Secularization and the Separation of Church and State in Canada

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ABSTRACT

This article concludes that the assumption that challenges of religious diversity and freedom have been solved by the adoption of a separation of Church and State represents a real barrier to attempts to address religious intolerance and discrimination. Instead, policy-makers and other stake-holders need to engage in a broad dialogue to fashion a uniquely Canadian solution to the issues of religious pluralism and multiculturalism. Such a dialogue will certainly engage governments at all levels but can also take advantage of established interfaith networks.

Introduction

Most Canadians assume that we have sufficiently addressed the issues of religious pluralism and freedom by creating a secular state marked by a separation of Church and State. Such a model would safeguard the goals of democratic governance, social justice, and multiculturalism, and would prohibit the State from favouring any one religious community, and would allow maximum religious freedom for all. This assumption does not accurately describe Canadian society or Church-State relations.

Unlike the United States and a handful of other countries, Canada does not have a constitutional and legal separation of Church and State, nor is it a fully secularized society. By adopting these assumptions, policy-makers and other stakeholders either ignore or refuse to address the issues of religious diversity and freedom in policies and practices related to multiculturalism, immigrant integration, and social justice.

While some arrangement for the autonomy of the state from religious communities is clearly a prerequisite for pluralistic democracy in Canada, uncritical approaches to the separation of Church and State can present significant barriers to the goals of Canadian democratic participation, social justice and multiculturalism. These approaches may serve to hide the persistence of Christian privilege in Canadian public culture as well as institutional practices and structures; alienate large sectors of the Canadian population by refusing to acknowledge or respect the public elements of their religious traditions; ignore claims made in the name of religion, for example, claims by Aboriginal peoples to access to certain lands in order to fulfill the requirements of Aboriginal spirituality; discourage the contribution to Canadian society made by faith-based institutions and organizations, such as schools, hospitals, social service agencies, as well as cultural, sports and charitable organizations; foster resistance to reasonable accommodation of religious difference, a human right that guarantees that a practice or policy that serves the majority does not discriminate against members of religious minority groups; encourage the creation of religious "ghettoes," that is, closed ethno-religious communities that have relatively little connection to the rest of Canadian society; prevent integration of ethno-religious newcomers (immigrants and refugees) by giving the Canadian state and society a public face that appears foreign or hostile to them.

The issue of religion in discussions of social inclusion, immigrant integration, multiculturalism, democratic participation and justice must be considered when making Canada more just and a participatory society. The assumption that challenges of religious diversity and freedom have been solved by the adoption of a separation of Church and State represents a real barrier to attempts to address religious intolerance and discrimination. Instead, policy-makers and other stake-holders need to engage in a broad dialogue to fashion a uniquely Canadian solution to the issues of religious pluralism and multiculturalism, which can also be taken advantage of by interfaith networks.

The idea that there is a separation between Church and State in Canada is widespread among members of Canada's political, cultural, academic, and media elite. However, there has never been an American-style "wall of separation between Church and State" in Canada. Indeed, there are only in a few states (such as the U.S., France and countries that are or were formerly Communist) where a legal and constitutional separation of Church and State exists. Moreover, the arrangements

for separation of Church and State in those countries vary greatly and produce different results. In contrast to these abstract models, Canada has seen a complex, ambiguous, contested and changing arrangement of relationships between religious communities and various levels of government. While Canada has become more secular and autonomous in recent decades and has a separation of political, economic and social institutions from religious institutions, there still exists no wall of separation. In fact, certain elements of the American separation of Church and States – not to mention France's *laïcité* – would violate sections of the *Canadian Constitution Act* (1982) and the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) – as well as other human rights legislation.

Consequences for multiculturalism

The abstract and a-historical belief that there is such a wall of separation in Canada may in fact act as a barrier to achieving some of the goals of the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988) and other efforts to promote diversity and inclusion. While Canada needs to negotiate and renegotiate the relations between religious and state institutions, doing so under the model of abstract and a-historical definitions of the separation of Church and State can foster an environment of intolerance and promote discrimination against members of certain religious groups. Moreover, religious identity is closely tied to ethnic identity; it is inevitable that such an approach will serve to marginalize members of ethno-religious minority groups.

An ideological adherence to a strict separation of Church and State either in official policy or in Canada's public culture could discourage religiously defined groups from participating in public debates and projects. Most importantly, a closed secularism communicates to members of ethno-religious groups the understanding that Canadian identity and their religious identity are incompatible. Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jews, and Muslims (as well as Christians who were not part of the "shadow establishment" of Canada's Christian era) find themselves more frequently the targets of the type of intolerance and discrimination (both direct and indirect) promoted by an ideological adherence to a strict secularism.

Secularization refers to the process whereby institutions and spheres of authority are transferred from religious bodies to non-religious bodies. It is a process that began in western societies, building on the Christian division between the "temporal" and the "spiritual" spheres of society. While the State had responsibility for the temporal and the Church had responsibility for the spiritual, both spheres were seen as sacred. However, in certain periods and locations, this gave the Church enormous political power. Only after the Wars of Religion in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the Enlightenment of the eighteenth century did Europeans begin to separate religion from politics and church from state, transferring a variety of important public functions to a state that was increasingly free from the control of religious authorities and eventually redefined by a non-religious culture. France and the United States were the first states to formalize these arrangements in their constitutions.

1. THE CANADIAN EXPERIENCE

To say that Canada is a secular state is not an accurate assessment of Canadian constitutional law and jurisprudence. Unlike the United States there is no strict separation between Church and State in the Canadian *Constitution Act* (1982). The situation in Canada is more complex. For example, the *Constitution Act* actually *requires* some provincial governments to fund Roman Catholic separate schools, an arrangement that is simply impossible in the U.S. Even less suitable to Canada's legal tradition is France's adoption of the law prohibiting the wearing of religious symbols in public institutions, most notably schools. Such a law would be impossible in Canada, since it would be an infringement of Section 2 (a) of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) as interpreted by the Supreme Court. The myth of separation of Church and State may blind us to realities of Canadian history and society and has the potential to promote a false understanding of how Canadians deal with ethno-religious diversity.

Given that there is no constitutional or legal basis for a separation of Church and State in Canada, we need to understand where this idea came from, what it means, and what importance it has. One of the most important sources for the belief in separation of Church and State is, of course, the influence of American culture and jurisprudence. Canadians who follow American politics find such church-state controversies discussed frequently, most recently in the form of George W. Bush's creation of a White House office for "faith-based and community initiatives" in providing social services.[2] In decisions that led to the de-Christianization of the public school system, Canadian courts frequently cited American jurisprudence on the separation of Church and State – despite its dissimilarities with Canadian precedents.[3]

While American secularism is one source of the mistaken belief that Canada is secular, this belief has deep roots in Canada. It is rooted in our conception of modern society as progressing from a past marked by superstition and ignorance to a future based on reason and science. This "myth of progress" is at the root of theories of secularization and is so widely held that for decades social scientists did not notice that they had been proven false by history. Religion has persisted in the modern world, both in the advanced industrial nations and in the developing countries of Africa, Asia, and Latin America. Every discussion of church-state relations has these theories of secularization; consequently, it is important to understand secularization and its relationship to modernization.

Secularization is an inherent part of the process or modernization, the enormous social transformation ushered in by the democratic and industrial revolutions in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. As societies became more democratic and industrialized (as defined by reason, egalitarianism, and economic growth), religion receded. As individuals participated in modern institutions, whose cultures were defined more and more by science, they ceased to believe stories and explanations of their faith traditions. For example, the rational demands of democracy meant that the state had to become autonomous from church authorities. In the interest of representative,

rational, effective, and fair government, the democratic revolution promoted the separation of Church and State.[4] Secularization was thought to be a "structural trend," that is, inherent, universal and irresistible feature of modernization.

During the emergence of market economies in Europe, for example, financiers had to overcome the Christian prohibition against usury (earning interest on a loan) and working on Sundays and feast days. Financiers and politicians claimed a sphere of activity that was relatively free of religious control or interference. This process, more than any other, lead to the separation of Church and State, church and market, church and university, church and hospital, as well as church and almost every other important social institution. Pushed out of important spheres of activity, religion began to lose its power and prestige.

If religion persists at all, theorists say, it does so in the private realm of personal interiority, family relations, ethnic identity, and local community. Religion is redefined as "private," not in the sense that it is something that one would not want to discuss, but rather in that religious institutions are to have no ability to coerce individuals and had no official place in the public sphere. Religion in the modern world, according to secularization theory, was to be privately diverse and idiosyncratic as well as publicly irrelevant and powerless.

Sociologists of religion now reject early secularization theories. First, there has been no evidence of a uniform decline in religious mentalities in industrialized or industrializing countries. The United States saw religious membership and attendance rise as it became more industrial and democratic.[5] The majority of Canadians still believe in God, and there has been little change in atheism, held by only 6% of Canadians in 1975 and 1985, 9% in 1995, and 7% in 2005, marginally higher among men and younger adults than women and people who are older.[6]

While the decline of religion in Europe has been precipitous, there was no straightforward correlation between modernization and secularization. In countries such as Poland and Ireland, religious membership and attendance increased. Only in some Western European countries has there been a decline in religious mentalities, but even in those countries a large majority (some two-thirds of the population) still believe in God or a divine spirit. Globally, the argument for secularization is much weaker. A 2002 PEW Foundation study showed that, with few exceptions, religion was very important for people living in developing nations.[7]

In *Public Religion in the Modern World*, José Casanova shows that in some societies (such as Spain) modernization has meant the privatization of religion while in others (such as Poland and Brazil) the Church has remained a feature of public life. Events such as the Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979, the role of the Roman Catholic-supported Solidarity labour union movement in challenging communism in Poland, the rise of various religio-political parties in formally secular countries like India and Turkey, as well as the rise of the New Christian Right in the United States, are evidence of both the persistence and power of religion as a force in public life.[8] Canada became more religious in the early stages of modernization in the late 19th century, and to call religion in Canada a wholly "private" affair is an exaggeration. Religion has a public presence in Canadian society.

