Québec Immigration, Integration and Intercultural Policy: A Critical Assessment

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[The complementary and sometimes contradictory policies of diversity management can play significant role in addressing the concerns of non dominant national minorities. Québec exemplifies such a case. Over the last thirty years, Québec has developed its own model relating to the matters of immigration, integration and intercultural relations. The analysis of public policy and of opinion polls clearly shows that this has been a success. It has probably contributed to the feeling of cultural security. There is now a sense among Quebecers that they own the diversity management policy. Québec has been relatively successful in integrating newcomers to a common Francophone but pluralistic culture.]

1. Québec's Involvement in Immigration, Integration and Intercultural Relations: Historical Context and Legal Framework

Autonomy of a provincial government to get involved in matters generally considered to be the prerogative of a Nation postulates shared sovereignty in a federation. Such is the case in Canada where, since the enactment of the *British* (sic!) *North America Act, 1867*, immigration is an area of shared jurisdiction between the Federal Government and the provinces (Tanguay, 1992). However, this alone does not explain

why Québec is the only province to fully assume its responsibilities in this regard – even though others have recently begun, albeit timidly, to follow suit –, or why it was not until the sixties that the Québec society realized the importance of immigration and integration issues (the first Federal-Provincial Agreement on this subject matter dates back to 1971). The motivation of modern Québec to control its immigration, and especially to ensure the integration of immigrants to a societal project reflective of its trajectories and values, where both the French language and interculturalism are central, is the result of a number of factors, some of which will seem more obvious than others to an Indian public.

To begin, it should be noted that the *Québécois* identity, and the accompanying territorial nationalism, is a relatively recent concept (Juteau, 1994, 2000). From the British conquest in 1759 up until the so-called *Quiet Revolution* of the sixties, French-Canadians across Canada, and even the North-American Diaspora, viewed themselves as a single minority people, based on ethnic nationalism. In contrast, in the collective consciousness, the other components of the Québec society (*i.e.* Anglophones and Allophones, each accounting for approximately 8 % of the province's population) were clearly part of another group – called the *English*, *English-Canadians*, or *Others*, as the case may be. It is not surprising, therefore, that an immigrant selection carried out exclusively by the Federal Government, then massively Anglophone, and the fact that immigrants blended almost exclusively into the Anglophone community, were not viewed as a social problem before the end of the sixties (Proulx, 1992).

The increased importance of immigration as an issue of public debate was also intimately linked to the demolinguistic issue (Mallea, 1977; Rocher, 2002). In a context where, over one generation, the fertility rate of Francophones dropped from one of the highest to one of the lowest in the West (it now stands at 1,4), the integration of immigrants into one community or the other would determine the linguistic future of Montréal. Although Montréal is the second largest French city in the world, Francophones there only account, in fact, for approximately 60% of its population (whereas they make up 83% of the province's total population).

Parallel to a modernization process that bridged the gap between a socio-economically dominant Anglophone community and the Francophone majority, and the development of a linguistic policy that made French the usual language of public administration, education, work and business, public intervention in the areas of immigration, integration and interculturalism may therefore be considered as the third component of what Marc Levine called the *Reclaiming of Montréal* by Francophones (Levine, 1997).

However, with respect to this last challenge, the decision to open up, rather than to react with a defensive reflex, seems influenced by the specificity of the Canadian and North-American contexts (Gagné & Chamberland, 1999; Mc Andrew & Tuyet, 2005). Indeed, the conviction that immigration represents a key economic, cultural and social contribution to the development of any society marks the public discourse and the collective consciousness, even though our societies are not free from intolerance or racist lapses. Moreover, Québec shares with the rest of North America a conception of immigration as a permanent movement, destined to modify a host society where pluralism is considered a central feature of collective identity, and its corollary, *i.e.* quick – in the case of Canada, three years – and almost automatic access to citizenship.

Which is why the successive provincial governments – whether sovereignist or federalist –that engaged over the past 30 years in a *nation-building* process, have all embraced essentially the same vision in favor of immigration and integration, although, as we will see later, the normative components of the concept of interculturalism have evolved over time. This vision was translated into a series of agreements with the Federal Government, the most famous one being the 1991 Canada-Québec Accord (CIC, 2005a).

