

Are Western Models of Multiculturalism in Crisis? National Identity, Cultural Integration, and Historical Memory

Joel MATTHEWS

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Multiculturalism, as a defining concept for modern immigrant societies, has suffered numerous setbacks over the past decade. With the ongoing threat of terrorism, xenophobia and policies against the resettlement of refugees, multiculturalism’s core ideals of cultural pluralism and egalitarian coexistence are under attack. From the early 2010s, a swath of European leaders have proclaimed the failure of multiculturalism, and some have actively distanced their immigration policies from other traditionally multicultural nations. This article will survey a number of major Western multicultural nations, focusing on their defining characteristics, the current state of multicultural policies, and relevant weaknesses to offer examples and inform the debate on Japan’s future immigrant policy.

Defining Multiculturalism

While there exists a vast spectrum of countries claiming to be multicultural, from those historically multicultural in Asia such as Malaysia, the Philippines and China to Canada, Australia, the United Kingdom and many other European countries that have adopted multicultural social and immigration policies in correlation with their history as either settler or metropolitan colonial nations. Nevertheless, multiculturalism generally refers to a society in which a range of different cultural experiences are both available and valued. (Bolaffi et. al. 183) Moreover, Anthony Giddens points to the existence of cultural pluralism. That is, a society in which ethnic or minority cultures “are given full validity to exist separately, but are expected to participate in the host society’s economic and public life.” (498) In other words, various immigrant, minority and/or ethnic groups are expected to exist separately and *equally*. This is often positioned in contrast to the policies of assimilation or segregation: whereby only the majority/dominant culture is valued and other cultures are expected to discard their traditional ideas, beliefs and customs and integrate into dominant

society in the case of integration; or completely isolated from the dominant culture for fear of cultural, racial or social contamination in the case of segregation.

Furthermore, the politics of multiculturalism signifies the recognition and validity of group differences in the public sphere. More specifically, these differences are recognized in the spheres of law, government policy, democratic discourse such as the media, common citizenship and national identity. Yet the ideal of different cultures existing separately, and more importantly *equally*, in the public sphere is often a complex and tortuous negotiation of dominant and subordinate cultures, with competing rights and obligations and notions of recognition. It could be argued that Switzerland is a rare example in which French, German and Italian ethnic groups coexist relatively equally within a single national framework. However, minorities in postcolonial nations, be they indigenous or First Nations peoples, or immigrants from other regions, often struggle to attain ‘distinct but equal’ status and become targets of scapegoating, prejudices and discrimination.

In their study of British multiculturalism, Meer and Modood (79) call attention to the multiple ways in which the term has been conceived. They formulated three distinct policy models taken by nations in both Europe and beyond and is listed below.

- 1) “An integration and social cohesion perspective that seeks to include minorities through a process of greater assimilation to majority norms and customs”. (Ibid.)
- 2) “An alternative, explicitly secular ‘multiculture’ or ‘conviviality’ approach...that welcomes the ‘fact’ of difference, and stresses anti-essentialist, lifestyle- and consumption-based behavioural identities which invalidate ‘group’ identities”. (Ibid.)
- 3) “A political multiculturalism that incorporates the goals of either or both these positions while accommodating ‘groupings’, including subjectively conceived ethno-religious minority ones.” (Ibid.)

The Japanese notion of multicultural coexistence (*tabunka kyōsei*) along with the German example examined in this article typifies the policy model of the first categorization. The second category more resembles that of France, with its secular republican ideal of a unified national citizenry. Great Britain, Australia and Canada, on the other hand, is more accommodating to ethnic ‘groupings’ at the same time embracing a convivial national identity. Furthermore, the institutionalization of political multiculturalism in, for example, nationality and anti-discrimination laws or official statements in support of multicultural values are more common to the Australian, Canadian and British examples.

For the purpose of this article, postcolonial multicultural nations will be divided into three categories that reflect their respective relationship to Euro-American and Japanese imperialism, native and First Nations peoples, the dominant culture of said nation and current policies vis-à-vis cultural, ethnic and racial minorities.

- 1) Metropole postcolonial nations: United Kingdom, France, Japan, the Netherlands, Germany etc.
- 2) Settler postcolonial nations: The United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Brazil etc.

- 3) Independent postcolonial nations: Malaysia, Algeria, Korea, Indonesia, the Philippines etc.