Casanova argued hat secularization theory has entered the public imagination in European societies, convincing people that to be a good, modern (that is, democratic, effective, prosperous and moral) person, one must become secular. In the United States, the exact opposite occurs. To be a good American, one must believe in God (in one Gallup poll, more Americans said that they would refuse to vote for an atheist than for a Black, woman, Jew, Catholic, Baptist, Mormon or a homosexual).[9] Immigrants in the United States who trace their roots back to Europe are decidedly more religious than their European counterparts. Casanova speculates that it is the social expectation to conform to the dominant culture that helps to promote secularization of individuals in Europe but not in America.[10] The national "personality" of most European societies is that of the secular modern, while that of the United States is the Christian modern.[11]

There is little evidence to suggest that secularization is a fundamental structural trend of modernization. Furthermore, there is no universal law that states that an absolute separation of Church and State is necessary for modernization. In fact, societies have chosen a variety of strategies and arrangements in determining the role of religion in modernity.

2. CHURCH AND STATE IN CANADA

There are three periods of church-state relations in Canada: 1) the attempt to transplant "Christendom" from Europe where church and aristocratic government worked hand in hand to define and control society (1608-1854); 2) the creation of a "pluralist establishment" in which the mainline Christian churches (that is, the Anglican, Presbyterian, Methodist/United, Baptist and Roman Catholic churches) acted as a "shadow establishment" (1854-World War II); and 3) the increasing separation of Church and State and the secularization of Canadian society after World War II.

In his famous report after the Rebellions of 1837–38 in Upper and Lower Canada, Lord Durham observed that one of the causes of the unrest in Upper Canada was the privileges enjoyed by the Church of England. Consequently, in 1840, the government decided to divide the Clergy Reserves among a larger number of denominations – although the Church of England and the Church of Scotland still received the lion's share. In 1854, the government liquidated the Clergy Reserves altogether. The dream of an established church – Protestant or Roman Catholic – in British North America was over.[12] However, the architects of Confederation still saw Canada as a Christian country. Historians have called this arrangement "voluntary Christendom" or "pluralist establishment," oxymoronic descriptions well-suited to the Canadian "shadow establishment".

At the time of Confederation, Sir Samuel Leonard Tilley, a pro-Confederation politician, recalled the words of Psalm 72, verse 8 ("He shall have Dominion also from sea to sea, and from the river unto the ends of the earth") that would become the motto used in the Canadian coat of arms. The

new entity was called the Dominion of Canada, a name that spoke to its unquestioned Christian foundations. For both the British and French communities alike, to be Canadian was to be Christian. From that assumption arose the support of Christian public education, the creation of social services, institutions for the poor, the legislation of Christian morality (in the cases of sexual behaviour and alcohol consumption, for example), laws protecting the Lord's Day, state-sponsored Christian missions to the Aboriginal peoples (including the disastrous residential school system), efforts to "Christianize" immigrants, and religious discrimination – sometimes amounting to persecution – against religious non-conformists, be they Christian or other.[13]

From Confederation until the 1960s, the mainline Protestant churches[14] (the Anglicans, Presbyterians, and the United Church of Canada, later joined by "junior partners" such as the Lutherans, Baptists, and various evangelical groups) along with the Roman Catholic Church formed a "plural establishment." In the United States, the problem of religious pluralism was solved by articulating a theory of individual rights and erecting a "wall of separation" between Church and State. Although many Canadians today believe their society is also characterized by this American constitutional innovation, in fact the Canadian solution was more conservative. The government formally recognized a limited number of denominations and supported their work. Moreover, the mainline Christian churches enjoyed a cultural and social "establishment" in that the dominant culture and political, economic, and social institutions were clearly defined by Christian values. Christianity set the foundation of Canada's personality for the century after Confederation.

Unlike the United States and a handful of other countries, Canada does not have a constitutional and legal separation of Church and State, nor is it a fully secularized society.

In fact, there were really two Canadian "plural establishments," one for English Canada and another for French Canada. The character of nationalism in Canada highlights this connection between Christianity on the one hand and the dominant English and French cultures on the other. In English Canada, British culture and politics, Protestantism, and a belief in modern political, economic and scientific "progress" formed the three pillars of Canadian nationalism. Roman Catholics, other non-mainline Christians, and of course, non-Christians struggled to find a legitimate place in this society.[15] By contrast, among French Canadians, the French language and culture, the Roman Catholic faith, and the traditional agricultural lifestyle (anchored by the patriarchal family) formed the core of their national identity. Remarkably, even though most French Canadians had become urban, industrial workers by 1931, French Canadian nationalists still heralded and romanticized the life of the simple, pious *habitant* or farmer well into the 1950s. Both English and French versions of Canadian nationalism defined non-Christians as "other". Members of non-Christian groups, from Hindus and Sikhs to Jews and atheists, experienced marginalization and even persecution.[16]

From the mid-1800s up until the 1960s, Canada was considered one of the most thoroughly Christian nations in the world. The number of Canadians who attended churches as a proportion of the total population in the 1950s was as much as one-third to one-half greater than that of the United States.[17] Also during this time, church attendance in the province of Quebec was quite possibly greater than in anywhere else in the world. As a result, the churches wielded great influence over the affairs of the state for a considerable period of Canadian history. What was most interesting about the relationship between Church and State in Canada prior to the mid-twentieth century was the fact that there existed no formal union between these two institutions, as was often the case in other nations with high levels of church attendance. In the United Kingdom for example, the relationship between Church and State was extremely formal, given the existence of an official state church, which was directly integrated with the political structure of the nation. In Canada, however, this relationship was much less formal, evidenced by the absence of an official state-church, but arguably just as influential in determining public policy that favoured the dominant Christian majority. For example, the Canadian state frequently passed laws to enforce the norms of the Christian majority, including laws against the production and sale of alcohol, homosexual activity, birth control, abortion, and divorce.

Secularization and the separation of Church and State

From 1960 on, Canadian society experienced a significant degree of secularization. In the 1961 Census, only one-half of one percent of respondents indicated that they had "no religion." In the 2001 Census, that figure rose to 16.2%.[18] The number of Canadians identifying themselves as Catholics dropped from 46 to 43 percent, while the proportion identifying themselves with the mainline Protestant churches (Anglican, Baptist, and Presbyterian and United churches) dropped from 41 percent to 20 percent.[19] Figures on church attendance tell the same story, after World War II 83% of Canadians attended weekly mass, and in the early 1960s this number was at 50%, falling to less than 23% during the 1990s.[20]

However, despite these declines, the majority of Canadians still identify themselves as Christian. Moreover, there has been a growth of non-Christian religious communities since the early 1970s. Finally, many of those people who identify themselves as having "no religion" on the Census still define themselves as "spiritual," believe in God or a divine spirit and engage in some form of religious practice, such as meditation or prayer.

Table 1: Major religious denominations, Canada, 1991 and 2001[21]			
Religious Affiliation	**2001**	**1991**	**% change (1991-2001)**
Roman Catholic	12,793,125	12,203,625	4.8
Protestant	8,654,845	9,427,675	-8.2
Christian Orthodox	479,620	387,395	23.8
Other Christian	780,450	353,395	121.1
Muslim	579,640	253,265	128.9
Jewish	329,995	318,185	3.7
Buddhist	300,345	163,415	83.8
Hindu	297,200	157,015	89.3
Sikh	278,415	147,440	88.8
No Religion	4,796,325	3,333,245	43.9

While the changes in Canadian attitudes about religion since 1960 have been dramatic, we have not seen much evidence of a decline of religious mentalities. Canadians are still interested in spiritual matters, questions of ultimate meaning, and religion.[22] Even in Quebec, where the Catholic Church had remarkable power, the provincial government was becoming the primary framework for the French Canadian nation. For example, Jean Hamelin and Nicole Gagnon show how, already in the 1920s, the complexity and scale of needs for social services and healthcare in an increasingly urbanized and industrialized Quebec meant that the Catholic Church lacked the financial resources to meet them. The Quebec State stepped in and from that time on the Church became a junior partner in an alliance with the state and business; it was allowed to handle education, healthcare, and social services only to the extent that it served the interests of the Quebec political and economic elite.[23]

Education, healthcare and social services began to be defined as discrete realms of specialization in which professionalism and effectiveness were to trump religious values. Still, it would only be in the post-World War II period – and especially during the 1960s and 70s – that we would see the emergence of what we might recognize as a secular state. In Quebec, that development would be more dramatic and sudden but it was not essentially different. After 1960, across Canada, politicians and senior civil servants implemented public policy and institutional changes that brought about the de-Christianization of Canadian society and public institutions by limiting the influence that the Church had previously exercised over the public affairs of the state. This was a reflection of a political consensus in many Western liberal democracies, including Canada that questioned the hegemonic influence of Christianity. Charles Taylor calls that emerging political sensibility the "politics of universalism." This consensus was based on the idea that all individuals, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, culture, or religion, were equal within a liberal democracy, and that no single gender, race, ethnicity, culture, or religion, was permitted to dominate the affairs of the whole. The politics of universalism differed dramatically from the politics of social hierarchy, the dominant political ideology in the West – including Canada – up until the 1960s, which emphasized the rights of the political, economic and social elite. Worldwide, some of the products of this shift in political doctrine can be seen in the adoption of the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* (1948) as well as subsequent United Nations declarations common in the 1960s and 70s, the *European Convention of Human Rights* (1950), and the American Civil Rights movement of the 1950s and 60s. In Canada, we saw a transformation of public culture that eventually led to the adoption of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982) and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (1988).

