

Debate on Racism with Special Reference to Canadian Multiculturalism*

Young-suck Moon**

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I. Introduction

Since the late 1990's, migration, in the form of immigration and education, to Canada from Korea has dramatically increased, and Canada has become one of the most popular destinations for Korean emigrants and students. The world is witnessing an upsurge of a "global movement of people." Whatever the motives, the desire to migrate will see hundreds of millions of people moving to pursue safer, cleaner, and more affluent lives in new territories.

For people who are planning to immigrate to other country, the issue of racism is a major concern they have, since experiencing

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** Professor of Dept. of Canadian Studies, Kangnam University, 6-2 San, Kugal-ri, Yong In, Gyonggi-Do; Office Phone: 031-280-3490, Cellular: 011-9732-8816, Fax 031-281-3604, E-mail: smoon@kangnam.ac.kr

racism may lead to a lowering of their self esteem, disadvantages at their work place and lower salary, lost opportunities for promotion, etc. Popular immigrant destinations for Koreans, such as the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, were once dominated by Caucasians, and their supremacy occupied the society for a long time.

Canada is known as an international regime of human rights and has championed multiculturalism, which is based on the fundamental rights of equality. Multiculturalism is an effort to cultivate the sensitivity which enables people to recognize the diversity among ethnic or visible minorities, very often ignored and repressed by dominant Caucasian-centered culture. In this regard, multicultural policy was formulated with mind of demographic and social factors, and thus analyses how multiculturalism as ideology and state policy conceals within it a racist discourse that make it an inadequate instrument for dealing with racism. This is the objective of this article.

II. The Socio-Demographic Background of Multiculturalism Policy in Canada

Canada is one of the truly multicultural nations in the world. Canada is a country of immigrants. Up to now, immigration supported the growth of the Canadian economy and helped Canada to maintain its status as one of the most influential nations in the world. In Canada, as Margaret Atwood reminds us, “if we are not aboriginal, we are immigrants, regardless of how many generations may precede us.” (qtd. Wadland, 30) Canada has accepted immigrants in vast numbers for most of its history; and even today on a per capita basis, it accepts more legal immigrants every year than any other country in the world.

1. The Changing Canadian Society: Demographic Overview

Prior to the reformation of the immigration policy in 1967, the majority of immigrants to Canada came primarily from the British Isles, then other European countries. In its early history, Canada was discovered and explored by the French. After almost a century of French rule, the British conquered New France, today known as Canada, in 1759-60. The British have since been in “control” of the vast territory of Canada. Canada dreamed toward creating a “White Settler’s colony,” more specifically a “Protestant, Anglo-Saxon” colony within the British Empire and at that time the majority of English-speaking Canadians identified themselves as being connected with Great Britain. Throughout most of its history, Canada has been perceived as predominantly British in its orientation. And new immigrants were expected to assimilate themselves to the cultural norm, which the whites set up for their supremacy.

At the time of Confederation in 1867, 60% of the population was of British origin and 30% French. While Canada began actively recruiting non-British immigrants during its “wheat boom” of the early 20th century, it only became “multicultural” in the post-World War II period. Contemporary immigration policy, which demolishes very discriminatory policy against non-whites and reformed in 1967, had opened Canada’s doors to a greater variety of the world’s peoples than ever before. At the time of the 1971 Census, 44.6% of Canada’s population was of British origin, 28.7% were French, and the remaining 26.7% of Canada’s population were from other ethnic origins (*Canada Handbook*, 57). The Anglophone (English speaking) and Francophone (French speaking) populations are the fundamental duality of the state but a third element, the “ethnic mix,” called “allophone,” belonging to neither, has been of growing importance in recent decades. In most cases this third element has opted for English as its working language in its adopted country.