The First Multicultural Nation: Canada

The term ‘multiculturalism’ first emerged in Canada during the 1960s as a counter to ‘biculturalism’. Due to Canada’s unique colonial experience, the Francophone region of Quebec was fearful of being assimilated into the larger and more culturally dominant Anglophone regions of Canada. This cultural anxiety set the secondary Francophone Quebec against the Anglophone rest that constituted the bifurcated cultural experience of Canada until the 1960s. However, after World War Two non-white immigrants were coming to Canada in increasing numbers. By the 1960s, previous assimilationist policies of racial discrimination had been rescinded and Canada began searching for a national framework beyond the Francophone/Anglophone bicultural model. In 1971, then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau (father of current Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau) declared the Canadian federal government’s commitment to multiculturalism and in doing so “formalized a policy to protect and promote diversity, recognize the rights of Aboriginal peoples, and support the use of Canada’s two official languages.” (The Canadian Encyclopedia)

Through this declaration, Canada became the first nation to officially declare and adopt the national policy of multiculturalism. It enshrined the principles of ethnic and cultural heterogeneity; strove for equality and mutual respect among ethnic and cultural groups; and the policies implemented after 1971 endeavored to achieve cultural harmony. Furthermore, multiculturalism became constitutive of Canadian identity, and as Paul Robert Magocsi’s (ed.) *The Encyclopedia of Canada’s Peoples* (1999) asserts, the identification of one’s particular ethnic identity does not supersede Canadian national identity, rather the multicultural ethic of acceptance and recognition itself defines Canadians and their worldview.

Canada to this day holds firmly to their multicultural model and concomitant national identity. Unlike many European countries, Canadian multiculturalism is protected because it remains political practice endorsed and supported by all major political parties. Canadian multiculturalism is also analyzed, scrutinized, debated and promoted by major Canadian liberal theorists such as Charles Taylor (see *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*) who rigorously question it, but it is this intellectual process that undergirds its validity in Canadian political and cultural discourse.

The Failure of Multiculturalism?

In the political context of the Islamic State and global terrorism, Brexit (Great Britain’s exit from the European Union), a refugee crisis in continental Europe, a Trump presidency and rising white nationalism in the United States, and resurgent One Nation Party under the leadership of Pauline Hanson in Australia, the liberal commitment to multicultural pluralism has suffered under the weight of considerable criticism. In particular,

the 2008 global financial crisis awakened many to the limitations to numerous contemporary grand ideas: globalization, financial capitalism, neoliberalism, and also multiculturalism. As the economic downturn started to take its toll, the long-standing myth that migration brought incalculable economic, social, cultural and political value to the host society, was increasingly called into question. Denmark and the Netherlands had already developed a skeptical view of immigration, but that skepticism began infecting the national discourse of neighboring European countries. With the gradual inflow of migrants since the end of World War II, and the more recent influx of refugees fleeing war in the Middle East, more and more questions were being raised about multiculturalism's ability to manage the diversity emerging in many European societies. This speculation and doubt fed into right-wing nationalist political movements that charged multiculturalism with obscuring how poorly migrants were integrating into host societies. This opened the Pandora's box on a nascent right-wing discourse that included quasi-racist, xenophobic, intolerant, and exclusionary discourses not witnessed in post-Holocaust Europe.

European leader's dedication to multiculturalism as an overarching national framework appears to be wavering. European leaders David Cameron, Nicolas Sarkozy, and Angela Merkel have all declared multiculturalism a failure over the past decade as detailed below.

- First, in October 2010, Angela Merkel, Chancellor of Germany stated that at "the beginning of the 60s our country called the foreign workers to come to Germany and now they live in our country. We kidded ourselves a while, we said: 'They won't stay, sometime they will be gone', but this isn't reality. And of course, the approach [to build] a multicultural [society] and to live side-by-side and to enjoy each other... has failed, utterly failed." (BBC News 1)
- In February 2011, Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, David Cameron criticized "state multiculturalism" in his first speech after becoming prime minister as a main cause of radicalized terrorism. While in Germany, he blamed the UK's lack of a strong national identity that would have prevented people from turning to of extremist terrorism. "Frankly, we need a lot less of the passive tolerance of recent years and much more active, muscular liberalism." He continues, we "have failed to provide a vision of society [to young Muslims] to which they feel they want to belong," he said. "We have even tolerated segregated communities behaving in ways that run counter to our values. All this leaves some young Muslims feeling rootless. And the search for something to belong to and believe in can lead them to extremist ideology." (BBC News 2)
- Later in February 2011, French President Nicolas Sarkozy said of multiculturalism, "It's a failure...The truth is that, in all our democracies, we've been too concerned about the identity of the new arrivals and not enough about the identity of the country receiving them... This raises the issue of Islam and our Muslim compatriots. Our Muslim compatriots should be able to live and practice their religion like anyone else ... but it can only be a French Islam and not just an Islam in France." (Reuters)

Both the political, cultural and historical background for each case, along with each nation's specific version of multiculturalism, are different. However, they come together in denouncing the cultural pluralism enshrined in multiculturalism due to the common threat of Islamic terrorism. In the case of Merkel's Germany, the perceived misgiving of multiculturalism is the immigration policy; in Cameron's United Kingdom there isn't a sufficiently strong national identity; and in Sarkozy's France the issue of nationalism and religion appear foremost. But the common thread across all three major European leaders disparagement of multiculturalism is an increasing anxiety about Muslims, and whether they are integrating into European host societies.