On the one hand, this agreement enshrined Québec's exclusive jurisdiction over the selection of *"independent"* immigrants (*i.e.* individuals who freely chose to settle in the province and are selected based on their potential contribution to its economic or social development – approximately 60% of the movement). The family reunification and humanitarian categories (i.e. non selected immigration) remained under the jurisdiction of the Canadian State, although Québec is consulted extensively in this regard (Gagné & Chamberland, 1999; Pinsonneault, 2004). Thus, the Canadian government plays an active role with selected immigrants only when they are already accepted, to carry health and security investigations. Federal authorities are also the only one that can grant refugee status to applicants abroad or already landed in Canada, as adhesion to the Geneva Convention is an exclusive prerogative of a sovereign State.

On the other hand, the Accord placed the linguistic and economic integration of newcomers under the exclusive authority of the Québec Government. This better articulation between selection and integration enables it to send a clear and consistent message about the specific

character of Québec, from the country of origin, where the candidate meets a Québec Immigration Service counselor, all the way to the host society. An immigrant may no longer claim, as before, to have come "to Canada" without knowing that he or she was settling in a Francophone milieu. Canada continues, however, to play a role in supporting the participation of Canadians of various origins and promoting intercultural relations, among others, through its *Multiculturalism Policy* (see Helly, 2006 in this volume). Its presence is also significant when newcomers are granted citizenship: the Federal government establishes the criteria, administers the test that immigrants have to pass and also organizes a ceremony where new citizens pledge allegiance to their new country (CIC, 2005b).

Overall, immigration and integration have represented over the last twenty years an area of peaceful collaboration between the Federal and Provincial governments, even when a sovereignist party was in power in Québec, in contrast, for example, with the question of international representation of Québec which has fuelled more controversy (Balthazar, 2004). Each government may, indeed, see this devolution of power from its specific point of view: the Federal as merely an administrative accord that permits a more efficient service delivery, the Province as a quasi-official recognition of its distinct status in Canada. But, if it is the case, these conflicting views have not impeded the smooth functioning of collaborations in this area.

Multiculturalism and interculturalism, i.e., what happens, on the long run, with Canadian/Québec identities when newcomers influence and change the social fabric, has proved more contentious. However, as we will see later, although differences exist in this regard, tensions there reflect mainly competing nation building processes or, at least, a fight for primary/secondary allegiance among newcomers. But before engaging into this issue, let's review the main characteristic of the immigration, integration, and interculturalism approaches developed in Québec in the last thirty years.

2. The Major Components of the Selection and Integration Policy

Although the Québec Government has been acting in those fields since the seventies, it is only with the Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration *Let's Build Québec Together* of 1990 (MCCI, 1990), that it did set out clearly its main normative framework, goals and action perspectives in this regard. More specifically, the selection Policy is based on two major objectives:

- A selection of immigrants that contributes to the development of a Francophone society and a striving economy, in keeping with Québec values of family reunification and international solidarity, and
- A gradual increase in immigration levels according to the needs of the host society.

The level and makeup of the migratory movement (MICC, 2005), which, over the past ten years, has reached an average of approximately 36,000 individuals a year (for a total population of 7,520,900 inhabitants), are defined following a public consultation process, through a balancing of demographic, economic, linguistic and humanitarian objectives. It should be noted, in this regard, that, although prior knowledge of French increases the chances of selection, this criterion is not eliminatory, in recognition of the fact that many Allophone and even Anglophone immigrants are likely, over the longer term, to contribute to the vitality and the Francophone character of Québec (overall people who know French – but do not necessarily have French as a mother tongue – represent around 50% of admitted immigrants).

With respect to integration, the Policy Statement of 1990 first sought to set out guidelines for the societal choices that enable to define the respective rights and obligations of newcomers and the host society. To that end, it presented a "moral contract" based on the three following principles:

- A society in which French is the common language of public life;
- A democratic society where the participation and contribution of all are both expected and promoted;
- A pluralistic society, open to multiple contributions, within the limits imposed by fundamental democratic values and the need for intercommunity exchanges (MCCI, 1990).