At the end of the 20th century, 17% of all immigrants came from Europe, while Asia's share was up to 57%. Non-whites now comprise the majority of immigrants to Canada. To a population of about 32 million between 200,000 to 250,000 immigrants is added each year. There were 250,000 immigrants to Canada in 2003, which accounts for 0.8% of the total global population. Canada welcomed more than 13.4 million immigrants during the past century, the largest number having arrived during the 1990s. Canada has become more ethnically and culturally diverse and recent data of Canadian Population census provides evidence to this:

<Table 1> Population by Selected Ethnic Origins, by Provinces and Territories¹

<u>Definitions and notes</u>	Total responses	Single responses	Multiple responses
Canada	Number		
Total population	29,639,035	18,307,545	11,331,490
Ethnic origin			
Canadian	11,682,680	6,748,135	4,934,545
English	5,978,875	1,479,525	4,499,355
French	4,668,410	1,060,760	3,607,655
Scottish	4,157,210	607,235	3,549,975
Irish	3,822,660	496,865	3,325,795
German	2,742,765	705,600	2,037,170
Italian	1,270,370	726,275	544,090

¹ In 1981 the census allowed respondents to use either the paternal or the maternal line of descent to describe their ethnic origin, but the census of 1986 encouraged multiple responses by making the question regarding origin plural, i.e., "to which ethnic or cultural group(s)", and revised the instructions by adding a request that the respondent mark or specify as many groups as were applicable.

Chinese	1,094,700	936,210	158,490
Ukrainian	1,071,060	326,195	744,860
North American Indian	1,000,890	455,805	545,085
Dutch (Netherlands)	923,310	316,220	607,090
Polish	817,085	260,415	556,665
East Indian	713,330	581,665	131,665
Norwegian	363,760	47,230	316,530
Portuguese	357,690	252,835	104,855
Welsh	350,365	28,445	321,920
Jewish	348,605	186,475	162,130
Russian	337,960	70,895	267,070
Filipino	327,550	266,140	61,405
Métis	307,845	72,210	235,635
Swedish	282,760	30,440	252,325
Hungarian (Magyar)	267,255	91,800	175,455
American (USA)	250,005	25,205	224,805
Greek	215,105	143,785	71,325
Spanish	213,105	66,545	146,555
Jamaican	211,720	138,180	73,545
Danish	170,780	33,795	136,985
Vietnamese	151,410	119,120	32,290

Source: Statistics Canada, 2001 Census of Population (Last modified: 2004-04-21)

A striking fact from this data is that more than one third of Canadian population identified themselves as Canadians, neither English nor French or any other ethnic group. From the 1990s there was considerable discussion about the extent to which “Canadian” is the most appropriate identity for many, and researchers have explored

the extent to which this option is appropriate. According to the 2001 Census, 18.4% of the population was born outside Canada, the highest proportion in 70 years. The trend of Asia replacing Europe as the predominant region that supplies Canada with immigrants is most evident in British Columbia. In addition, Asia provides four of Canada's top five sources of business immigrants.

There are two clear characteristics for recent immigrants: Majority of immigrants comes from Asia, and the immigrants are concentrate into urban centres. Rural areas, small towns and the Maritime Provinces are home to fewer foreign-born Canadians when compared to the major urban cities. By contrast, approximately 90% of foreign-born Canadians live in Canada's 15 largest urban centers. The absolute majority of immigrants have been "people of color," concentrated in major urban cities as can be seen in the table below.

<Table 2> Immigration by Five Immigrant Receiving CMA's for Canada in Real Numbers and Percentage, 2000-2002

	2000	2001	2002
Toronto	110 069	125 114	111 580
%	48.81	49.95	48.71
Montreal	28 138	32 377	33 004
%	12.38	12.93	14.41
Vancouver	33 289	34 234	29 922
%	14.64	13.67	13.06
Calgary	8 478	10 166	9 036
%	3.73	4.06	3.95
Ottawa	7 774	8 441	7 156
%	3.42	3.37	3.12

Source: Citizenship and Immigration in Canada-Facts and Figures 2002

Table 2 clearly indicates the concentration of new immigrants into major cities in Canada. "In 1981, there were only six in Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver. By 2001, there were 254, according to a study by Statistics Canada, which defines ethnic enclaves as communities with 30 per cent of the population from one visible minority group."² The majority of immigrants settled near where they first landed, like in Toronto. The living conditions in the urban areas where most immigrants settled are terrible. The poverty of most of the new immigrants prevented them from finding a better place to live. Especially, the labor conditions for unskilled workers are often unsafe, and paid very low wages. Not only was the equipment they worked with unsafe and accident prone, they were also frequently required to work in environments where their physical and mental health were severely affected.