The distancing of Christianity from the apparatus of government and other important Canadian institutions began to accelerate with the victories of Jean Lesage's Liberals over the Union Nationale in the 1960 Quebec general election and Lester B. Pearson's Liberal's over John Diefenbaker's Conservatives in the 1963 Canadian federal election. The Liberal victory in the province of Quebec ushered in the Quiet Revolution, which resulted in the expansion of state support for and control of education, health care, and social services. The Liberal victory in the Canadian federal election meant the initiation of more liberally oriented public policy that extended the proliferation of a politics of universalism on a national level. The secularization of Canadian public policy only intensified during Pierre Trudeau's tenure as Prime Minister.

New public values replaced influences that the Canadian churches had exerted from the eighteenth century through the mid-twentieth, where as Liberal-communal political ideals stimulated by the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* replaced the conservative-communal ideals of Canada's past. Because Christianity had been expressed consistently in the ideals of a conservative-communal social order, when that conservative-communal social order was given up, so was the Christianity.[24] New values attached to multi-culturalism and human rights were developed out of a more liberal politics of universalism and replaced the conservative politics of social hierarchy with which the Canadian churches had become identified.

In fact, the churches themselves were frequently – for distinctly religious reasons – promoters of this new ethic of universalism. Many in the churches began to see Christianity's implication in the conservative social order as religiously illegitimate. They themselves accepted the process of differentiation, demanded the autonomy of the state and church, promoted multiculturalism and human rights, and even became trenchant critics of the secular state for not going far enough in addressing issues of social justice. It should be noted that in Canada, the process of differentiation was undertaken by Christians and not secular thinkers. Even today, most mainline Christians support a separation of Church and State.

Frequently, Canada's increasing religious diversity is cited as a cause for this separation of Church and State, but in fact the process precedes by several decades the influx of immigrants from countries where Christianity is not the dominant religion. Indeed, the number of Hindus, Buddhists, Sikhs, Jews, Muslims and practitioners of Chinese religion has risen dramatically in Canada in the last fifteen years. Still, taken together they represented a very small percentage of the population from 1960 to 1990. The process of differentiation also preceded by several decades the emergence of official policies of multiculturalism; that means that this separation of Church and State had begun before Canadians took the rights of members of these minority religious groups into serious consideration.

The persistence of religion in Canadian public life

Canada is no longer "God's Dominion," an overtly Christian nation. On the other hand, Canada is not really a "post-Christian society."[25] There are signs that Canada has become a secular country with a separation of Church and State, but there are other indicators that Christianity remains a significant public presence. It is for that reason that we conclude that Canadian secularism is "residually Christian".

There is no doubt that the Canadian state and market – along with other social institutions that depend on them – have become separated from the churches. There are clear signs of this separation: the de-Christianization of Canada's public schools, especially after the adoption of the 1982 *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*; the overturning of the *Lord's Day Act* (1905) in 1985 that allowed for Sunday shopping; the liberalization of laws governing sexual morality, including those concerned with contraception, abortion, homosexuality, and marriage; the state's control over healthcare and social services since the 1960s; the absence of religion at official public gatherings and celebrations, such as the memorial for the Swiss Air Tragedy in 1999 or at the official memorial service for the victims of 9/11.

The state relies on religious communities to supply essential social services, build hospitals, operate universities, and organize charitable campaigns. Recognizing the social contribution of religious communities, the state makes many concessions to them. These include: tax exemption on lands used by religious communities for religious purposes; tax exemptions for residence costs for ministers, priests or other religious leaders; charitable organization status for religious organizations, making contributions to churches, mosques, synagogues and temples as well as a host of religious organizations tax deductible; and power-sharing in the administration of chaplaincy programs in hospitals, prisons and armed forces.

Moreover, Christians have found ways to redefine themselves, both culturally and institutionally, in order to maintain a public presence that serves rather than hinders the creation of a democratic, participatory and open society. A few of the more obvious signs that the churches have transformed themselves into "modern, public religions" include: significant church ownership and operation of healthcare and social services institutions, including large-scale hospitals, health programs, and child welfare services; church sponsorship of refugees, especially during the early-1980s "boat people" from Vietnam; Roman Catholic public (although "separate" schools) in Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta and the Northwest Territories along with other religiously based schools that receive public funding in many provinces; participation in chaplaincy programs for the Canadian Forces, Correctional Service Canada, and public schools in Quebec; considerable participation in public debates around ethical issues, including sexuality and marriage, abortion, contraception, and homosexuality and participation in debates around social justice.[26]

Even in the state apparatus, there are signs that Canadian secularism is residually Christian. Biles and Ibrahim identify the following significant elements of Christianity in the Government of Canada: the preamble of the Constitution states "Whereas Canada is founded upon principles that recognize the Supremacy of God and the rule of law…;" the official title of our head of state according to the Canadian election writ is "ELIZABETH THE SECOND, by the Grace of God of the United Kingdom, Canada and Her other Realms and Territories QUEEN, Head of the Commonwealth, Defender of the Faith;" the Speech from the Throne, concludes with the words "May Divine Providence Guide You in Your Deliberations;" the national anthem, *O Canada* includes the line, "…God keep our land glorious and free!…;" our currency includes the marking "D.G. Regina" beside the name of Elizabeth II that stands for *dei Gratia* (Queen by the Grace of God); the national motto, *A Mari usque ad Mare* (from sea to sea) is taken from Psalm 72:8 ("He shall have dominion from sea to sea and from river unto the ends of the earth."), twenty-one pieces of federal legislation refer to "God," seventeen to "religion", four to "Christian" and one to the "Bible;" eleven pieces of legislation require the swearing of an oath to God; and the Christian feast days of Christmas and Good Friday are statutory holidays.

Besides the federal government, Biles and Ibrahim argue, provincial and municipal governments also show signs of their Christian past, for example, opening sessions of legislatures and municipal councils with Christian prayers or requiring an oath to God in courtrooms.[27] Beyond this residual public presence, Christianity still defines much of Canadian public culture indirectly. Danièle Hervieu-Leger argues that despite its staunch adherence to a secular public culture and constitutionally guaranteed separation of Church and State, France remain very much a Catholic country.

Hevieu-Léger argues that the structure of France's public institutions – everything from schools and hospitals to courts and universities – "was entirely based on, and has continued to operate (though, obviously, not explicitly) with reference to the Catholic model." She argues that no element of French public life – "from food quality to the ethical regulation of science, the management of hierarchical relationships in business, the future of rural society, societal expectations of the State, and demands for workers' rights" – is untouched by Catholic values. The same dynamic appears is evident in all European societies. This is not, she continues, because religious institutions have remained power brokers in modern states or that they

have a great degree of control over the beliefs of individuals. They patently do not. Their influence is more indirect and subtle, she argues because "the symbolic structures which they shaped, even after official belief has been lost and religious observance has declined, still have a remarkable capacity to influence the local culture."[28]

In Canadian society, this observation is equally valid. Canadian institutions – from our universities, hospitals, and social service agencies to our businesses, public campaigns, and cultural production – still bear the imprint of their Christian origins. As Roger O'Toole observes, the persistently *Christian* character of Canada, in a broad sense, is an important legacy of this past century and a frequently underestimated fact of considerable sociological interest. Despite the impact of secularization, an apparent crisis of religious commitment and a rapidly expanding non-European presence, Canada remains decidedly Christian. [29] This, among other reasons, is why institutions in Quebec operate according to a different culture and ethos than those in the rest of Canada. Canadian secular culture is residually Christian, albeit in different ways in different parts of the country.

The current state of Canada's political culture as well as constitutional and legal agreements is not set in stone. It is the product of historical and social developments and may change in the future. Because there is no constitutional arrangement for separation of Church and State, political parties and policy makers can change the current arrangement in short order. While the courts along with the *Charter* require the protection of the rights of religious minority groups, the relationship between Church and State in Canada today is a) constantly changing, b) contested, and c) ambiguous.

Modernization requires some degree of separation of Church and State as well as church and market. However, this does not automatically mean a constitutional and legal disestablishment. Nor does a constitutional and legal disestablishment necessarily mean a separation of state from religion – as the Canadian experience with a "shadow establishment" surely demonstrates. A constitutional and legal separation of Church and State is not sufficient to guarantee equal treatment of all religious groups by Canadian state or society. As O'Toole observes, Canadian secularism – to the degree that Church and State are already separated – is residually Christian. Mere separation of Church and State cannot address the historical advantages enjoyed by the Christian majority and it does not address the residual cultural influence of Christianity. Even when it is coupled with an adherence to "reasonable accommodation," it cannot address the cultural and structural marginalization of minority religious communities.

3. SECULARIZATION AND THE SEPARATION OF CHURCH AND STATE: AN INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

Abstract and a-historical assumptions about the connection between modernization and secularization do not take into account the bewildering complexity that marks the modernization of societies – even if we are to look at the developed West alone.[30] While the trend to formal disestablishment and the recognition of religious freedom is unmistakable, there remains a remarkable variety of models of a secular society and for church-state relations. In this section, we explore these models to demonstrate Canada's uniqueness. While Canada shares a structure with a variety of European countries, it departs from them as a result of the division between Quebec and the rest of Canada, and because of the influence of American culture and politics.