The interest of the first two statements, which are not strictly speaking innovative, lies in that they serve as a reminder, for each of the parties, of central elements of the social contract in Québec. In this regard, it is quite obvious that the first principle represents the effort required from newcomers, whereas the second principle is directed primarily toward the Francophone community, which might give in to a temptation to exclude them or shelter its institutions and identity from their influence.

Each of these principles is sufficiently qualified, however, to allow the identification of certain limits that respond to the concerns of the other group. For instance, the notion of *common language of public life* is in opposition to linguistic assimilation, and even encourages the development of languages of origin as a valuable asset for Québec society as a whole. Similarly, if involvement in defining society is

presented as a right for all Quebecers, it also represents an expectation that the host society may emphasize in its dialogue with isolationist-leaning communities (Mc Andrew, 1997).

The third principle, which also represents, as we will see in the next section, one of the faces of the normative development of the concept of interculturalism, is more daring. Indeed, it states that a pluralism of ideas, values, lifestyles and senses of belonging is a societal choice flowing from the *Quiet Revolution*, and not only a result of the presence of ethnic minorities (named in Québec *cultural communities*). Thus, this principle challenges the nostalgic temptation to define a cultural content for "Quebecness", to which immigrants and their offspring would then be required to assimilate (Juteau, Mc Andrew & Pietrantonio, 1998). However, in contrast with a certain (naïve or politically tainted) rhetoric based on the maintenance of cultures of origin – whose incapacity to generate the bounding and collective allegeance required to share a common political community is more and more apparent in various Western countries (Bissoondath, 1994; Maalouf, 1998) –, the Statement (MCCI, 1990) reiterates that all cultures and communities must accept to be modified by intercommunity exchanges and social interaction.

These broad principles are embodied in the three components of the Integration Policy:

- Development of French language learning services, for both students and adults, and promotion of the use of French by immigrants and their offspring;
- Increased support for the openness of the host society and the full participation of immigrants and their offspring in Québec's economic, social, cultural and institutional life; and
- Development of harmonious relations between Quebecers of all origins.

Action in this area, under the stewardship of the *Department of Immigration and Cultural Communities*, extends not only to all provincial departments but also to municipal, private and community partners. It tackles a variety of often complex issues, such as how to define the best practices for promoting French language learning without delaying economic integration (Nguyen & Plourde, 1997; MRCI, 1998), equal access to housing (Séguin, Bernèche & Garcia, 2000; Rose & Ray, 2001), employment and the fight against discrimination (Bosset, 2003), adapting institutions to the specific needs and characteristics of their clienteles (CCCI, 1993), recognizing Québec's pluralistic character *inter alia* in the media (Santerre, 1999), or resolving intercommunity tensions in neighborhoods or in school (Germain, 1998; MEQ, 1998).

Obviously, it is impossible to provide the reader with a full assessment of these initiatives, which were first undertaken in some cases more than 30 years ago, and have been made more systematic and expanded fifteen years ago through the *Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration* (MCCI, 1990). Broadly speaking, however, it may be argued that the devolution of federal powers over immigration and integration has been positive on the whole, in terms of its impact on both immigration for the host society and the situation of immigrants and their offspring. Such positive effects since 1990 include:

- a better retention of immigrants which is now comparable to that of immigrants in Canada (i.e. 75% of immigrants after ten years) (MRCI, 2001a),
- a greater access to French language learning services, which now reach 60% of the potential adult clientele and 100% of youth (MRCI, 2001a),
- clear progress in the knowledge and use of French, especially among newcomers, but also within the longer-standing Allophone community (MRCI, 2004),
- as well as a notable increase in positive attitudes toward immigration and cultural diversity in public opinion (MRCI, 2001b).