2. Mounting Evidences of Racism and the Development of Policy to Reflect the Multicultural Fact

There are two kinds of racism. One is the personal kind where one individual or group discriminates against another on the basis of race, causing that person or group to suffer or be deprived in some way. The other is the systemic kind which is less obvious to those who are unaffected by it.

a) Personal Kind of Racism

Canada has been a very racist society from the start. The two founding members of the nation, English and French, had excluded the Native Indians from the beginning. Since the 16th century, French settlers, settled on both banks of St. Lawrence in Eastern Canada,

² *The Globe and Mail*, Feb. 8, 2007.

called New France, but they were later conquered by Britain in 1759-60. The new ruler, British colonial government, once envisioned Canada as a "White Settler Colony" and so, traditionally had upheld and maintained a very discriminatory immigration policy toward non-whites, especially non-Brits, until the 1960's. When the English were in control of Acadia, known today as the Maritime Provinces-namely Nova Scotia, Prince Edward Island, New Brunswick, the English attempted to "rid themselves" of the Acadians, French settlers in that region, because of an irrational fear that French priests would persuaded the Acadians and Indians to enter the war against the English. So, in 1755 and 1758, 6,000 to 8,000 Acadians were deported to the American colonies along the far Atlantic coast, and some made their way even to Louisiana to live with the French settlers there. Some of those who escaped deportation hid out in the woods, only to be later captured and deported. Many Acadians did not survive the trip.

Never forgotten, Canada enacted Chinese "Exclusion" Act in 1885 against Chinese immigrants, later referred to as a "head tax" that Chinese entering Canada pay a \$ 50.00 fee. Chinese immigrants got a traumatic experiences that was intended to discourage, or 'exclude' all Chinese newcomers to Canada. Since 1900, the Government of Canada forced unbearable tax increases from the "taxes" to \$100 and, then, \$500. In the early 1900s, the value of \$500 was enough to purchase two homes in Montreal, largest city at that time in Canada. As a result, these racist measures caused a near stoppage of flow of Chinese immigrants into Canada while the Canadian government offer free land and financial incentives to white, European settlers, in an effort to purge the country of its "Yellow Peril" and populate the prairie provinces with "superior" race of people. There were other immigration policies designed to exclude Asians from Canada, such as the Japanese Canadian internment

during World War II.

Racial discrimination throughout history as witnessed that the perpetrators are unlikely to admit to the role that they have taken in the acts, and denies that a person's skin color plays any role in their assessment of their worthiness or credibility. For many generations racial discrimination has been structured into major institutions of Canadian society, such as the immigration laws, the schools, the economy, the real estate market, and the ideology, etc. And, the bigotry found underlying sentiments such as the prevailing monstrous menace of “Yellow Peril” were perpetuated. The issue of effective labor market access for immigrant is urgent.

b) Systematic and Institutional Racism

A considerable amount of evidence points to institutional barriers as the main problem for contemporary immigrants. Frequently, newly arrived immigrants are victimized as being poor or arbitrary recognition from business and education institutions, prejudicial opinions and subjective evaluation for immigrant’s previous working or educational records. The recent experience of new immigrants in the Canadian labor marker seems to point to failures in the recognition of their qualifications effective access to employment.

Canada’s labor market demands recruited Asian skilled worker into Canada but usually visible minorities including Asians have failed to access to employment because of their qualification recognition. This systematic under-evaluation or exclusion causes often discriminations against new immigrants in job market. A recent Quebec longitudinal survey found that of the 60 respondents whose indented profession was regulated, only a third(18) had managed to get licensed after 10 years (qtd. Couton, 114-123). Similar rates of licensure for new immigrants professionals have mentioned in English Canada also.

Almost all the job markets, newly arrived immigrants complained that credential poor or non-recognition is the most obstacle to get a job and seems to be systematic barriers. Vancouver, second largest Asian immigrants concentrated urban centers in Canada, found that the vast majority had experienced credential recognition problems or barriers (Basran and Li Zong, 6-23). And this recognition problem occurs not only male worker but also perhaps more severe for immigrant women (Beach and Worswick, 36-53).