The German 'Guest-worker' Model

It should be noted at the outset that Germany has never proclaimed itself to be a multicultural society. However, in the 1990s Germany's steady shift away from an ethnic-assimilationist model of citizenship to policies that are more associated with multicultural models of political practice. Contemporary German society is multiethnic and exhibits a cultural diversity that is predominantly from post-World War II immigration. The first wave of foreign immigration was initiated via a recruitment agreement with Italy in 1955 that saw Italians recruited as *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers) or mostly low-skilled industrial workers. The original intention was to create a model whereby migrants would rotate, with each rotation spending about one or two years in Germany after which they would return to their country of origin. This labor recruitment program ended in 1973, but regular immigration (mostly family reunions) continued at a lower rate than before. Beginning in the 1980s, asylum seeker and refugee numbers increased significantly until they reached an all-time high in 1992. Following this peak, restrictions on asylum and ethnic Germans translated into lower immigrants entering Germany. (Wasmer 164-165)

Overall, Wasmer asserts that there are several reasons why the proportion of foreign nationals in Germany increased from 1% in 1950 to 9% in 2010.

Immigration rates are amongst the highest in the world; return migration is well below the originally intended level; *jus sanguinis* [or the rule that a child's citizenship is determined by its parents' citizenship] (up to 2000) meant that children born in Germany of foreign parents had difficulties naturalizing; low naturalization rates generally created a statistically high number of 'foreigners'. Today, nearly 20 per cent of the population has a 'migration background', that is, made up of those who (1) immigrated to Germany after 1950; (2) were born in Germany as foreigners; and (3) have at least one parent who immigrated to Germany after 1950 or was born in Germany as a foreigner. (Ibid. 165)

Today, consisting of around 24% of the foreign population, and by far the largest ethnic minority, are Turks. Other significant ethnic minorities come from the former Yugoslavia, Italy and more recently Poland. Due to their history as guest workers, many of Germany's ethnic minorities still have lower overall education and occupation status, and a

disproportionate number of them are either unemployed or on welfare. Another significant issue for Germany's multicultural policies and cultural integration is the high percentage of Muslim immigrants and the cultural, religious and political implications that engenders.

As mentioned previously, Germany has never proclaimed itself to be a multicultural state, and therefore categorization and assessment of its immigration and cultural integration policies is fraught with difficulty. Furthermore, the complicated state of German political parties along with subnational states being responsible for education and cultural affairs has left Germany with an inconsistent and incoherent multicultural agenda. Nevertheless, management of migration and ethnic diversity in Germany includes many elements that would be considered adhering to multicultural principles: recognition of cultural diversity, and social equality for members of racial, ethnic or other minority groups. An important indicator of Germany's commitment to multicultural values is the laws relating to citizenship and naturalization. As will be discussed later, citizenship grants migrants access to civil rights, which in turn determine the boundaries of national identity.

[The] new Citizenship Law of 2000, supplementing the traditional principle of decent (bloodlines) with the *jus soli* principle, was a remarkable change of political practice in Germany. All children born in Germany now automatically receive German citizenship if at least one of their parents has lived in Germany for at least eight years. They are entitled to dual citizenship but have to decide whether to retain German nationality or the nationality of their parents between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three. Also, the numbers of years of residence in Germany required before immigrants can request naturalization was reduced. With this liberalization of citizenship regulations Germany has moved away from the...ethnic conception of citizenship towards a more civic-territorial one. (Ibid. 167)

Despite these changes, Germany's naturalization rate remains much lower than other European nations. Wasmer speculates that this is due to Germany's refusal to recognize dual-citizenship. Since 2007, naturalization applicants have had to deal with stricter language requirements, while also demonstrating sufficient knowledge of the German social and legal system by means of a citizenship test—a measure more and more multicultural nations are adopting.

Wasmer also perspicaciously points out how these “changes point to the notion of citizenship not as a *means* of integration but as the *end point* of a complicated integration process.” (167) Unlike the multicultural models of Canada and Australia, Germany does not include affording immigrants civil rights as part of the integration process. It would appear from recent changes to German immigration and social integration policies that the onus for successful integration into German society lies with the immigrant themselves. “Despite official rhetoric that integration a ‘two-way’ process that ‘requires acceptance by the majority population’... little is done to increase the majority's acceptance of culturally different groups.” (Ibid. 170) In this rendering of multiculturalism, the positive value ascribed to ethnic, racial and cultural diversity is becoming increasingly obscured.