Canada's pattern of secularization was unique because, in fact, there were two distinct patterns, one for Canada and another for Quebec. For Canada outside of Quebec, the pattern was remarkably like that of other pluralistic societies where Protestantism dominated. Like Australia and New Zealand, Canada outside of Quebec fell between the United States, with its high degree of pluralism, elevated levels of church attendance, low levels of anticlericalism and broad-based, relatively low-status clergy, and England, which had a lower degree of pluralism, lower levels of church attendance, and higher levels of anticlericalism.[31] This means that in Canada, religious pluralism has helped to guarantee democracy, political pluralism and religious freedom by frustrating the dreams of an established church with close ties to the state and the political, economic and social elite.[32]

In Quebec, the situation was quite different. From 1840 onwards, Roman Catholicism became the touchstone of French Canadian identity and solidarity. The Church, more than the state, became the societal framework for French Canadians, an arrangement that was recognized in the *British North America Act* (1867) and symbolized by the Church's ability to force the provincial government to back down on its plans to create a Ministry of Education in the late 1890s. As it became more industrialized and democratic, Quebec experienced quite the opposite of secularization and the privatization of religion – even in the twentieth century. As Hubert Guindon observed, in reaction to industrialization and urbanization, the Catholic Church became a more important feature of public life from the late 1800s to 1960. The clergy became bureaucratic overlords and the rate of growth of clerical bureaucracies is simply amazing.[33]

Directly or indirectly, the Church created or promoted in incredible number of initiatives, including colonization societies that settled the Quebec hinterland; the *caisses populaires* (credit union) movement; cooperatives for fishers, farmers, and other producers; farmers' cooperatives that adopted scientific agricultural methods; Catholic labour unions; Catholic newspapers such as *l'Action catholique* in Quebec City, *Le Devoir* in Montreal, and *Le Droit* in Ottawa; pious leagues, temperance associations and societies for the promotion of moral behaviour; as well as an extensive network of Catholic Action groups for men and women, workers, students, nationalists, and intellectuals. Beyond these new initiatives, the Church continued to expend it ability to provide education, healthcare and social services for the province's growing Catholic population. Where necessary, the Protestant churches provided a parallel and segregated set of institutions for other Quebecers.

This arrangement suited the political and economic elite of the province. The provincial government could count on

the Church to provide education, healthcare and social services at very low cost – given that the Church had an army of tens of thousands of relatively well-educated, unpaid workers, that is, the nuns, brothers and priests. For owners of large-scale capital – who were mostly English-speaking Americans, Canadians or British subjects -– the arrangement kept social spending and, hence, taxes low. Moreover, they could afford to fund their own set of institutions generously. This alliance of the Church, big business, and small government (under Duplessis' Union Nationale Party) meant that in Quebec, church, state, and public bureaucracy remained curiously undifferentiated until the 1960s. The Quebec pattern of modernization before 1960 was closer to that of Poland and Ireland, where religion and nationalism fused together in the face of an outside "threat" different from the nation in both ethnicity and religion.[34]

The Quiet Revolution in the 1960s overturned this arrangement. The Liberal government of Jean Lesage adopted the interventionist policies of welfare state liberalism and took control of education, healthcare and social services. But Quebec did not suffer the painful cultural schism that marked other Catholic societies such as France and Italy. There have been Catholics on both sides of every controversial public issue, Baum argues, and consequently Catholicism has not been identified with any one political party, ideology, or option.[35] Today, Quebec political culture bears traces of history. A small proportion of the population would like to create a totally secular Quebec. However, the general population does not support this option. While uninterested in attending church (Quebec Catholics have the lowest attendance rate in the country), Quebecers remain loyal to their Catholic identity and refuse to convert to other forms of Christianity in any significant numbers.[36] French Quebecers especially regard Catholicism as essential to their national self-understanding. While the Church often plays a negative role in the national mythos – it is most frequently identified with the oppressive traditionalism of *la grande noirceur* of the Duplessis era – most French Quebecers refuse to abandon Roman Catholicism altogether and ensure that their children undergo the rites of passage rituals associated with baptism, the Eucharist, and confirmation. This attitude is common in Europe and is labeled "belonging without believing," that is, maintaining loyalty to a religious heritage because of its central importance to national or ethnic identity, without necessarily practicing it.[37]

There is no doubt that the Canadian state and market – along with other social institutions that depend on them – have become separated from the churches.

4. MULTICULTURALISM AND RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY IN CANADA

Frequently, Canadians assume that secularization along with the adoption of a separation of Church and State has solved the question of Christian privilege and religious freedom. While there is some truth to this assumption, two recent debates show that this abstract and a-historical conceptualization of the relationship between religion and public life in Canada can actually work against the goals of the Multiculturalism and Human Rights Program and related efforts to promote tolerance and freedom in Canadian society.

By assuming that Canadian public life is already secular and that all religious expression should remain in the private sphere, people tend to ignore the fact that our putatively-secular public sphere is in many ways residually and normatively Christian. This means that its secularity has been shaped – ironically – by Christianity and in a way to accommodate most easily the needs of Christian communities. The most obvious example of this is the fact that the holiest Christian feast days (those around Christmas and Easter) are statutory holidays. Moreover, as Roger O'Toole has argued, the Christian origins of our public institutions continue to inform their culture and structures.

Given these facts, the abstract and a-historical notion of separation of Church and State can act to frustrate the goals of encouraging civic participation and recognizing the cultural diversity of all Canadians by 1) ignoring the lingering privileges accorded to the mainline Christian communities; and 2) countering the claims of all minority religious groups for public recognition of their needs. This promises to remain an important issue in public policy debates in Canada because the numbers of Canadians belonging to non-Christian religious communities is growing.

According to a 2005 Statistics Canada population projection, "persons who are members of non-Christian denominations should represent between 9.2% and 11.2% of the Canadian population in 2017, or between 3,049,000 and 4,107,000 people." In 2001, the authors note, only 6.3 percent of the Canadian population declared its religion as Muslim, Jewish, Buddhist, Hindu, Sikh or other non-Christian religions. Even that figure was an increase from 1991 when it sat at approximately 4 percent of the population.[38] The authors continue, based on the demographic 2017 projections, Muslim, Hindu and Sikh would see their membership increase by 145%, 92% and 72% respectively compared to 2001, to reach 1,421,000, 584,000 and 496,000 people respectively in 2017.[39]

This new religious diversity is clearly linked to immigration, a situation that in several European countries has fostered resentment against immigration, multiculturalism, and accommodation of the needs of religious minorities. Even in Canada, we have seen people react negatively to this new religious diversity. Some argue that Canada is essentially a Christian country and newcomers who are not Christians must learn to adapt to this reality. Others argue that Canada is essentially a secular society – with a strict separation of Church and State – and so it cannot accommodate the religious needs of newcomers

without compromising its neutrality.[40] In the end, the burdens imposed by this separation of Church and State weigh more heavily on minority religious communities. Minority communities find their own needs unmet while the needs of the Christian majority are – for the most part at least – already met by the culture and structures of our public institutions. Two recent debates illustrate this point, the unexpected debate around the funding of faith-based schools in Ontario and the continuing debate around "reasonable accommodation" of the needs of religious minority groups in Quebec.

Public funding of faith-based schools in Ontario

The debate over the public funding of faith-based schools in the 2007 Ontario provincial election demonstrated that Ontarians are committed to a secular public sphere, protected by a putative separation of Church and State. Moreover, while the fear of funding faith-based schools was articulated in terms of their alleged threat to social cohesion, in fact, whether implicitly or explicitly most opposition was grounded in fears of the threats to social cohesion and integration allegedly presented by the funding of Islamic schools. Notable in all this debate was that none of the three major political parties – and very few pundits or groups – extended the same critique to Ontario's publicly-funded, separate, Roman Catholic school system. In this debate, the false assumption that Canadians enjoy an American-style separation of Church and State promoted a political culture in which the doctrine of separation was applied primarily to single out a racialized minority religious group.

John Tory, the leader of Ontario's Progressive Conservative Party, announced well before the election campaign began that, were he to be elected, the province would fund faith-based schools as long as they adopted Ontario's school curriculum, submitted to standardized testing, and employed accredited teachers. Dalton McGuinty, leader of the Liberal Party of Ontario, built on the public outcry that followed Tory's announcement and made opposition to the plan a central platform of his party's campaign. By mid-election, a poll conducted for the CTV television network and the *Globe and Mail* newspaper showed that 71 percent of the electorate was opposed to public funding for faith-based schools and 26 percent were in favor of it.[41] In spite of an attempt to backtrack by promising to bring the controversial proposal to a free vote in the provincial legislature, the issue cost Tory his seat in the legislature and is widely viewed as having lost the Ontario Conservatives the election. The Ontario Liberals took the first back-to-back majority in the province in 70 years.

From very early on, the debate was articulated in terms of the liberal-democratic distinction between public and private spheres of society, and governed by the assumption that the public sphere must be free of religion in order for the province's diverse settler, immigrant and religious communities to live harmoniously.[42] Yet, as a survey of their interventions will show, many opponents of funding for faith-based schools expressed an inexplicit but nonetheless unmistakable Islamophobia. Moreover, the defeat of the Conservatives on this issue suggests that for the moment, Ontario's electorate is relatively content with the status quo, in which Roman Catholic schools are the only faith-based schools to receive public funding. This contradiction (opposing funding for religiously based schools but accepting funding for Catholic schools) suggest that the secularism of Ontario's public sphere was defined in this debate in opposition to the specter of a public or institutional expression of Islam. This "secularism" is residually and normatively Christian.