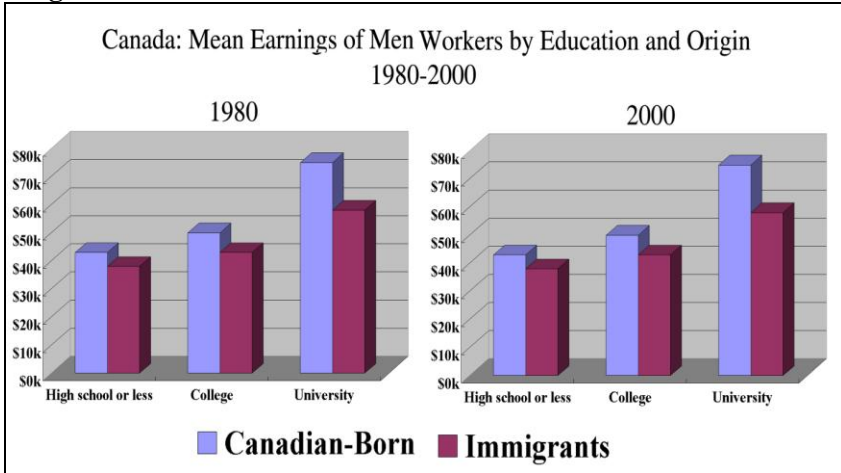
Spark and Wolfson report that the intended occupations of immigrants, on the basis of quantitative and qualitative evidence, do not match their attained occupations, suggesting a lowering occupational shift.³ Even though the dramatic rise of Asian immigration prompted former Prime Minister of Canada Jean Chrétien to argue that customary Canadian's "brain drain" to the United States was more than offset by inflows of highly-skilled workers from Asia.⁴ However, skilled worker immigrants from Asia were often unable to find jobs or switch to manual jobs and much lowering payments of their Canadian-born counterparts or other white immigrants.

Although many recent immigrants found jobs, many of them, regardless of education, were employed in low-skill or manual jobs. There was an overrepresentation of university-educated immigrants in lower-skill jobs including taxi or truck drivers, security guards, janitors and building superintendents, etc.

³ http://www.settlement.org/downloads/settlement_in_the_Workplace.

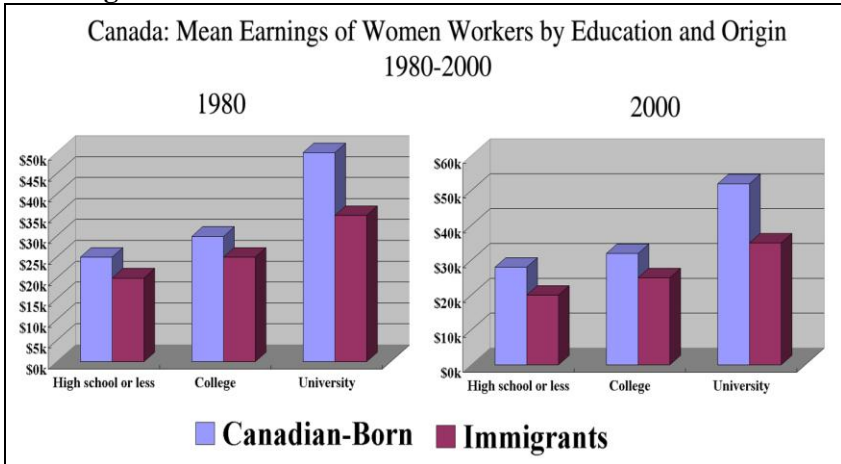
⁴ The Department of Citizenship and Immigration argued that 40,000 skilled worker immigrants entered Canada yearly from 1995 to 2000, while the country's brain drain to the United States only amounted to 10,000 per year. Don J. Devoretz, "Asian Skilled-Immigration Flows to Canada: A Supply-Side Analysis," *Foreign Policy Dialogue Series* (2003-5), 6.

<Table 3> Mean Earnings of Men Workers by Education and Origin: 1980-2000



Source: Statistics Canada, 2003

<Table 4> Mean Earnings of Women Workers by Education and Origin: 1980-2000



Source: Statistics Canada, 2003

Table 3 and 4 shows clearly the gaps of earnings of education and origins.