It would be naïve, however, to present the actions of the Québec Government as a panacea. Even though Québec society has now clearly moved beyond the obstacles related to its specificity, the problems experienced today are more in line with those arising elsewhere in Canada or in other immigration countries. Two issues are particularly crucial in this regard. First, the economic performance indicators for the immigrant population have deteriorated, in particular among visible minorities, who take more time than before to catch up with national averages, both in terms of income and unemployment (Godin, 2003; Picot & Hou, 2003). This is a problem whose multiple causes (economic context, specificity of the migratory flux, inadequate services, systemic racism, etc.) remain to be weighed.

Second, over the past ten years, a number of public debates on the limits of adaptation to pluralism have arised, in particular as regards religious diversity (CRI, 1997; Mc Andrew, 2001). Although these debates have somehow helped clarify what constitutes legitimate and illegitimate practices in a democratic society, they have also given rise to certain xenophobic and intolerant reactions, in particular toward the Muslim community (La Presse canadienne, 2001).

This later issue is also linked to the difficulty of building a normative consensus around the concept of *integration to pluralist society*, proposed by the Policy Statement of 1990, in contrast both with the more classical

intercultural perspective put forward in the eighties and the increasingly popular conception of a *civic integration*, at the dawn of the twenty-first Century, where cultural pluralism is given much less weight, especially in the public sphere. In this regard, the evolution of Québec debates, over the last thirty years are largely in line with international trends, although they sometimes appeared quite specific in the Canadian context, as we will see in the next part of this article.

3. Québec's Interculturalism: Normative Debates and Practices

From the end of the seventies, when it first articulated a specific normative position on the management of diversity, the Québec State has tried to distantiate itself from the Canadian model of multiculturalism, which, as described in Helly's paper in this volume, had already been criticized, from another point of view, for its lack of recognition of the sociological status of the Francophone community as one of the "host" societies. The argument to put forward an *intercultural* approach, as it was then termed (Québec Government, 1978), was the need to avoid the pitfall of cultural homogeneity without falling in some of the pervert effects attributed, rightly or wrongly, to multiculturalism (Juteau *et al.*, 1998; Mc Andrew, Helly & Tessier, 2006), i.e. folklorization of cultures, static juxtaposition of diverse groups and promotion of undemocratic practices under the guise of cultural relativism. This was also a time of confrontation between the Federal and the Québec Governments, as for the first time in Canadian history, a sovereignist Party was in power (the first election of the *Parti Québécois* dates back to 1976).

Thus, the 1978 *Cultural Development Policy* (Québec Government, 1978) clearly stated that: *"between either slow or forcible assimilation and conservation of the cultures of origin behind the walls of segregation"* the government proposed another path that of *"exchanges within a Québec culture"*. In opposition to the Canadian *mosaic*, the preferred metaphor was that of the Québec *tree* into which various rootstocks would be grafted. A *culture of convergence* composed of a solid core based on Québec tradition would be called upon to enrich itself with contribution from *cultural communities*. This statement reflected the state of interethnic relations during a period where the French community was just becoming the host community to which immigrants were invited to integrate. Indeed, although the Government later called for a more inclusive use of the Québécois identity label (Québec Government, 1981), overall the then dominant discourse assumed the existence, on the one hand, of relatively homogeneous majority and minority cultures and, on the other hand, of a clear boundary between them (Juteau, 1986).

At the beginning of the nineties, the *Policy Statement on Immigration and Integration, Let's Build Québec Together* (MCCI, 1990) described above, provided for much more blurring of distinct identities, a trend which reflected the shifting reality of pluralism in Québec. More than a decade of mutual contacts and linguistic integration had occurred. The very concept of an homogeneous Francophone population was difficult to upheld, especially in Montréal, while, as in many other international contexts, the reality of multiple identities among immigrants and their descendants was becoming more obvious (Juteau & Mc Andrew, 1992). A liberal perspective, stressing individual freedom as the framework for the maintenance or the fading away of minority cultures, also marked the statement, a choice which may, or not, have reflected the fact that the Liberal Party was in power. Pluralism was presented as a generic characteristic of Québec culture, and a right that everybody was to be allowed to exert within the same limits. The boundary between *"old stock"* Francophones and *cultural communities*, although not fully delegitimized, especially as it regards inequalities and institutional barriers, was also much less preeminent.