Secularism in Ontario

Most opponents of Tory's proposal argued either explicitly or implicitly that a publicly funded secular school system was necessary to promote and maintain a diverse, multicultural society. On the day he announced that public funding for faith-based schools was going to be the defining issue of the electoral campaign, McGuinty was widely quoted in the media as arguing that the proposal threatened "social cohesion."[43] The Canadian Civil Liberties Association (CCLA) issued a public statement against the funding of religious schools, signed by individuals ranging from Farzana Hassan, president of the Muslim Canadian Congress (MCC), to Lois Wilson, former president of the World Council of Churches. The statement read: "Our public education system strives to acknowledge, accommodate and celebrate the diversity of faiths in our multicultural society. Our public schools have shown flexibility and creativity in responding to the changing face of our communities while playing a vital role in integrating many cultures."[44] In a brief submitted to Kathleen Wynne, the Liberal Minister of Education in Ontario, the CCLA raised the concern, widely vocalized by opponents of the Tory proposal, that funding for faith-based schools would help promote religious sectarianism and intolerance: "How could the newly-subsidized schools be monitored so as to ensure that public funds are not used to promote hate or discrimination?"[45]

A number of commentators dwelt on the distinction between public and private spheres, arguing that the proper place for religion in Canadian society was in the private sphere, (and by implication not in its public institutions). This reflected the opinion of 33 percent of those polled who opposed Tory's proposal on the basis of belief that "only the public system should be funded with taxpayer dollars and religion should not be a part of a government-funded education."[46] Columnist Margaret Wente, relating the controversy over public funding for faith-based schools to the so-called debate over reasonable accommodation underway in Quebec, argued that "religion as a private matter" constituted one of the primary "civilizational virtues proper to the Canadian way of life."[47]

Secularism and fairness: Why not fund none?

While the *Canadian Constitution Act* obliges Ontario as well as Alberta, Saskatchewan, and the Northwest Territories to fund Roman Catholic schools, Ontario and Saskatchewan are the only provinces that still fund Catholic schools without funding other faith-based schools. In 1999, the UN Human Rights Committee announced a non-binding ruling that Ontario's school funding policy constitutes discrimination on the basis of religion.[48] It

restated its decision in another assessment of the current state of human rights in Canada in 2006. The Canadian Civil Liberties Association was among the few voices in the recent debate to suggest that in the spirit of fairness and out of a commitment to secularism, Ontario should stop funding its Catholic school system.[49] It called for a constitutional amendment to end public funding for the province's Catholic schools.[50] A coalition called "One School System" also received some media attention in July 2007, when it held a press conference at Queen's Park, under the banner "One Secular School System." But these efforts were not received with much enthusiasm from Ontario residents, and the Green Party of Ontario was the only political party to campaign on a proposal to end public funding of Catholic schools. Nonetheless, at least one observer suggested that the increased scrutiny of the public funding of the Catholic school board and the combined values of those who voted against and for Tory's proposal – the strong desire to separate religion and education on the one hand,[51] and "fairness" on the other – will lead to a public acceptance of de-funding Ontario's Catholic schools in the not-so-distant future.[52]

"The elephant in the room"

Some of the interventions in the debate during the election period revealed an undercurrent of Islamophobia in the province that was used to reinforce and even help define the normatively "Christian secularism" with which the Ontario electorate proved comfortable. For example, Premier McGuinty began the only televised leaders' debate by warning that public funding for faith based schools would lead to "strife in the streets" of the kind witnessed in "Paris and London." He told an *Ottawa Citizen* reporter that "People see images of the streets of London, France, Germany, and the Netherlands and when I travel I'm asked why they aren't seeing more evidence of ethnic struggles and strife in Ontario." [53] McGuinty was not referring to strife caused by religious faith in general, or potentially by any number of different faiths, but to strife associated in many non-Muslim Ontarians' imaginations – whether accurately or not – with Islam.

The indirect reference to the riots caused by the intersection of racialized socio-economic injustice and religious radicalization within the South Asian, North African and Middle Eastern Muslim immigrant communities ghettoized by Western European societies seemed, disturbingly, to resonate with fear harbored by his audience.

Some voices supported their arguments against the public funding of faith-based schools with more explicit appeals to the fear of radical Islam. In their submission to the Education Minister, the Canadian Civil Liberties Association quoted the president of the Muslim Canadian Congress to support the argument that public funding for faith-based schools would exacerbate the conservative, orthodox elements in faith communities. According to the president of the Congress, the public funding of religious schools would mean that "more Muslim children will attend religious schools, and therefore have less contact with other Canadians."[54] In their view, our society can anticipate that "a new generation of young Muslims will come to embrace a more orthodox and archaic understanding of Islam."[55]

While there is indeed a legitimate debate to be had about the ramifications of faith-based schools, and it is raging within Ontario's Muslim community, some appeals to this fear played on straightforward bigotry. *Toronto Star* columnist James Travers agreed with the president of the Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) Mohamed Elmasry that "the elephant in the room" of the debate "is Islam", but went on to argue, "more precisely, it's fear that immigration trends now skewing heavily to Muslim countries, combined with schools preaching that God's domain is indivisible from man's, will nurture Islam's virulent mutant strain."[56]

Haroon Siddiqui *(Toronto Star)* responded in a pre-election op-ed. Opposed to the John Tory proposal, Siddiqui nonetheless argued that much of the public opposition to funding religions schools was driven by bigotry and implicit "public unease with Muslims and Islam." He noted that "Protestant, Jewish, Hindu, Sikh and other faith schools may pay the price for fear of Muslim schools being funded."[57]

Interventions by faith-based communities and organizations

The contrast between the Canadian Islamic Congress and Muslim Canadian Congress positions on the issue cited above provides a sense of the division among Ontario's Muslims. This division may be one of the reasons that prominent Muslim organizations like Council on American-Islamic Relations-Canada (CAIR-CAN) did not intervene in the debate. That said, some explicitly Muslim voices did speak out in favor of faith-based schools. In an opinion piece published in the Toronto Star, two recent graduates of Toronto's Osgoode Hall law school, Muneeza Sheikh and Khurrum Awan, as well as York University law student Daniel Simard observed that "a large part of this debate lies in the fact that, under Tory's proposal, funding would be extended to Islamic schools."[58] They argued that these fears were based on stereotypes and assumptions about Islamic schools – that they isolate or radicalize Muslim communities, trample women's rights – and that "some public figures have adopted a strategy of playing on these stereotypes in order to oppose Tory's proposal." In the remainder of their piece, they tried to debunk those stereotypes. Aisha Sherazi, an occasional writer in the *Ottawa Citizen* and former principal of a Muslim private school in the Ottawa area also wrote in favor of faith-based schools.[59]

As a whole, non-Muslim faith-based organizations were more public in advocating for Tory's proposal. The Ontario Alliance for Christian Schools published several op-eds, was quoted frequently in news reports, and devoted a great deal of web-site space to advocating for public funding.[60] In August, the United Jewish Appeal organized and led a coalition called Public Education Fairness Network described in its press releases comprised of members of the Armenian, Hindu, Jewish, Muslim and Sikh communities. As part of its campaign UJA also produced an online video calling for "Inclusive Public Education" which featured testimonies from a range of volunteers and professionals who attributed their sense of social justice and civic responsibility to their education in faith-based schools. All

were white, the majority were identifiable as Jewish, and none was identifiable as Muslim.[61]

In Ontario, secularism is residually Christian

Ontario's election-time debate over the public funding of faith-based schools was argued in terms of the liberal-democratic division between (secular) public and (religious) private spheres, and premised on the conviction that for Ontario's diverse cultures and faith-based communities to function together in a socially cohesive, pluralistic, democratic manner, the public sphere must be secular. These premises – and their proponents – imply that religion, when it filters from private confession into public practice, is dangerous, divisive, and potentially violent. However, when arguments against the public funding of faith-based schools were articulated or implied on this basis, it was clear that politicians and media pundits alike were speaking not about 'religion' in general but about one particular religion that threatens to provoke unrest and strife: Islam.

The simmering unease with Islam that was raised by the proposal to fund faith-based schools during the 2007 Ontario election campaign helped rally public opinion against it and contributed to defining a notion of secularism proper to Ontario. Considered in conjunction with Ontario voters' decision against public-funding for faith-based schools and their support for the status quo (in which Roman Catholic schools will continue to receive funding), this leads to the conclusion that although most Ontarians believe they live in a secular society characterized by an "arms length relationship between Church and State,"[62] that secularism is residually and normatively Christian.

Quebec's reasonable accommodation debate

Months before the 2007 Ontario provincial election, Quebecers had highlighted the issue of minority religious rights in their own provincial election. During the campaign politicians debated the extent to which Quebec public institutions found it necessary to implement "les *accommodements raisonnables*," that is, reasonable accommodation of the needs of minority religious groups. In an effort to defuse the debate, Premier Jean Charest announced on 8 February 2007, the creation of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences *(Commission de Consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles)* to examine the issues raised by the debate that had been taking place in the Quebec media. Chaired by two reputable senior academics, sociologist Gérard Bouchard and philosopher Charles Taylor, the Commission was mandated to conduct extensive consultations and public hearings with academics, community groups, organizations and individuals across Quebec in order to take stock of practices of accommodation practices and varying views on them. It will ultimately formulate recommendations to the government "to ensure that accommodation practices conform to Quebec's values as a pluralistic, democratic, egalitarian society."[63]

It is ironic that this debate has centered on accommodation of the religious needs and sensibilities of members of Quebec's religious minorities given that the term "reasonable accommodation" has its origins in labour legislation. Marie McAndrew, the Chair of Ethnic Relations at the Université de Montréal, defines reasonable accommodation as "an exception granted to a person or a group of persons upon whom a universal rule would have a discriminatory effect, on grounds prohibited by the *Charter*, and infringe upon the exercise of their fundamental rights."[64] She goes on to note that reasonable accommodation "touches upon all sub-groups protected against discrimination by the *Charter*," and that as such, "its realm of application extends (…) well beyond the question of ethno-cultural or religious diversity."[65] In fact, most legal challenges around the issue of reasonable accommodation have to do with the accommodation of persons with physical disabilities in the workplace.