**<Table 5> Canada: Low-Income Rates among Immigrants*
1980-2000**

SOURCE REGION	1980	1990	2000
North Europe	11.0	13.8	12.5
North America	18.4	19.7	15.1
Oceania & other	17.7	25.2	16.5
West Europe	23.9	17.9	18.4
Southeast Asia	35.3	33.8	23.0
East Europe	22.3	31.8	27.4
South & Central America	30.6	40.6	29.9
South Asia	17.4	23.9	31.8
South Europe	21.5	21.6	34.7
ALL RECENT IMMIGRANTS	24.6	31.3	35.8
Caribbean	38.3	40.0	37.5
East Asia	26.8	28.0	45.1
Africa	20.7	34.9	45.8
West Asia	34.0	48.0	51.7

*Living in Canada less than 5 years. Source: Statistics Canada, 2003

Table 5 shows a clear correlation between race and poverty in Canada. The indicators of immigrant earnings reviewed above suggest that this trend has not been reversed and even that the earning gap of racial lines has been worsened compared to the last three decades. The immigrants take up 70% of all labor in Canada. Thousands of immigrants came to Canada believing that it is the land of opportunity or simply looking for that better way of life. Because

they believed it offered something they currently did not have. They wanted things like a job where they could make more money. But reality is often very contrary to they once dreamed.

c) Development of Policy to Reflect the Multicultural Fact

The term, “multiculturalism” is so often and widely used by policy makers, social commentators, academics, and members of the general public across Western industrialized countries (Inglis, 16). The term, multiculturalism, is a relatively recent development based on the older sociological concept of “mosaic” as an alternative to that of “melting pot.” The United States has traditionally been referred to as a “Melting Pot,” known as the American theory for cultural assimilation for new immigrants, but has recently been replaced with the “the salad bowl” the idea of pluralism rather than assimilation by the most American sociologists these days.

The similarities between Canadian society and that of the United States seemed to bear this policy in which homogenous societies develop and immigrants absorbed the ways of the “host” society, while loosening to varying degrees their connection to their native culture. The concept of an Anglo-Saxon identity of interest, modified by North American geography and economics and combined in the melting pot, was never far away, as the two countries saw the world until recently. This process is fundamentally known as cultural assimilation. In the United States where the term, melting pot, is still commonly used, despite being largely disregarded by modern sociologists as outdated, and a “salad bowl,” the idea of pluralism has largely replaced the idea of assimilation (Porter, 183-198) .

The idea of multiculturalism is often put forward as an alternative to cultural assimilation. Into the diversity mix of “post-modern” Canada has therefore recently been provided in more tangible way than before the immigrants or visible minorities’ reality. Multiculturalism

and recent influx of non-white immigration are linked in their evolution: changing immigration policies and patterns based on equality led to changing huge demographics within Canada; this trend led to demands for more inclusive policies and symbols of an increasingly diverse population within the Canadian unifying polity (Abu-Laban, 88).

Ever since the Conquest of Quebec, a colony of France, by Britain in 1759-60, Canada has wrestled with the co-existence of two cultural groups. Multiculturalism in Canada has its origins in the perennial problem of national unity because of Francophone assertion of an invigorated French-Canadian nationalism for the last four decades. Since the Conquest, the French population of Quebec has always been confronted with the historical reality that their association with English Canada. For a long time, the goal of French Canadian existence was survival under the oppression of English Canada. However, decolonization and the “world revolution in human rights movement in 1960’s, especially the civil right movement in their southern neighbor, U.S.A., inspired Quebec’s awakening nationalism which led into the “Quiet Revolution.”⁵ The Quiet Revolution was characterized by Quebecers accepting a major role for the state in determining the direction of their society. With the result of the Quiet Revolution of 1960, the objective became equality rather than mere survival. But their assertion of equality should be pursued as a community either in or out of Canadian Federation, rather than as individual Canadian citizens.

The power of Quebec separatist movement forced the federal government to assemble the “Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism” in 1963. The concept of Multiculturalism developed

⁵ Lee has ascribed this to the impact of three major social processes in Quebec – industrialization, urbanization, and political modernization (Lee, *Two Nations Many Cultures: Ethnic Groups in Canada*, 60).

from the Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission which was the federal government's, and English Canada's, response to Quebecois' assertion of their right for their language and culture. In this genesis lies concealed the problematic field of application to which multiculturalism is directed

The commission soon found itself faced with antagonistic voices from the third force, the allophone Canadians, Canadians of non-British or non-French origins. Allophone Canadians feared that their social existence were ignored by the government and declined to be treated as "second-class citizens." To maintain social harmony and unity, the Canadian government response has culminated in the institutionalization of multicultural policy in 1971. However, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau, supported a federal policy of multiculturalism with a bilingual framework, arguing that "although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other."⁶ Throughout the last century, the formation of a national identity in Canada has been closely connected to the integration of immigrants into the body politic and the formation of a Canadian cultural identity and at the same time, political tool for weakening Québécois nationalism. By then, Québécois objected to this policy because they felt their privilege as a dual partner of a founding nation may give way to simply being one in a multiple.

