingly harsh policies and attitudes in the wealthier countries towards migrants and the creation of stronger barriers to most forms of migration. Community development, aware of values of social justice is in charge of *building bridges between communities and supporting the goals of multiculturalism, while combating racism – essential part of globalization, at local, national and international levels* [1, p. 19].

Some of the Canadian regional reports suggested that this theme combined (or conflated) two distinct issues that were worth separating. On the one hand, there is a set of questions about Canadian current policies on racism and racial discrimination, and how they can be made more effective. On the other hand, there is a more hypothetical dispute on the ongoing perspectives of multiculturalism as a concept or model, and whether inherited ideas of multiculturalism need to be replaced with new, post-multicultural approaches in an era of “hyper-diversity.” The wind of change is blowing for several causes, since the Canadian regional reports proposed that more concrete and urgent issues of racism and discrimination be separated from more speculative and theoretical issues about the future of multiculturalism, and that both issues be treated as separate research themes [7].

The parallels between past anxieties and present concerns about integration in Canada should be briefly mentioned as well. Both Michael Adams, founder of Environics Research Group and author of *Unlikely Utopia*, and Will Kymlicka, a professor of philosophy at Queen's and widely recognized as an international expert on multiculturalism, parallel anxieties about European Catholic immigrants in the past and contemporary anxieties about Muslim newcomers. Many concerns about immigration and multiculturalism today look back nostalgically on earlier waves of immigration. The argument postulates "we didn't worry about earlier waves because newcomers were coming from the same cultural and religious traditions as the British and French" (i.e. European, Christian). Today, the argument contrasts, newcomers from Africa and Asia are from very different religious, political, and cultural traditions, so they'll have a harder time integrating into social and political life in Canada [2, 52]. Nevertheless, European Catholics were as much of a concern to the Canadians of the past as Muslims are these days. W.Kymlicka explains European Catholics were seen as "undemocratic and unpatriotic because their allegiance was to the Pope, and as separatist because they demanded their own schools. The fear that Catholics would not integrate took many years to disappear; yet today they are seen as a vital component of the mainstream society into which Muslims are allegedly not integrating" [6, 55].

In his 2008-2010 Report on the Current State of Multiculturalism in Canada, Will Kymlicka states that there is much evidence that newcomers and visible minorities are integrating in Canada better than in any other country in the world, and that multiculturalism is a major factor in this success. Canada is not the only country in the world with a diverse population or the only country to adopt an official multiculturalism policy; however, *it is the only country that has made the reality and celebration of diversity intrinsic to national identity*. Public polling gives an idea of just how increasingly important multiculturalism is to the way Canadians self-identify. Since 1985, Environics has been asking Canadians to identify, in their own words, what makes them proud to be Canadian. In 1985, multiculturalism was in the 10th place. In 2006, multiculturalism had climbed to the second place behind only freedom and democracy [2, 20]. Though a Focus Canada poll in 2010 saw multiculturalism fall to the 4th place (behind democracy, quality of life, and being a caring/humanitarian people), multiculturalism remains as one of the top reasons Canadians are proud of their country. Indeed, Adams explains in *Unlikely Utopia* that a 2003 survey revealed 85% of Canadians identify multiculturalism as important to Canadian identity; more important, he notes, than bilingualism or hockey [2, 20]. Additionally, an international Ipsos MORI survey in 2006 revealed that Canadians have the most positive attitudes about immigration in the world. 75% of Canadians believe that immigrants have a positive influence on the country while only 54% of Australians, the second highest country, agreed with the statement [2, 13-16]. Adams also notes that these positive attitudes have increased as Canada's immigration rates have increased [2, 16].

I really don't mean to advocate for everything being perfect in Canada, that the discrepancy between Canada's branding and its reality doesn't persist in important ways or that there aren't sustained challenges and flaws in multiculturalism here. The economic frustrations of newcomers is a topical issue at present, one that has only worsened over the last few decades, and the disparity between the average income of some visible minority groups and the average income of Canadians is actually distressing.

These problems should be interpreted as indicators that multiculturalism in Canada – as a social ideal – is in process rather than completed, and the federal policy must correspondingly progress as well. Noteworthy, multiculturalism funding today supports the exchange but not the cultures' isolation. Arguments about the failure of multiculturalism in Canada tend to focus on the existence of ethnic enclaves as an example of the marginalization and segregation produced by multiculturalism policies. Definitely, it should be emphasized on both the socio-economic outcomes of newcomers to Canada and the high rate of poverty among the visible minority groups. The Canadian government must be vigilant about the way that anti-Muslim sentiment and hysteria are presented in the media. It shouldn't be overstated what a fringe position is, studies suggest, but as it's become part of article about multiculturalism, it will be great of focusing on these issues. International backlash against multiculturalism – in Germany, the U.K., the Netherlands, etc. – has influenced commentary on multiculturalism in Canada today. Much of the international reaction is linked to Anti-Muslim sentiments, and the same is true of these arguments when applied to the Canadian context [2]. Public opinion polling demonstrates that Canada has weathered this international backlash more successfully than European countries. Through data collected in Adams' *Unlikely Utopia*, he argues that, compared to international polls, Canadian Muslims are less likely to perceive hostility toward their faith than Muslims in other Western countries, and Canadian Muslims express high levels of pride in the nation [3,98; 95]. Despite this positive news, Adams also demonstrates that, though Canadian Muslims believe that their fellow Muslims want to integrate and adopt Canadian values, most Canadians (54% in 2010) doubt this [4]. There's also evidence that Canadians are anxious about newcomer integration. The number of Canadians who agree with the sentiment "too many immigrants do not adopt Canadian values" was in gentle decline from 1993 to 2005 (from 72% to 58%) until it rose to 65% in 2006 [3, 20], and now sits at 66% in 2010 [4]. This increase in anxiety about integration is troubling, and though Canadians continue to have favorable opinions about immigration generally, support for both immigration and multiculturalism has softened slightly in the last four years. As part of public consciousness and as a concern of federal policy, persistent discrimination and the economic outcomes of both newcomers and particular visible minority groups must be at the forefront of discussions about multiculturalism's challenges and successes.

We can jump into conclusion that Canada has managed its increasing diversity and maintained unity by balancing rights and responsibilities in citizenship, and individual and collective rights in its Constitution. However, the global drastic forces of change that impact on all countries affect Canada as well. Eventually, all Canadians (regardless their background) are sharing common beliefs and common hopes for their prosperous future, whilst enjoying common rights.

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