Because of the expansion of the term in the public debate beyond the parameters warranted by the legal use of "reasonable accommodation," the Bouchard-Taylor Commission has chosen to focus on questions of ethno-cultural and religious diversity. In the document prepared to frame the consultation process, including written submissions and testimonies at regional citizens' forums as well as hearings hosted by the commission as it travels throughout Quebec, the authors write it is true that some protests targeted only one kind of accommodation linked to certain religious practices, but what numerous critics appear to call into question, at least indirectly, is the socio-cultural integration model adopted in Québec in the 1970s.[66]

Although some observers have criticized the manner in which Taylor and Bouchard have framed the issue,[67] the Commission's choice reflects the way the term reasonable accommodation has come to be used in the Quebec media over the past several years. It has most frequently, if not exclusively, been used to describe instances in which the religious practices of members of racialized immigrant communities are perceived to come into conflict with the cultural practices of the dominant francophone community that still has not resolved its relationship to its Catholic past.[68] The consultation document continues, "The opinions expressed in recent months bring back to the fore the question of secularism (*laïcité*). There appears to be considerable uncertainty, indeed, a malaise in Québec society, concerning our relationship to religion."[69] As such, the Commission and the debate over "reasonable accommodation" constitute a fruitful site for examining how Quebecers understand secularism and the relationship between religion and the state.

Government and commission definitions and constructions of secularism

The Commission's consultation document identifies "secularism" as one of four key dimensions of reasonable accommodation. It affirms that, "As Québec Premier Jean Charest has stated several times in recent months, Québec is a secular society, i.e. the sphere of the State (including its institutional extensions) and the sphere of religion are independent and each sphere enjoys its own autonomy."[70] The authors of the document note that separation of Church and State is a fundamental if not the primary

principle of secularism, and indeed, the government order according to which the Commission was created cites "the separation of Church and state" second in the list of the "core values" of Quebec society according to which the Commission is being convened.[71] Thus, by government order, the Commission was founded on an understanding of Quebec as a society in which Church and state are separate.

The Commission document observes, however, that the independence of these two spheres can be understood in two different ways – either as "the neutrality of the State in respect of various religions or world views" or as the "more or less complete elimination of the religious life from the public sphere".[72] In Québec, these two options are called "*la laïcité ouverte*" and "*la laïcité fermée.*" The authors of the document propose that a secular Québec adopt the former interpretation, that is to say, the principle of "neutrality stemming from equal respect for all citizens", complemented by the protection of rights, and the freedom of conscience of religion (following the Quebec and Canadian charters).[73]

Tellingly, after listing a series of questions designed to encourage thoughtful, topical submissions to the Commission on the question "What kind of secularism" Quebec should maintain, the document's authors delineate a special set of questions devoted to considering "Catholicism's place" in this secular society: Do you think it is legitimate in Québec to grant special status to Catholicism, given its place in the society's history? Do you think that society overall would accept it? What might this special status for Catholicism entail?[74]

This tension – constituted on the one hand by a desire to assert secularism founded on the principle of separation of Church and State and, on the other, the need to reconcile this position with a Catholic history that remains an emotional and ideological touchstone that buttresses the cultural identity of Quebec's Francophone majority – has been evident in the media coverage and public response to the series of events that surrounded the creation of the Commission. These events were all framed as controversies over the request or the refusal to "accommodate" non-Christian religious symbols or practices in the public sphere, broadly understood (that is, not necessarily only in those institutions or programs run or funded by government). A brief summary of the events that received extensive media coverage helps illustrate the point:

- In February 2006, the YMCA (Young Men Christian Association) in the midst of Montreal's Hasidic community installed frosted windows, paid for by the Yetev Lev Congregation, so that male students of the congregation would not see women exercising.[75]
- In March 2006, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled that barring Gurbaj Singh Multani, a Sikh student at a Montreal school from wearing his kirpan to school violated the student's freedom of religion, as enshrined in the federal *Charter of Rights*.[76]
- In January 2007, the municipal council of Hérouxville, a town of 1,300 with only one immigrant child in it, passed a set of standards *("normes de vie")* directed at new immigrants. While stating in oblique language that halal and kosher dietary restrictions, gender segregation, and a range of religious apparel (from the kirpan to the veil) have no place in Herouxville's schools, businesses or other institutions, it warned that Christmas trees and Christmas carols are to be expected in public schools at Christmas time. [77]

A survey of these and subsequent events, as well as their coverage by the media, reveals how secularism and the notion of separation of Church and State, have frequently been invoked by Quebec media, politicians, and individual citizens (including Internet chat rooms) to argue against, stigmatize, and even criminalize the public expression of non-Christian religious practices or symbols, while reifying a "secularism" in which Christian symbols and practices are acceptable.

The indirect reference to the riots caused by the intersection of racialized socio-economic injustice and religious radicalization within the South Asian, North African and Middle Eastern Muslim immigrant communities ghettoized by Western European societies seemed, disturbingly, to resonate with fear harbored by his audience.

Fear of Islam at the center

Following the Hérouxville *"normes de vie"* episode, the press reported a number of cases involving conflicts over the right of Muslim girls and women to wear the hijab that formed the pegs of the debate over reasonable accommodation:

- In February 2007, a young player on a female soccer team from Nepean, Ontario, was ordered by the referee in a tournament in Montreal to remove her hijab. She refused, supported by her teammates, and the team forfeited the tournament.[78]
- In March 2007, a young Muslim woman was fired from the Bordeaux detention training program because she refused to remove her hijab.[79]
- In April 2007, members of a girls' team from Montreal's Muslim Community Center were refused entry into a Tae Kwon Do tournament for refusing to remove their hijabs.[80] It is worth noting that in all these instances, the official reason the women were told they had to remove their hijabs was because wearing them posed a threat to their safety.
- In March 2007, the Quebec media, and particularly the *Journal de Montréal*, TQS and TVA television networks, devoted a great deal of coverage to an incident at the *Érablière Au Sous-Bois*, a cabane à sucre (sugar shack) not far from Montreal, in which a group of Muslim visitors had, with the permission of the management,

asked country singer Sylvain Boily – a white, francophone Quebecer – and his friends to leave the dance hall for twenty minutes on a Sunday afternoon, so that the group could pray.[81]

Boily's outraged response, broadcast in a TVA report, is worth dwelling on, because it was characteristic of the sort of muddled discourse about secularism and right to religious freedom propagated in the major francophone Quebec media chains: "Vous ne trouvez-pas ça étrange qu'on dénature les cabanes à sucre?", he asked. "On n'est pas raciste," he maintained, but the sugar shack was a public space, and others didn't have the right to force their religion on him there. Then he went on, "Respecter notre religion à nous." The sequence of statements forced a critical viewer to wonder what religion exactly was not being respected when Muslims asked to pray, and why it – whatever it was – had precedence over Islam in the so-called public space of the dancehall to which Boily referred. The TVA anchor did not pose these questions.

Boily's indignation, broadcasted across Quebec, amplified the outrage that had already been directed by a number of so-called "de souche" Quebecers at sugar shacks that had begun to take the pork out of the pea soup, and make pork- and lard-free meals available to groups of visitors upon request. Although this had more to do with good business practices, and tapping into a growing market of visitors – Muslim, Jewish, and vegetarian – who eat a pork-free diet, the issue was cast as a special "accommodation" being provided to Muslims.[82] André Boisclair, leader of the Parti Quebecois, encouraged the media-driven outrage as he headed into a spring election race, telling LCN that "Obviously restaurateurs are allowed to serve whatever they want. But I can tell you that if we are getting into a situation where cabanes à sucre doesn't serve pork anymore, we are getting into big trouble."[83] All of these controversies were sparked by public demonstrations of non-Christian faith. Moreover, it is impossible to overlook the fact that, most often, the controversies involved the public expression of Islam.

"Respecter notre religion à nous!": The passive double standard

The public discourse that effectively allowed some members of the dominant white, Francophone Catholic majority in Quebec to invoke secularism and the separation of Church and State to protect European Christian cultural norms was captured by a *Léger & Léger* poll of 1,001 Quebecers carried out in August 2007. The results, published in the *Montreal Gazette* on September 10th, as the Commission hearings began in the regions, "reveals a passive double standard: a large majority of Quebecers disapproves of open expressions of religion, unless it's Christian."[84] For example, 72 percent are against Jews or Muslims getting time off work to pray, 67 percent do not want the government to subsidize religious schools, 63 percent do not want Muslim women to walk around with their faces covered (i.e., with a niqab, which completely covers the head except for the eyes, as compared to a hijab which covers the hair and the neck) and 61 percent are against Muslim teachers and Muslim girls wearing the hijab to school. Yet almost the same number – 59 percent – approve of keeping crucifixes on the walls of public schools. (Of these, only 25 percent would allow hijabs to be worn by students or teachers.)[85,86]

Like the debates in Ontario over public funding of religiously based schools and the earlier controversy over so-called Sharia courts, the Quebec debate over reasonable accommodation reveals a latent assumption that secularism in Canada can accommodate historically dominant forms of Christianity but not other faiths. In practical terms, it means that the principle of separation of Church and State is applied more to non-Christian religions – as well as certain minority Christian groups – than to the Christian majority.