Multiculturalism as a policy gained its currency by Canadian government in 1971. Its use has spread from Canada and helped influence the adoption of the term in many countries, notably Australia. The term is used in Canada in at least three sense: "to refer to a society that is characterized by ethnic or cultural heterogeneity; to refer to an ideal of equality and mutual respect

⁶ Canada, House of Commons, *Debates*, 12 Oct. 1971, 8545.

among a population's ethnic or cultural groups; and to refer to government policy proclaimed by the federal government in 1971 and subsequently by a number of provinces.”(*Canadian Encyclopedia*, 1535).

From the beginning, Canada was a multiple geographic, linguistic, religious and ethnic unit. It mocks homogeneity, and always has. Thus, Canadian cultural mosaic is distinct, formed by geographic, political, and community realities that cannot be duplicated elsewhere in the world. Canadian identity isn't based on ethnicity. It comes from their commitment to egalitarianism and from the ideals of civility and tolerance. Canada became the first country to develop a normative approach towards group identities and solidarities inside its borders.

III. Contested Views on Multiculturalism and Racism

We often try to understand “race” as it confronts us today, either as a source of diversity and multiculturalism or as a social problem. Racism is a very controversial topic. A few flatly deny that it exists in Canada. Those who feel victimized by it, however, would disagree. Canada's commitment to human rights and anti-racism issues received a significant boost internationally and domestically during the last century. The history of the bill of rights has shown how the concept of human rights in Canada has been developed. Canada also practiced slavery up to 1833 and has kept very discriminatory laws against the immigration of nonwhites until 1967. They also have had inhumane treatments against natives, women and children.

In 1948 the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and Canada played an important role in the drafting of the declaration. By 1966 the international scene had evolved in important ways. The international

Bill of Rights has had a tremendous impact on Canada and on its obligations in human rights matters. Eventually, this international pressure to strengthen human rights led to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982. Before the patriation of the Constitution in 1982, Canada's Constitution contained no explicit prohibition of racial discrimination. Since then, Canadian politics has been marked by a growing preoccupation with issues of human rights and this preoccupation evolved later to born the policy of multiculturalism. However, the section on the Charter looks at its weaknesses and why the discourses of multiculturalism, equal rights, and affirmative action contained in the Charter are insufficient to address racism.

Canada's commitment to international human rights issues received a significant boost in October 1991. At the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting (CHOGM) in Harare, Canadian Prime Minister Brian Mulroney said that Canada would increasingly channel development assistance to those countries which show respect for fundamental rights and freedoms. Active pursuit of the international protection of human rights can be considered a characteristic feature of the foreign policies of Canada as a middle power. The human right issue was reiterated by in a 1986 joint parliamentary committee on Canada's international relations. Its report stated that, "the international promotion of human right is a fundamental and integral part of Canadian foreign policy. It is a vital and natural expression of Canadian values." The Committee rejected the idea that this constitutes a readiness to interfere in the affairs of other countries. "We insist, on the contrary, that the behavior of governments, like that of individuals, is subject to universal values. It is not interference to pass judgment on a government's conduct and to

adjust relations with that government accordingly...”⁷ This committee’s report had a significant influence upon, and drew the attention of Canada’s leading role, on human rights in the international scene. This resolution influenced not only foreign policy of Canada but also revised approaches to the development of assistance by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA), and lead to the establishment, by the Mulroney government, of the International Centre for Human Rights and Democratic Development (ICHRDD). The section on the Employment Equity Act of 1986 looks at another major state response to racism.

Canada had played an important role in debating human rights issues within the Commonwealth, and in no small measure had an influence in South Africa’s departure from the Commonwealth in 1961. Canada’s leading participation against South Africa’s apartheid continued, while attempting to avert a major North-South fracture of the organization. While issues of apartheid in South Africa, and Namibian independence, were central to Canada’s foreign policy agenda in the 1980’s, critics argued that Canada’s anti-apartheid stand lacked substance, partly because Canada’s statements on the issue were mitigated by “an implicit acknowledgement of the cousinhood of white settler states with similar... roots in Britain”(Howard, 271 & 277). Legislation and the state’s subordinate activities can neither eliminate nor effectively control racism because the legacy of racism is so interwoven in the collective culture and its common-sense ideology.