Political debate over the German model of cultural diversity focus predominantly on the negative: immigrants allegedly living in parallel societies or migrant ghettos that are perceived to be cut off from mainstream German society, lacking German language, customs, culture, and some would argue most importantly law. The issue of *Ausländerkriminalität* (foreigner criminality) has been a major topic of debate in German political and criminological discourse since the 1990s. (Krajencrink, M. et. al.) Within this debate, there are numerous calls for criminal offenders to be exiled from Germany, even if they were born and raised in Germany.

Today, the high relevance attributed to religious-cultural factors, Islam in particular, is particularly significant. Since 9/11, Muslim fundamentalists have been seen as posing a serious terrorist threat. Outdated parenting styles in Muslim families are supposed to be the main reason for young male Muslims' (alleged) proneness to violence. In the tabloid press or readers' letters, incidents of 'honour killings' are cited as undisputable proof of the problematic nature of Islam in general. (Wasmer 172)

While Germany is by no means unique in placing the cause of fundamentalism, extremism and terrorism within migrant culture, the symbolic value of providing civil rights and citizenship, especially to Muslim migrants, as a sign that they have a place and are valued in the host society is largely overlooked. Without those symbolic gestures to incoming immigrants, the possibility of finding and cherishing German national identity remains tenuous.

Furthermore, another sign of an increasingly emotional and hostile debate surrounding immigration in Germany was the publication of Thilo Sarrazin's *Germany Does Away With Itself* in 2010. Thilo Sarrazin is a renowned German banker who is also a long-time member of the center-left Social Democratic Party (SPD) and the book itself has sold over two million copies, thereby making it one of the most read books in Germany since World War Two. (Gatestone Institute) In the book, Sarrazin argues that Muslims are unwilling or unable to integrate into German society, and goes as far as claiming Muslim "genetic disposition" was to blame. Thus, he claimed, Germany was becoming less intelligent because of the higher fertility rate among Muslims. While this explosive claim was denounced as downright racist by many politicians, it shattered the German taboo on discussing the impact of Muslim immigration, and its best-seller status speaks to the extent it resonated with Germans at the time. This has led to more German politicians adopting populist tendencies, and as Habermas commented in the *New York Times* (2010), "The usual stereotypes are being flushed out of the bars and onto the talk shows, and they are echoed by mainstream politicians who want to capture potential voters who are otherwise drifting off towards the right." (Habermas) While many of Germany's neighboring European countries have seen the rise in right-wing populist parties over the past decade, Germany, until very recently, hadn't experienced the same political movement. However, as of writing this article, the Eurosceptic, anti-immigration right-wing populist party, Alternative für

Deutschland (AfD) party has just come in third place in the September 2017 election. This has translated into the party making up one of the biggest opposition forces in the German parliament, signalling Germany's cultural diversity and commitment to multicultural ideals may be in for troubled times. Only time will tell.

Overall, it appears that despite Germany not hoisting the flag of multiculturalist cultural diversity, it nevertheless promotes “equal opportunities and provide[s] equal individual rights for immigrants.” (Wasmer 185) In addition, the German state's commitment to individual ‘freedom of self-determination’—which could be held as guaranteeing an immigrant's right to choose to what extent her or she adopts German culture, and to what extent he or she preserves the culture of their homeland—should not be underestimated.

The British ‘Imperial’ Model

Unlike the German case, both the British and French models of cultural diversity and integration are, as metropole postcolonial nations, intimately tied to their history as a global imperial power. However, their approach to conceptualizing and dealing with cultural plurality differ entirely, and the French republican model of citizenship will be considered in the following section. Multiculturalism in the United Kingdom stems from the post-World War Two initiative known as CUKC or Citizens of the United Kingdom and Commonwealth/Colonies. This new citizenship category was created by the British Nationality Act of 1948 which formed the basis for the United Kingdom's nationality law until it was revised by the British Nationality Act 1981. The 1948 nationality law facilitated mass immigration from the Commonwealth of Nations, an intergovernmental organization established in the context of mid-twentieth century decolonization and consists of 52 member nations. In line with Commonwealth and British law, migrants from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Jamaica, South Africa, Kenya, Uganda, Australia, Hong Kong, Nigeria, Sri Lanka etc. were granted the right to abode in the United Kingdom. This continued until 1972 when the introduction of work permits, or only people with parents or grandparents born in the United Kingdom, could gain entry. The desire to retain some form of imperial prestige led to the creation of the Commonwealth identity and citizenship, but many in contemporary Britain consider this to have diminished a national identity.

Four years prior to the changes made to the United Kingdom Commonwealth immigration policy in 1972 was an infamous racially-charged speech given by the British Member of Parliament Enoch Powell while addressing the Conservative Political Center in Birmingham. Powell was criticizing the Race Relations Act of 1968 which made it illegal to refuse housing, employment, or public services to anyone on the grounds of national origin, ethnicity or race. In what became known as the “Rivers of Blood” speech, Powell references discussions he held with constituents who complained about the number of immigrants coming into his community.