5. CONCLUSION

The controversies surrounding the uneven funding of faith-based schools in Ontario and the "reasonable accommodation" debate in Quebec demonstrate that questions about religious freedom and diversity – as well as religious intolerance and discrimination – continue to challenge the attempts of the all levels of government to make Canada a more inclusive, just and participatory society. Given that Statistics Canada predicts that the number of Canadians belonging to minority religious communities will grow to approximately 10 percent of the population by 2017, questions of religious pluralism, freedom, as well as intolerance and discrimination will certainly continue to play themselves out in Canadian public life in the decade to come. Consequently, government programs – at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels – that promote multiculturalism can no longer afford to neglect questions of religious pluralism and barriers to religious freedom. These questions intersect with wider issues of racism, gender inequality, ethnic tensions, and immigrant integration. To the extent that the abstract and a-historical idea that Canada is a secular society with a formal and legal separation of Church and State prohibits us from confronting these issues squarely, it represents a barrier to the goals of promoting multiculturalism and safeguarding human rights.

The consequences of ignoring religion

By now it should be clear that the refusal to address religion in a meaningful way is not based on any constitutional or legal restrictions. Rather it is the product of a specific public culture that arose in response to particular circumstances and influences. In other words, it is a public policy choice – and hence it is open to rethinking. From the recent controversies in Ontario and Quebec, we can see that ignoring religion as an element of our multiculturalism and human rights policies can exclude significant (and growing) portions of the Canadian population by: hiding the persistence of Christian privilege in Canadian public culture as well as institutional practices and structures; alienating large sectors of the Canadian population by refusing to acknowledge or respect the public elements of their religious traditions; ignoring claims made in the name of religion, for example, claims by Aboriginal peoples to access to certain lands in order to fulfill the requirements of Aboriginal spirituality; discouraging the

contribution to Canadian society made by faith-based institutions and organizations, such as schools, hospitals, social service agencies, as well as cultural, sports and charitable organizations; fostering resistance to reasonable accommodation of religious difference, a human right that guarantees that a practice or policy that serves that majority does not discriminate against members of religious minority groups; encouraging the creation of religious "ghettoes," that is, closed ethno-religious communities that have relatively little connection to the rest of Canadian society; preventing integration of ethno-religious newcomers (immigrants and refugees) by giving the Canadian state and society a public face that appears foreign or hostile to them.

Consequently, while we do need to protect the autonomy of institutions in Canada's public sphere (the state, political parties, economic institutions, etc.) as well as that of our religious communities and institutions, we do not need to adopt attitudes based on American or French doctrines of separation of Church and State. This means that we can – and should – address issues of religious diversity and freedom in our policies on multiculturalism and human rights. In a report prepared March 2007, we recommended that the promotion of religious tolerance, freedom and diversity be made a priority for agencies interested in promoting multiculturalism and human rights.[87] This has not been the case in the past. For example, in that report, we noted a study conducted by Paul Bramadat that showed that only 3.4% (19 of 546) of research projects funded by the Multiculturalism and Human Rights Branch from 2000 to 2004 addressed religion in a meaningful way.[88] Our March report to Canadian Heritage also concluded that the increasing number of Canadians who belong to minority religious traditions, their concentration in urban centers, and their increasing demand for accommodations will mean that a variety of government and public institutions will face important public policy decisions regarding respect for religious diversity and freedom.[89] Consequently, it is important for all levels of government to put aside all squeamishness about confronting the issue of religion seriously.

Beyond simply studying the issues of religious diversity and freedom, Canadians have to be prepared to discuss the role of religion in public life. Moreover, political philosophers have begun to argue that to forbid religious discourse in the public sphere – a priori – is a violation of the rights of members of religious communities and contrary to liberal democratic philosophy. They argue that the requirement to translate their religious discourse into a secular idiom in order to participate in a putatively "value-free" public sphere according to allegedly "neutral" rational rules places an unfair burden on members of religious communities. Such a requirement asks some Canadians – and not others – to sacrifice important elements of their identity and group solidarity. Moreover, as we have seen in the Ontario and Quebec debates on religious pluralism, this public sphere is neither value-free nor neutral. The residually Christian nature of this public sphere places a further burden on members of minority religious communities that adherents of mainline Christian churches do not need to shoulder.

Finally, Canadians must undertake this initiative in a manner that reflects the specific challenges, structures, historical inheritance, values and vision for the future that makes Canada unique. Other countries have crafted their own unique arrangements for relations between government and religious communities – and we must do the same. Consequently, Canadians need to begin a public dialogue on the issues of religious diversity and freedom as well as the place of religion in Canadian public life that will lead to an arrangement of relations that reflects their own heritage and vision for the future.

Religion and Canadian multiculturalism

Canada's multicultural model is unique in the world and provides a blueprint as well as wealth of experience for developing the means to address this issue. In a recent article on religious diversity in Canada, Kamal Dib writes, "the Canadian approach of public dialogue and royal commissions has served the country well over the decades… Canada has more progressive views on socio-economic issues and immigration and multiculturalism compared to those expressed in Europe and elsewhere".[90]

Such a public dialogue, Dib writes "would have two goals: to inform the majority about the culture of the various religious communities and to educate adherents of religious communities on how to integrate in mainstream society without losing self-dignity and self-respect."[91] This model of dialogue, in which both established Canadians and more recent immigrants as well as members of the mainstream and minority groups are all called to mutual respect and accommodation, is part of the heritage of our multicultural policies and practices of the last four decades.

Such public dialogue would be greatly facilitated by national interfaith bodies. For example, in Great Britain and Australia,[92] the state subsidizes interfaith networks that serve a variety of functions. In Canada, such networks could address questions of religious diversity by: facilitating communication and cooperation between government departments and public institutions and faith communities on an ongoing basis; promoting understanding and cooperation amongst various religious groups; negotiating conflicts between adherents of religious groups (Canadian Jews and Muslims, for example) and within specific religious communities (within the Sikh community, for example) ; helping members of immigrant communities integrate into Canadian society by promoting those religious structures and practices that facilitate social integration; acting as an information resource centre for government departments, public institutions, and the media on questions related to religion; sponsoring public education – in schools and other forums – on religious diversity, tolerance and freedom; and combating religious extremism in all its forms.[94]

Given that most Canadians identify themselves as Christian, such a national council or network would probably be dominated by representatives from those communities but care should be taken to achieve a fair – if always imperfect – representation from as broad a spectrum of communities as possible. Given that agencies and departments in the federal and provincial governments already have extensive experience in fostering dialogue

among ethnic communities, there is no reason to believe that the creation of such a network should pose an insurmountable challenge. In fact, the government already consults with the Canadian Council of Churches regarding a variety of issues including chaplains in the Canadian Forces and Correctional Services.[95]

At the Sixth National Metropolis Conference, in Edmonton, Alberta in March 2003, a number of religious studies scholars, including me, Paul Bramadat and Harold Coward, participated in a panel on religion and multiculturalism in Canada.[96] After our presentation, we were approached by a senior administrator in the Department of Canadian Heritage who agreed with our argument that those in government who are concerned with multiculturalism must take religion more seriously. This person then said urgently, "We know we have to confront this issue [religion], but …we are *afraid*. We don't know anything about it!" Often when the issue of religion arises in discussions of multiculturalism and democratic governance, we have found that the response is fear that religion will have a polarizing effect on public debates. And while it is certainly true that religion has served to polarize communities in the past, it is equally true that it has helped to overcome differences, promote cooperation, and facilitate communication between groups as well. Religion is – like politics, ethnicity, and other human realities – ambiguous.

Refusing to confront the persistence of religion in Canadian society by clinging to an abstract and ahistorical concept of the separation of Church and State will certainly lead to misunderstandings and injustices. It is precisely those misunderstandings and injustices that are likely to lead to polarization, ghettoization and the radicalization of certain religious communities. Public policies that aim to make Canada a more participatory and just society cannot be developed in an atmosphere of ignorance and fear. The issue of religion must be addressed in discussions of social inclusion, immigrant integration, multiculturalism, democratic participation and justice.

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Notes

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[2] See www.whitehouse.gov/government/fbci/ for the Web site of the White House Office of Faith-Based and Community Initiatives.

[3] Khan, A. (1999). Religious education in Canadian public schools. *Journal of Law and Education*, 28, no. 3.

[4] Classic statements of secularization theory are found in Berger, P. (1967). *The sacred canopy: Elements of a sociological theory of religion.* Garden City, NY: Doubleday., Wilson, B. (1969). *Religion in secular society: A sociological comment.* Baltimore, Maryland: Penguin Books., & Luckmann, T. (1967). *The invisible religion: The problem of religion in modern society.* MacMillan.

[5] Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Among wealthy nations: U.S. stands alone in its embrace of religion. Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Retrieved from http://www.queensu.ca/cora/polls/2002/September19-Religious_Belief_across_Countries.pdf.

[6] Bibby, R. Is God dead...Or just misread? Bibby's blog: research, reflections, and rants. Retrieved from http://reginaldbibby.blogspot.com/2007/08/is-god-deador-just-misread.html.

[7] Pew Research Center for the People and the Press. Among wealthy nations: U.S. stands alone in its embrace of religion.

[8] Casanova, J. *Public religions in the modern world.*

[9] Newport, F. Americans today much more accepting of a woman, black, Catholic, or Jew as President. *Gallup News Service.* Retrieved from http://www.gallup.com/poll/3979/Americans-Today-Much-More-Accepting-Woman-Black-Catholic.aspx.

[10] Casanova, J. Religion, European secular identities, and European integration. *Eurozine.* Retrieved from http://www.eurozine.com/articles/2004-07-29-casanova-en.html.

[11] The idea that the elite in a society claim the right to define the national "personality" comes from Talal Asad. See Asad, T. (2003). *Formations of the secular: Christianity, Islam, modernity.* Stanford: Stanford University Press.