These changes in the normative discourse did enjoy a wide consensus among Quebecers of various origins and their associations and were not widely debated (Helly, Lavallée & Mc Andrew, 2000; Mc Andrew & Jacquet, 1992). Nevertheless, there was much more criticism on the degree to which the limits which defined the conditions of the thriving of pluralism in Québec were sufficient. As described above, those were procedural limits (*the respect for common democratic values* and *the need for intercommunity exchanges*) making sharing and building together a new Québec culture possible and not very substantive commitments about the very nature of the content of this new identity. To paraphrase here Kymlicka's (1995) classical opposition, *thin* culture was clearly chosen over *thick* culture. In such a perspective, as long as States insure social participation, equality and spaces where people can meet, it is believed that integration and social cohesion will thrive in the long run. Societies, thus, would not need a very defined list of cultural or ideological characteristics that citizens should share.

It is precisely that aspect that proponents of a more substantive conception of culture did criticize (Harvey, 1991; Bourgeault *et al.*, 2002; Sarra-Bournet, 1998; Helly *et al.*, 2000). During the nineties, competing concepts, such as *public common culture*, *civic space*, and finally *citizenship* were brought forward in the public debate in an attempt to specify

more the *Projet de société* (*societal project*, an old concept from the sixties and the *Quiet Revolution*, still very popular in Québec), which all Quebecers should share. Numerous attempts (among others CSE, 1993, CRI, 1997; Québec Government, 2000; MRCI, 2000) were then made to identify the common values, cultural heritage or societal norms that should constitute the non-negotiable package limiting, or giving directions to, any further identity change. But, as expected, most of, if not all, those attempts failed, when confronted with the test of consensus, at getting much more further down the list than the very procedural and universalistic type of values proposed in the *Policy Statement* of 1990.

Nevertheless, by the end of the nineties, the concept of *citizenship*, sometimes qualified as *"in a pluralistic context"* had imposed itself as the main framework of reference of the Québec Government, then controlled by the sovereignist *Parti Québécois*, while it was enjoying a wide popularity in many civil society circles. The return to power of the Liberal Government in 2003, did not significantly alter this tendency, as the new Government has been both very discreet and rather ambiguous on this issue. On the one hand, it, indeed, clearly prefers to focus on more practical issues, especially the socio-economic problems experienced by newcomers. On the other hand, it has oscillated between a commitment to the 1990 *Integration in a pluralistic society* framework and a politically motivated rhetoric, especially among ethnic communities, often leaning to a return to a communitarian version of the Québec model.

Beyond theoretical and political debates, one must nevertheless be aware that actions really carried in the area of interculturalism in Québec over the last thirty years have tended to reflect much more the state of interethnic relations in the Province, especially the degree to which the Francophone community was becoming pluralistic while immigrants and their descendants were integrating more and more into the Francophone milieu, than to be directly linked to normative models put forward by politicians and intellectuals (Juteau & Mc Andrew, 1992; Juteau *et al.*, 1998; Mc Andrew, 2006). Thus, for example in the seventies and eighties, the Québec Government, which was in need of convincing minorities of the legitimacy of its new role, carried a very *de facto multiculturalism* approach stressing community events and maintenance of cultures, very much in line with the Canadian model at the same time with, perhaps, the slight exception of the stronger emphasis put on the promotion of a common language. In the nineties, preoccupations shifted from language to cultural issues, and on the ground, institutions and NGO's were mostly trying to find the right balance between diversity and common values in their daily practices, a trend that also touched the Canadian society, although it was less publicly debated (Bissoondath, 1994). Finally, although the new Liberal Government has a pretty regressive political platform regarding citizenship (Parti Libéral du Québec, 2002), its actions are clearly more interesting: for the first time in the history of Québec interculturalism, antiracism is getting momentum, bringing the Québec approach more in line with the Canadian (MRCI, 2004).