We must be mad, literally mad, as a nation to be permitting the annual inflow of some 50,000 dependents, who are for the most part the material of the future growth of the immigrant

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descended population. It is like watching a nation busily engaged in heaping up its own funeral pyre. So insane are we that we actually permit unmarried persons to immigrate for the purpose of founding a family with spouses and fiancées whom they have never seen... In these circumstances nothing will suffice but that the total inflow for settlement should be reduced at once to negligible proportions, and that the necessary legislative and administrative measures be taken without delay. (The Telegraph)

The final part of the speech gained it the popular title “Rivers of Blood,” as he quotes the Sibyl epic poem, *Aeneid*, 6, 86-87:

As I look ahead, I am filled with foreboding. Like the Roman, I seem to see "the River Tiber foaming with much blood". That tragic and intractable phenomenon which we watch with horror on the other side of the Atlantic but which there is interwoven with the history and existence of the States itself, is coming upon us here by our own volition and our own neglect. (Ibid.)

Powell gained the support of many far-right groups in the United Kingdom and the slogan “Enoch was right” has been printed on badges, T-shirts, and fridge magnets. (Vice News) The influence of this almost fifty-year old speech can still be seen in contemporary British discourse on immigration and multiculturalism. .

Issues of national identity are further complicated in the British case as the United Kingdom itself is a ‘nation of nations’: England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland. Questions of social cohesion and cultural integration are therefore intertwined with the Scottish independence movement, Britain’s exit from the European Union and Northern Ireland-Republic of Ireland (an EU member state) border concerns, and the rise of popular English nationalisms. Recent ruminations on British multiculturalism also need to be considered in the context of global terrorism: without doubt 9/11, but more specifically the 7/7 London bombings, and more recent attacks such as the 2017 Westminster attack, Manchester Arena bombings, among others. After the 7/7 2015 London bombings, several social and political commentators came out against multiculturalism. (Meer and Modood 77) The aforementioned quote by former U.K. prime minister David Cameron was delivered in the political context of a heightened threat of Islamic State-inspired terrorism. Cameron indirectly criticized multiculturalism for minimizing the cultural position of Christianity as a public moral ethos, and suggested that this allowed “segregated communities to behave in ways that run counter to our values and has not contained that extremism but allowed it to grow and prosper.” (U.K. Government) The impact of top-level public figures attacking multiculturalism has been that recent tendency in many multicultural nations, the demand for higher qualifications to naturalize and the expectation that ethnic minorities make public statements of national loyalty. As with other nations, this burden of proof takes the form of citizenship tests, the swearing of oaths, language proficiency tests and the explicit

condemnation of extremism and terrorism from Muslims in particular. This suspicion of the Muslim minority's loyalty to the nation before they have even taken the oath at their citizenship ceremony is symptomatic of the exclusionism manifesting in many nations in which cultural cleavages are being pried open.

The French Republican Model

Nicholas Sarkozy's comments on the failure of French multiculturalism may appear in line with David Cameron and Angela Merkel's comments, but the French case differs from the United Kingdom and Germany in many respects that should be examined in detail. Firstly, while Germany has never officially adopted multiculturalism as official government policy, especially since 2000 it has embraced the multicultural ideals of accepting cultural plurality within German society. France, on the other hand, by the very nature of its republican model is not accepting of numerous cultural identities. Villard and Sayegh argue that it was not until recently when the term 'multiculturalism' entered French political discourse. Rather, the terms 'cultural diversity' (*la diversité culturelle*) or simply 'diversity' (*la diversité*) have been preferred to multiculturalism. French republicanism is ideologically premised on the 'politics of indifference' (or individual rights) as opposed to multicultural ideals that center on the 'politics of recognition' (or group rights). France therefore generally holds individual rights above the rights and recognition of cultural or ethnic minorities.

Article 1 of the French Constitution of 1958 holds that: "France shall be an indivisible, secular, democratic and social Republic. It shall ensure the equality of all citizens before the law, without distinction of origin, race or religion. It shall respect all beliefs." This moral universalism originated in the philosophies of Enlightenment thinkers and is often presented as an opposite to the multicultural model. As Villard and Sayegh note:

The theoretical origins of this model are to be found in the ideals of Enlightenment philosophies which themselves directly inspired the political imaginings of the French Revolution. The revolutionary definition of the nation was contractual and civic, representing universal values and progress. There were many interpretations for further defining this 'civic nationalism', but the Jacobin version...has consistently remained the dominant interpretation in French republican institutions, which are characterized by a rigorous political and ideological centralism. In the French Republican model, the nation is conceived as an association of equal citizens. They are equal in rights and in treatment. Their equality is thus expressed in regard to the common law, defined as the core of the *res publica*, literally the public affair. (238)

Without the individual occupying the primary unit of measure in French Republicanism, there would be no universal attribute. In the French model, society is divided into two spheres, the public and the private. In the public sphere, the equality of all citizens is paramount and anything deemed to privilege any cultural or ethnic group is relegated to the private sphere.