[12] Ibid.

[13] Discrimination against non-Christian traditions is described in Bramadat, P., & Seljak, D. (Eds.). (2005). *Religion and ethnicity in Canada.* Toronto: Pearson Longman.

[14] These churches were historically the "respectable" Christian communities that received special recognition from the Government of Canada.

[15] One element that has been ignored in histories of Canada is the rampant anti-Catholicism of this period. In Ontario, the Orange Order, an Irish invention to promote anti-Catholicism, thrived in the late 1800s and early 1900s. See Miller, J. R. (1993). Anti-Catholicism in Canada: From the British conquest to the Great War. In T. Murphy and G. Stortz (Eds.). *Creed and culture: The place of English-speaking Catholics in Canadian society, 1750-1930.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. Roman Catholics struggled to define for themselves a place of legitimacy in this society. See McGowan, M. (1999). *The waning of the green: Catholics, the Irish and identity in Toronto, 1887-1922.* Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press. for the example of the Irish in Toronto.

[16] See Bramadat and Seljak. (Eds.). *Religion and ethnicity in Canada.*

[17] Noll, What happened to Christian Canada?, 249.

[18] Scholars do not agree on the significance of this figure.

[19] Noll, What happened to Christian Canada?, 248-49.

[20] Ibid.: 249.

[21] Adapted from a Statistics Canada table available at: http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Analytic/companion/rel/canada.cfm.

[22] Bibby, R. (2002). *Unknown gods: The ongoing story of religion in Canada.* Toronto: Stoddart.

[23] Hamelin, J. & Gagnon, N. (1984). *Histoire du catholicisme Québécois. Le XXe Siècle. Tome 1. 1898-1940.* Montréal: Boréal Express.

[24] Noll, What happened to Christian Canada?

[25] Biles and Ibrahim note that at a conference on religion in public life in Canada, a participant stated that Canada was a "post-Christian country"; the audience erupted in surprise and disagreement. Biles and Ibrahim. *Religion and public policy: Immigration, citizenship, and multiculturalism–Guess who's coming to dinner?*, pp. 167.

[26] José Casanova defines a modern, public religion as one that operates in the undifferentiated sphere of civil society, recognizes the autonomy of the state and political society, affirms the independence of the individual's conscience, and raises ethical questions in a democratic manner. Contrary to classical liberal theory, the participation of such institutions in public life, he argues, protects civil society and promotes democracy. See Casanova, *Public Religions in the Modern World.*

[27] Biles and Ibrahim. *Religion and public policy: Immigration, citizenship, and multiculturalism–Guess who's coming to dinner?*, pp. 167.

[28] Ibid.

[29] Original emphasis. O'Toole, R. (2000). Canadian religion: Heritage and project. In D. Lyon & M. Van Die (Eds.). *Rethinking Church, State, and modernity: Canada between Europe and America.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp 45.

[30] Needless to say, the situation is far more complex when we look at the entire international scene. India and Turkey, for example, are officially secular states

in which religion still plays an enormous political role. China's communist government sanctions religious communities that it sees as promoting "harmony" but ruthlessly suppresses all others.

[31] ———. Canada in comparative perspective.

[32] Canadian sociologist S.D. Clark discusses how religious pluralism helped to promote political freedom and democracy throughout the history of British North America and Canada. See Clark, S. D. (1948). *Church and sect in Canada. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.* and the section on religion (Part II) in Clark, S. D. (1962). *The developing Canadian community.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press., especially "The religious sect in Canadian politics".

[33] Guindon, H. (1988). *Quebec society: Tradition, modernity and nationhood.*(1988). In R. Hamilton and J. L. McMullan (Eds). Toronto: University of Toronto Press, pp. 20-21.

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[64] McAndrew, M. *Reasonable accommodation: Foundations, guidelines, and issues.* Retrieved from http://www.couch.ca/conference/McAndrew.pdf.

[65] Ibid.

[66] Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles. (2007). Seeking common ground: Quebecers speak out. Gouvernement du Québec, pp. 3.

[67] Some critics argue that this broad framing misapplies the term to disputes between individuals and private institutions – not between public institutions or employers and individuals. Daniel Weinstock, "Quatre Clés Pour Éviter La Crise," *L'Actualité*, October 1 2007, 38-39.

[68] Indeed, reasonable accommodations coverage has been so focused on religious practices and symbols that that in an interview with the CBC just after the Commission was struck, Charles Taylor and host Anna Maria Tremonti used the term "religious accommodations" interchangeably with "reasonable accommodations". The Current. (2007). *Charles Taylor Feature.* Toronto: CBC, Audio File.

[69] Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles, *Seeking common ground: Quebecers speak out*, pp. 4.

[70] Ibid., 25.

[71] Government of Quebec. (2007). Order in council: Concerning the establishment of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation of Practices Related to Cultural Differences, pp 1.

[72] Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles. *Seeking common ground: Quebecers speak Out*, pp. 25.

[73] Ibid., 26.

[74] Ibid., 27.

[75] White, M. PQ leader wants complete control. *CanWest News Service.* http://www.canada.com/montrealgazette/news/story.html?id=2a647f1c-e0a2-4037-a179-d77afb0340f7.

[76] Ibid.

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[78] Even the premier of Quebec weighed in on the controversy. See Larocque, S. (2007, February 26). Interdiction du voile islamique au soccer: Jean Charest appuie la décision. *Presse Canadienne* (PC. It is interesting to note that the referee was himself a Muslim, who defended his decision citing FIFA rules.

[79] Canadian Press. Quebec guard fired after insisting on wearing Hijab. *CTV.ca.* Retrieved from http://www.ctv.ca/servlet/ArticleNews/story/CTVNews/20070314/hijab_prison_070214?s_name=&no_ads=.

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[81] LCN. Des accommodements raisonnables à la cabane à sucre. *LCN*. Retrieved from http://lcn.canoe.ca/cgi-bin/player/video.cgi?file=/lcn/actualite/regional/20070319_sucre.wmv.

[82] Nadeau, J. De la soupe aux pois sans jambon. *Journal de Montréal*. Retrieved from http://www2.canoe.com/cgi-bin/imprimer.cgi?id=285217. Baillargeon, G. D. Accommodements dans les cabanes à sucre. *Journal de Montréal*. Retrieved from http://www2.canoe.com/infos/societe/archives/2007/03/20070320-075503.html.

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[84] Heinrich, J. Immigrants welcome - as long as they conform. *The Montreal Gazette.* Retrieved from http://www.canada.com/montrealgazette/news/story.html?id=fee092fd-5859-48c7-a46e-0a0a43700b73&k=38180&p=1.

[85] Ibid.

[86] It is worth noting that younger Quebecers are more open to public expressions of non-Christian faiths. Heinrich, J. Generation accommodation. *The Montreal Gazette.* Retrieved from http://www.canada.com/montrealgazette/news/saturdayextra/story.html?id=352d10c7-e6d9-4bf3-a689 090a420e11fc&p=3. Thus, it appears that young Quebecers' attitudes toward secularism are shifting and becoming less antagonistic toward expressions of non-Christian faiths in the public sphere.

[87] Seljak et al. Religion and multiculturalism in Canada: The challenge of religious intolerance and discrimination. pp. 87-95.

[88] Bramadat notes that six of those studies were designed specifically to address the repercussions of the attacks of September 11, 2001. Consequently, the number of studies done on religious diversity, for its own sake, numbers 13 in the five years studied. Bramadat, P. (2004). Challenges and opportunities: reconsidering the relationship between religions, the Multiculturalism Program, and the Government of Canada. Ottawa: Department of Canadian Heritage Multiculturalism Program. pp. 10-11.

[89] Seljak et al. Religion and multiculturalism in Canada: The challenge of religious intolerance and discrimination. pp. 34.

[90] Kamal, D. (2006). Now that religious diversity is upon us… Canada's multiculturalism model is increasingly relevant. *Canadian Diversity*, 5, no. 2, 42.

[91] Ibid.: 42-43.

[92] Since 2001, the British government has awarded an annual grant to the Inter Faith Network for the United Kingdom, an independent voluntary organization, funded by private donations, charitable trusts and faith communities. For the Australian initiative, see Cahill, D., Bouma, G., Dellal, H., & Leahy, M. (2004). *Religion, cultural diversity and safeguarding Australia*. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (Ed.) Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs in association with the World Conference of Religions for Peace. RMTI and Monash University, pp. 119-20.

[93] Naturally, interfaith networks will not *resolve* conflicts of this nature that are rooted in deep, historical and transnational animosities. However, they can be used to *negotiate* the conflict so that it is played out, at least on Canadian soil, in a civil, democratic, and non-violent manner.

[94] The authors of *Religion Cultural Diversity and Safeguarding Australia* provide a comprehensive list of the responsibilities of such an advisory body. See Cahill, D. et al. (2004). Religion, cultural diversity and safeguarding Australia. Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs (Ed.). Department of Immigration and Multicultural and Indigenous Affairs and Australian Multicultural Foundation in association with the World Conference of Religions For Peace. Rmit University And Monash University, pp. 119-20.

[95] While Christian in its orientation, the Council promotes interfaith dialogue and cooperation. See Canadian Council of Churches. Canadian Council of Churches' Commission on Faith and Witness. Retrieved from http://www.ccc-cce.ca/english/faith/inter.htm. A partial list of interfaith groups in Canada is found at Canadian Council of Churches. Interfaith Groups and Centres in Canada. Retrieved from http://www.ccc-cce.ca/english/downloads/GroupsCentres.pdf.

[96] The Metropolis Project is an international research project on the integration of immigrants and refugees into pluralistic societies. The Canadian project is found at http://canada.metropolis.net/.