The majority of immigrants, non-white, were able to express their disapproval of racist sentiment in Canadian society. Allan Gregg, pollster, notes this sentiment:

⁷ Parliament of Canada, 1986, *Independence and Internationalism: Report of the Special Joint Committee on Canada’s International Relations*, June, 99.

One could fairly conclude that a significant portion of the Canadian population is uncomfortable with not just the idea of freer immigration but with the very notion of multiculturalism—one of the bedrock building blocks of the modern Canadian mosaic. We salute the abstraction; we seem to resent the reality. And the persistence of these attitudes through the 1980s, in times of economic wellbeing as well as of hardship, strongly suggests they aren't going to change for some time—if ever (Gregg and Posner, 172).

Allan Gregg's, in his findings in 1987 and 1989, showed that close to half of the Canadian population expressed complaints that too many people from different cultures and races had been allowed into Canada.

As I review the development of multicultural policy in Canada, it was not derived from deep philosophical ideology, rather political adaptation to circumstances. Even though the term “multiculturalism” has been widely adopted in policy debates, there has been no agreement on the precise meaning of the term “multiculturalism.” Therefore, the policy then is somewhat ambiguous, and has been at times criticized with hostility and has been received with suspicion by many people and many arenas. The national surveys suggest that attitudes towards multiculturalism are moderately positive and “tolerance” is moderately high.⁸ On the other hand, some have ridiculed this policy as a means of buying “the ethnic vote,” (Hawkins, 17) or buttressing Anglo-Saxon dominance. “Multiculturalism” for them has come to be associated exclusively with the negative aspects of perpetuating cultural diversity by diverting the efforts of ethnic

⁸ Angus Reid Group, *Multiculturalism and Canadians: Attitude Study* (Toronto: Angus Reid Group, 1991).

groups from political and economic affairs into mere cultural activities like “folk festivals” and “heritage days or weeks” that have erupted all over the country.

Changes in multi-ethnic society in Canada led to increasing opposition towards “Anglo-conformity.” This term reflects the assumption that “immigrants admitted to the country or their descendants [would] assimilate to the British group,” which was Canada’s dominant national ideology from the past (Burnet and Palmer, 223). Neil Bissondath, one of most famous opponents of multiculturalism, warned that multiculturalism leads to a heightened sense of ethnicity among groups and recognition and support for the expression of ethnic and racial differences threaten Euro-Canadian values. He lamented “Anyone critical of multiculturalism policy ... is immediately branded a racist ... and many are they in this country who fear serious examination of multiculturalism, its policies and its consequences.” (Bissondath, 5)

Although the metaphor of the Canadian cultural mosaic suggested less assimilationism than the American “melting pot,” ethnicity continued to work as a crucial mechanism for sorting social groups along class lines. Porter’s dramatic picture of Canadian society as a “vertical mosaic” demonstrated the vertical ranking of ethnic groups on a series of inequality dimensions. Porter’s most renowned evidence highlighted the economic elite; he found that “economic power belong[ed] almost exclusively to those of British origin.” (Porter, 286) Economic gap between whites and visible minorities, Greese demonstrates clearly that Chinese labor in British Columbia was considerably less expensive for employers to purchase than Euro-Canadian labor (Creese, 10).

Some critics believe that the multiculturalism approach to cultural and racial diversity a lead to social divisiveness and “Balkanization”. And some complains "Mostly, it's too early to tell. But one thing is

already clear: Multiculturalism isn't working that well for visible-minority newcomers."⁹ And they argue ethnic enclaves impede integration into the supposedly multicultural Canadian society. They claim that multiculturalism as policy, ideology, and practice promotes the formation of ethnic ghettos; that is, hermetically sealed cultural and racial enclaves. Immigrant and visible minority group incorporation into capitalist economies is shaped by a variety of structural, cultural, and demographic forces.

"Ethnic economy" is a business firms owned by coethnics and concentrated in certain districts, in which case an "ethnic" enclave economy. Known more colloquially as "Chinatowns," "Korea towns," or "Little Italies," these ethnic enclave economies provide important source of employment for new coethnic immigrants or illegal immigrants. The problem of ethnic economy is a place for a super exploitation of coethnic workers and manipulated by employers to block employee's mobility and opportunities mainly due to language problem or illegal status, etc., of the employees. Furthermore, claims of ethnic solidarity and ethnic loyalty were thought to be manipulated in order to justify lower-than-average wages for their coethnic workers (Light and Karageorgis, 69-96).