The construction of unity, or indivisibility, of the French Republic renders any recognition of cultural, religious and linguistic differences problematic. Despite the implementation of ‘integration’ as the official policy in the 1980s, the French model does not recognize any form of particularisms as France defines its citizenry in terms that do not include cultural signifiers such as race, religion, ethnicity, class or culture. This homogenization of culture, language and identity was carried out both internally and externally. Those areas of France outside the capital Paris were coerced to adopt the Parisian dialect and to subsume themselves into a national culture and identity from Paris. The modern conviction of republican universality and nationality also became the foundation of France’s ‘civilizing mission’ abroad as the French taught their colonial subjects that by adopting French culture and language, they too could become French. This differs significantly from the British Empire, which despite consisting of an assortment of policies, could best be characterized as ‘indirect rule’. This was a policy in which military and taxes were controlled by the British, but all other aspects of colonial governance were left to pre-colonial elites that sided with the British during the colonial conquest. The coercive character of French republican assimilation has understandably come into conflict with the practices and beliefs of ethnic, cultural and more significant recently, religious minorities in France.

The legacy of French colonialism and recent immigration has been taken up by a new generation of French academics, which is itself symptomatic of the problems French society is facing with regards to its colonial past. The recent French presidential election illustrated the widening schism historical memory is calving into French society. A history of institutionalized slavery, and more recent revelations about the French military’s use of torture during the Algerian War of Independence have increasingly smeared the prestige and pride once held for the French Empire. These criticisms of the French colonial empire is a common theme for the right-wing anti-immigrant National Front and its founder, Jean-Marie Le Pen, Marine Le Pen’s father and veteran of the war with Algeria.

Strategically, “positive” accounts of the colonial past appeal to former settlers from French North Africa, known as *pieds-noirs*, and to nationalist defenders of the French military. This made colonial revisionism tempting to mainstream conservatives, too, as FN [National Front] began to gain electoral ground beginning in the mid-1980s. Jean-Marie Le Pen’s shocking advance to the second round of the 2002 presidential elections spurred new conservative efforts to win back FN voters, especially the *pieds-noirs*. Prime among them was the infamous law of Feb. 23, 2005, whose Article 4 specified that French school programs should “recognize the positive role of the French presence overseas, especially North Africa.” (Sessions)

During the election campaign, both Marine Le Pen and conservative candidate François Fillon endorsed positive revisionist renderings of France’s colonial history. Le Pen believes the French secondary education should be rebalanced towards more “glorious elements” of France’s colonial past. This harks back to the nineteenth century when French education

aimed to foster national pride in French civilization and imperialism, and implicitly promote the hierarchies of race and civilization that undergirded it.

Whereas policies in the United States, Australia and Canada have evolved over the twentieth century to acknowledge, accommodate and even celebrate immigrant's culture, language and identity, France continues to homogenize all immigrants into the shared identity of French nationality. This is encapsulated in the French term *fraternité*. In line with this notion of an indivisible French nationality, the French government aggressively suppresses cultural diversity and a large part of that is its prohibition of public displays of religion. In 2004, the French government banned Muslim headscarves sparked a heated debate in France on the place of religion, specifically Islam, in French public life. It escalated further in 2011 when face veils were banned in all public places. It goes without saying that the privileged position of Christianity in French society remains uncontested. The recent spate of Islamic State-inspired terrorist attacks such as the 2016 Bastille Day attack in Nice, the November 2015 Paris attacks, and January 2015 Charlie Hebdo attacks, to name just a few, have without doubt created a political and social atmosphere where cultural and religious tensions have been stretched to breaking point. The acceptability of far-right cultural racism inspired by the likes of Marine Le Pen have also appear to set France back to more assimilationist discourses founded on a monoculturalist national identity.

The Australian Model

The survey of European multicultural examples suggest an insufficiency of national belonging and 'loyalty' to the host society. Theorists such as Ernest Gellner and Benedict Anderson described the emergence of a national identity as a uniquely modern construct, arguing that in a modern industrial society the complex division of labor meant that interaction with strangers or people outside an individual's traditional community had increased dramatically. This increased interaction with strangers also called for a standardized language for communication, which in turn was established and maintained though a mass national education system. However the foundations upon which that national belonging and loyalty rested was, in most cases, the particulars of race, language, history and culture. As with the European examples, despite inclusive rhetoric and integration policies, the foundations of many European country's national identity are being challenged. It is here a comparison with the Australian example will prove worthwhile.