4. Interculturalism and Multiculturalism: Common trends and Differences

In this regard, although the existence of a dichotomic opposition between both policies is still an article of faith widely shared by politicians and public opinion in Québec, in part because it is closely linked to the very definition of Québec's distinct identity (Mc Andrew, 1996), when one focuses on actual programs and practices, instead of political rhetoric, it is clear that Canadian multiculturalism and Québec interculturalism have much in common (Mc Andrew, 1995; Juteau *et al.*, 1998). They share a high commitment to diversity, considered a major feature of collective identity, as well as a definition of equality that goes further than formal equality to include equity (both governments recognize systemic or indirect discrimination and have adopted compensatory and equalization programs). Both policies also clearly value the Human Right perspective (whether the *Québec Charter of Human Rights and Freedom* or *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom*) as the main framework for managing diversity.

Nevertheless, two relatively important differences are worth mentioning, even if they may be more questions of stress than radical opposition. On the one hand, it is clear that there has been in Québec a stronger preoccupation with the balancing of rights, especially when they are potentially conflicting, such as equality of women and religious liberty, both at the level of policy documents and of public debate. This tendency has meant, paradoxically, that interculturalism has overall been a more liberal and less communitarian policy, especially in its applications, then its Canadian multicultural counterpart. Obviously, this does not mean that the rest of Canada is indifferent to the issue of the potential danger of cultural relativism, nor that Canadian multiculturalism does not have any legal or normative limits. But clearly, it is not an issue that figures very high both in official statements or in political discourses there. This difference may explain also why the

Québec policy has been credited, especially by some critics of multiculturalism (Bissoondath, 1994), for fostering a better sense of security among the majority, or, at least, has not been criticized as much as multiculturalism, for its negative potential impact on social cohesion.

On the other hand, because it has been so focused on linguistic and cultural issues until very recently, Québec interculturalism has given a weaker recognition to the persistence of interethnic inequalities and to the role of racism in this regard, both at the level of political rhetoric and at that of actions initiated or supported by the Government. This reluctance to recognize the need for an active antiracist perspective has been interpreted often, both by some representatives of *cultural communities* and by decision makers of the *Rest of Canada (ROC)*, as an evidence of the lack of sensitivity of Québec's Francophone majority towards immigrant minorities' concerns. But, here again, it is difficult to state whether this trend results from the limit of the normative conception put forward or from the reality of ethnic relations in Québec, where, until relatively recently, Francophones were still among the most socio-economically defavorised groups.

Whatever their real or putative differences, multiculturalism and interculturalism share common weaknesses and have faced some similar criticisms. First, as mentioned above for Québec and well described for Canada in Denise Helly's paper, neither have been able to significantly reduce the deep entrenched reality of interethnic inequalities, especially among visible minorities or immigrants from the Third World. They, thus, can commonly be criticized as policies more focused on enlightening the majority than bettering the life of minorities (Mc Andrew *et al*, 2006). Another source of discontent, at least among the most fundamentalist communities, would be that, by recognizing diversity within the paradigm of democratic values, they both are actually promoting *soft assimilationism* much more than *radical pluralism* (Halstead, 1986). This characteristic may explain why religious diversity in both contexts, but especially in Québec, where the stress on democratic limits to diversity has been more pronounced, has raised so many visible and vocal controversies.

Conclusion

As can be seen from this brief overview, over the last thirty years, Québec has developed its own approach in matters of immigration, integration and intercultural relations. Although not always different from their Canadian counterparts, the actions carried within this framework have a distinct character, both in their conception and in

their strengths and weaknesses. The question I wish to raise as concluding remarks, which should be relevant to the Indian debate in the area of pluralism, is that of the role that complementary and sometimes contradictory policies of diversity management, coexisting within the same territory, can play in insuring that specific challenges experienced by non dominant national minorities may be accommodated.

Indeed, it is clear that, in this regard, the Canadian Government has been rather daring, at least when assessed from an international perspective. It did actively support the involvement of Québec in immigration and integration and cooperated with it heartily in these domains, while allowing, or at least not actively fighting, Québec's initiative to develop its own model of multiculturalism, i.e. interculturalism.