The race-based analysis of multiculturalism is based on the premise that multiculturalism should become a movement for social change. Those who support this view situate multiculturalism as a means or method to challenge the cultural hegemony of a dominant ethnic group or social class. Many critics agree that a major weakness to multiculturalism it's a failure to deal with the problems of systemic racism in Canada. This race-based analysis documents the ways that multiculturalism as ideology has provided a veneer for liberal-pluralist discourse in which democratic values such as individualism, tolerance, and equality are espoused and supported without altering the core of the common culture or ensuring the rights of people of

⁹ "Culture Clash?", The Globe and Mail, 08/02/07.

color. This critique of multiculturalism points to its inadequacies, including its inability to dismantle systems of inequality and diminish White power and privilege.

Despite the existence of public policy of multiculturalism and other various legal acts against racial discrimination, it has proven inadequate in eradicating racial inequality in Canadian society. Because racism is deeply embedded in the collective belief, values and normative system of society and affects the way in which laws are interpreted and implemented. Thus, ethno racial communities have begun in earnest to protest the negative ideas and implicit notions regarding culture, differences, race, and racism. As more and more, educated people become increasingly aware of the negative impact of racism, attitudes towards race and ethnic relations will likely improve. As Canada struggles with the issues of culture and multiculturalism, and race and racism, new and more inclusive paradigms are emerging.

IV. Concluding Remarks

Even though Canada exported multiculturalism to the world and has lead the way in establishing policy in the international scene, multiculturalism has not provided adequate social and political accommodation for ethnic minorities is an important point. It must be understood, however, that social and cultural changes and subsequent political changes cannot be achieved overnight but rather such social changes are an intergenerational process that takes at least several decades to occur. As shown in Porter's review, the penetration of ethnic members into elite groups, a key element of the vertical mosaic, has remained limited. Nevertheless, some progress has been achieved, as seen in the new "entrepreneurial" immigration category, and it

would seem that visible minorities have done well in selected occupational niches—among professionals(Lambert and Pendakur, *Visible Minorities in Canada 1986*).

Canada has transformed its immigrants, but immigrants too have transformed Canada. Canadian culture, from religion to literature to music to cuisine, is no longer the monolith it once was. The persistence of racism and inequality in Canada, as in most diverse societies in the world, should not blind all Canadians to these positive changes. Canada has in large part been settled by immigrants and their descendents and most people therefore have some sympathy for other people who wish to migrate. From my own personal experience in living in Canada for over 18 years, I have witnessed that most Canadians are ambivalent: “immigration yes, of course; but the right types in the right numbers.” Canadians have built a society in which respect for diversity and compassion prevails. With vision and persistence, Canadians have constructed a prosperous, dynamic economy, and nurtured a culturally rich environment.

Canadian identity isn’t based on ethnicity. It comes from their commitment to egalitarianism and from the ideals of civility and tolerance. Without a doubt, new immigrants bring with them the potential to contribute to a rich and variegated Canadian culture, and in the twenty-first century to a new cosmopolitan identity. The world economic situation can be characterized as being “globalized.” All nation-states are being challenged by the global economy, computer technology, and contemporary Cultural Revolution. Thus, it seems that Canada must take on a broader vision of the state’s role in reducing inequity that will more fully ensure the rights of all Canadians.

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Abstract

**Debate on Racism with Special Reference to
Canadian Multiculturalism**

Young-suck Moon

For people who are planning to immigrate to other country, the issue of racism is a major concern they have, since experiencing racism may lead to a lowering of their self esteem, disadvantages at their work place and lower salary, lost opportunities for promotion, etc. Canada is known as an international regime of human rights and has championed multiculturalism, which is based on the fundamental rights of equality. In this regard, multicultural policy was formulated with mind of demographic and social factors, and thus analyses how multiculturalism as ideology and state policy conceals within it a racist discourse that make it an inadequate instrument for dealing with racism.

Key Words: Culture, Globalization, Korean-Canadians, Multiculturalism, Immigration, Human Rights, Racism.