Australian immigration policy from 1901 to 1966 was conducted in accordance with the now infamous White Australia Policy. Under this policy, non-white (generally interpreted as those not of Anglo-Celtic origin) were restricted from migrating to Australia by means of a 50-word dictation test. This model had already been used in South Africa, and was a sleight of hand that could appear to value education over race, but effectively made Australia whiter that it had been before federation in 1901. In the period between 1891 and 1947, the percentage of whites (including northern Europeans) Australia rose from 93% to 96% (SBS, *Immigration Nation* (documentary)). The period after World War II witnessed the most

significant changes to Australian immigration, a lot of which stemmed from then Minister of Immigration Arthur Calwell's warning: "populate or perish." Replete with the racial paranoia that characterized the White Australia Policy, Calwell contended: "We have 25 years at most to populate this country before the yellow races are down upon us." (Pilger 87) From 1947, the Australian government embarked on an immigration program that was reoriented from an Anglo-Celtic to Pan-European focus. This period witnessed Australia welcome migrants from Malta, the Netherlands, Italy, West Germany, Turkey, Yugoslavia, Austria, Greece, Spain, Belgium, Hungary and Czechoslovakia. This period of Pan-European migration under the White Australia policy came to an end with the enactment of the Migration Act of 1966 that established legal equality between European and non-European migrants, and laid the foundations for Australia's shift to multiculturalism in the 1970s. (National Museum of Australia)

Australian politics went through a transformational change in the 1970s. The election of 1972 saw Gough Whitlam lead the progressive Australian Labor Party into government for the first time in 23 years. The Whitlam government implemented several changes that transformed Australia's political, social, economic and demographic landscape irreversibly. Whitlam terminated military conscription, instituted universal health care, introduced tuition-free tertiary education, and initiated a legal aid program for disadvantaged Australians. Most significant, however, for Australia's immigration program was the submission of the government paper titled "A Multicultural Society for the Future" by then Immigration minister Al Grassby. This was the first official statement declaring Australia's commitment to multiculturalism, some two years after Canadian Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau announced the policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism would be implemented in Canada. Under Australia's multiculturalism, a key piece of legislation was enacted in 1975 titled the Racial Discrimination Act. This statute makes discrimination due to race, color, descent, or national or ethnic origin illegal in Australia and is applicable in areas of employment, housing and accommodation, provision of goods and services, access to public facilities, advertising and access to trade union membership. (Federal Register of Legislation) This legislation formed the basis for state-based hate speech laws that give redress (to varying degrees in each state) when a person is victimized on account of ethnic origin, gender identity, disability, religion, race, HIV/AIDS status or sexual orientation.

Migration to Australia was also overhauled and the multicultural policy saw over 80,000 Vietnamese refugees moved to Australia between 1975 and 1985. (SBS News 1) This was the first wave of Asian migration to Australia since the gold rush of the late nineteenth century and marks a watershed in the history of Asian migration to Australia. Into the 1980s Asian migrants from Hong Kong increased as the 1997 transfer of sovereignty from the United Kingdom to the People's Republic of China approached.

The Australian government was also active in promoting multilingual broadcasts and multicultural content through the establishment of the Special Broadcasting Service (SBS) in 1978. More recently, the National Indigenous Television (NITV) network was launched in

2007 as a channel that broadcasts programming primarily produced by indigenous peoples of Australia. In 2012 it was relaunched as a part of SBS and started to receive public funding to support it. As noted in the preceding section on Canadian multiculturalism, immigration to Australia is considered a part of nation-building, and the diversity it engenders has itself become an important part of Australian national identity. The commitment to immigrants and their cultural integration into Australia is undergirded by a commitment and provision of social welfare to incoming immigrants. Government policy is grounded in the assumption of permanent residency (PR) and citizenship, and PR can be gained after two years, followed by another year of residence for citizenship (the citizenship requirement has changed from one year to four in 2017).

However, cultural integration and harmony in Australia has not always been easily attained. Starting from the 1990s, indigenous struggles and new critical historiography called forth a cultural revolution in how Australia imagined itself. For the first time, speaking of Australia's colonial history as a British "invasion" of Australia was no longer positioned on the radical fringe. White Australia's treatment of indigenous peoples gradually garnered significant public discourse, and in 1997 the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report titled *Bringing them Home: Report of the National Enquiry into the Separation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Children from their Families* was published to both praise and condemnation. This report documented the forcible removal of indigenous children, particularly 'half-castes,' from their parents, and the placing of them in the foster care of white parents or white institutions in order to assimilate them. This epitomized the colonial racial hierarchy and disregard for indigenous Australians human rights. These children became known as "the stolen generation." The release of the Human Rights and Equal Opportunity Commission report awoke a debate (at times very hostile) around the colonial history of Australia, and the relationship between white (Anglo-Saxon/European) Australia, indigenous Australia, and multicultural (immigrant) Australia. The election campaign of 2007 saw the issue of the stolen generation specifically, and colonial history generally, be discussed by the candidates of the conservative Liberal Party and the left-leaning Labor Party. After a long conservative era under the Liberal Party's John Howard, the Labor Party under Kevin Rudd was brought into government. On the 13th of February 2008, Kevin Rudd made an official, public national apology to indigenous Australians for the stolen generations. Rudd pledged to bridge the gap between indigenous and non-indigenous peoples in the areas of health, education, and living conditions, and in a way that is respectful of their self-determinism. While this symbolic gesture certainly made progress in non-indigenous attitudes and recognition of colonial history, the condition of indigenous Australia can be summarized as follows:

- Life expectancy approximately 10 years less than non-indigenous.
- Over half the indigenous community is unemployed.
- One in five Indigenous women experience physical violence in the previous 12 months.