What was the impact on Canadian society of this relative openness, which in some area amounted to quasi *de facto* asymmetrical federalism, although no English Canadian politician would use this term, for fear of negative reactions from their public opinion? I would like to stress four tendencies in this regard, based on my involvement in the field as a critical observer since the end of the seventies, as well as on various syntheses of research data (Mc Andrew, 2001, 2003, 2006).

(1) First, it is clear that the evolution of the last thirty years has permitted that diversity, especially ethnocultural diversity originating from migration which used to be considered with fear, and the survival of a redefined minority Francophone culture in Canada be considered as complementary and not antithetical. Although pockets of resistance to the pluralistic transformation of the Province still exist in Québec, overall both the analysis of public policy and of opinion polls clearly show that this has been a success, or at least that reality on that front is now not that different in Québec than in more simple dominant majority immigration societies.

(2) Although not fully founded as we have shown above, the myth of Québec having a specific approach in terms of integration and interculturalism, has probably contributed to that feeling of cultural security. There is now a sense among Quebecers that they own the diversity management policy: they loved to believe that their model is better than that of English Canada (Mc Andrew, 1998). Whether this is true or not, it has certainly contributed to bringing them much closer to the rest of Canada through a pluralistic identity redefinition. Some could argue that cultural security is not yet dominant in Québec but my own analysis of the mutation of public debate over twenty years seems to, at least, indicate that the traditional cultural insecurity, based on a

besieged ethnic group mentality is slowly, for better or worse, being replaced by an insertion in the matrix of post-modern cultural insecurity, shared with many nations of the world.

(3) The fact that Québec has been relatively successful in integrating newcomers to a common Francophone but pluralistic culture, also means that it has come closer to the identity model prevailing in the rest of Canada. There is now, especially in Montréal, a greater degree of distinction between sharing a language and sharing a culture, as well as a more instrumental relation with the French language, as a tool for civic participation, at least among minority groups.

(4) But before Indian policy-makers infer from these conclusions, any indication regarding the positive impact of a decentralization of policies on regional conflicts, it must be reminded, though, that this coming closer of cultures, has not meant that *Québécois* feel more or less Canadian. The level of support for autonomist movements has not widely changed those last thirty years, and, while first generation immigrants tended to have a stronger Canadian national identity and commitment, there are some indications that, due to political socialization within the school system, their off-springs are evenly split, like Francophone Quebecers of "*old stock*", on the political future of the Province. Thus, as often exemplified by international studies of the construction of ethnic relations (Schermerhorn, 1970), greater similarity of cultural markers has not meant lesser salience of ethnic boundaries, at least in the short run. But they are neither compelling evidences for the reverse argument, i.e. that insuring more sensitivity to the specific challenges experienced by the Francophone minority in the area of immigration, integration and diversity management has, in any way, contributed to centrifugal tendencies in Canada.

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State Policy and the Socially Deprived in India: Situating Muslims and Christians of Scheduled Caste Origin

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[There are several sources of deprivation in a complex society such as India, some of which are universally recognized and others which are hotly contested. In such a situation it is necessary to formulate state policy with a rationale which is accepted as legitimate by the public at large. Therefore, in evolving an appropriate policy, the state has to take into account two factors: multiple deprivations suffered by some of the groups/communities and the hierarchy of factors contributing to deprivation. Pursuantly, the policy measures ought to be different for different categories depending on the nature and sources of deprivation. To prescribe the same package of benefits for all is not only irrational but also be not viable.]

The state in the contemporary world is no more a police state; it is a 'developmental' or 'welfare' state. Consequently, the erstwhile private worries of individuals and groups/communities have become contemporary public issues. Further, the modern democratic state has taken upon itself the task of initiating and institutionalizing social transformation. But in a multi-party democratic polity, wherein a large number of interest groups indulge in intense bargaining the Government becomes vulnerable, largely because of the arithmetic of adult franchise and the excessive influence commanded by the traditionally privileged.