- Half of all indigenous people have some form of disability (2008).
- Around 1 in 12 indigenous people are part of the stolen generations.
- National imprisonment rate of Indigenous people is 15 times higher than non-indigenous.
- There were approximately 250 languages at the time of colonization, but only 145 are still spoken, and only 20 are considered “strong”. (Australian Human Rights Commission)

The often hostile debate over Australia’s colonial history has more recently focused on Australia Day celebrations. Australia Day is the official national day of Australia and is celebrated annually on the 26th of January, the anniversary of the 1788 arrival of the First Fleet at Port Jackson, New South Wales and the raising of the Union Jack at Sydney Cove by Governor Arthur Phillip. However, colonial and indigenous historical awareness has led to the day being referred to as “Invasion Day,” “Survival Day” or “Sorry Day” with many people advocating the date be changed to a more appropriate anniversary.

The Australia Day debate is just one part of Australian discourse on its colonial past and multicultural present. While not as mainstream as the leaders of European nations denouncing multiculturalism, there are political figures in Australia that are vocal in their denunciation of Australian multiculturalism. For example, in October 2016 Australian outspoken right-wing senator Pauline Hanson came out in support of fellow One Nation senator Brian Burston’s proclamation that Australian multiculturalism was a failure. He said the current migrant and refugee intake is too high and was having a negative impact on community safety. "Carjackings, home invasions, flash riots, drive by shootings and, of course, when citizens object, endless complaints, under section 18C of the Racial Discrimination Act. Organised crime, patterns of antisocial behaviour - especially amongst young men - welfare dependency, imprisonment rates three times the national average, and the long-term threat of terrorism and questionable loyalty." (SBS News 2) While Hanson’s One Nation Party takes aim at immigrant crime and Australia’s Racial Discrimination Act, the political consensus over Australia’s national identity as a multicultural nation is far more entrenched than in Europe. This was reaffirmed by the Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull in his “Remarks at the Release of the Multicultural Statement 2017.”

You know, we live in a world of increasing intolerance and disharmony in so many parts of the world. There are so many parts of the world where people of different faiths and different ethnic backgrounds and cultures who have lived together with relative harmony for many years, for hundreds of years if not thousands of years, seem no longer able to do so today. So many parts of the world are racked by that type of bitter conflict. And yet, we manage here this remarkable achievement. We are as old as our First Australians. We are here on the land of the Ngunnawal people. They have been here, caring for this land, our First Australians right across Australia, for over 50,000 years, from time out of mind. And yet, we are as young as the baby in the arms of her migrant mother who could have come from any nation, any faith, any race. We are an immigration nation. You can't look in the mirror - no-one can look in the mirror and say,

‘Australians only look like this’. Australians look like every face, every race, every background because we define ourselves and our nation by our commitment to shared political values, democracy, freedom and the rule of law. (Turnbull)

Conclusion

Australia’s commitment to dealing with its colonial past at times vacillates, but especially since the 1970s there has been a rigorous academic, philosophical, historiographical and social drive to confront its colonial past. Renowned Australian anthropologist Ghassan Hage points to the history wars in the 1990s as adding further dimension and greater intensity to the debate about, and significance of, colonial memory in Australia’s history and its present. In particular, it was significant in that it helped define a kind of citizenship and participatory belonging required from non-indigenous Australians if they were to address and rectify the injustices of the past. As Hage argues, “there can be no ethical belonging to Australia without an ethical relationship to Australia’s history of colonization.” (2) Hage is the first to point to insufficiencies of Australian multicultural integration, especially the patronizing concern for others that characterizes much of white Australia’s relationship with indigenous and immigrant Australia. However, the attempts at critical and open debate over Australian identity and its past that defined this kind of citizenship and participatory belonging have opened a space for dialogue between so-called majority and minority stake holders so that the burden of ‘integration’ is not simply thrust upon indigenous and immigrants as is often the case in the German, French and British case. This intellectual challenge calls forth a national reckoning for the post-colonial nation, in whatever form that takes, to reevaluate and reconsider its relationship with the colonial past, and the role that can take in sustaining the inclusiveness multiculturalism enshrines.

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