

## **Liberal Governance, Multiculturalism, and the Making of Ethnocultural Identities in Canada**

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With the support of the Simons Foundation, SFU students were invited by the Institute for the Humanities to submit written proposals that focused on issues related to citizenship. **Stephen Fielding**, SFU graduate student in history, presented the following selected paper on November 9, 2006, at SFU Harbour Centre.

In modern Canada multiculturalism has become the political language *de rigueur*.

Public opinion polls consistently show that Canadian citizens consider it something distinctly “us.” It is remarkable that for such a pervasive category there is little agreement over what multiculturalism actually *is*. This confusion is evident in Patricia Wood’s (2002) treatise on Italian Canadians in Alberta and British Columbia. The impressions shared by the people she interviewed reflect those found in society at large: a general attitude of openness or tolerance of other cultures and races; a celebration of diversity within the nation; and an obstacle to collective Canadian identity. With the exception of the last comment, which can be taken as a political criticism, these perceptions should be distinguished from Multiculturalism (capitalized), the institutional progeny of the state. It is the policy and theory which guides legislative action. Like its “small m” counterpart, official Multiculturalism suffers from its own contradictions and inconsistencies. William Kymlicka (2001) recently opined that these limitations exist because there is a considerable gap between practice and theory in liberal democracies. Only in the past decade have scholars begun to study this discrepancy, and most importantly, from the conceptual starting point at which the state is not a neutral actor. The “gap” between Multicultural theory and practice in Canada must be traversed.

Charles Taylor (1994) once stated: “I can define my identity only against the background of things that matter” (p. 66). In this process, the influence and participation of the state *matters*. Ethnocultural boundaries and identities are conditioned through dialogue with the state, and by extension, its Multicultural institutions. This dialogue provides a space for the interaction of two historical processes: an epic state project and the development of ethnic identity. Neither function in their *in situ* position; rather, both are structurally unstable, continually shaped and reshaped, and made and remade through the discourse of dialogue. This essay explores how the state, in an effort to incorporate subaltern groups into its project of rule, has since the creation of the Multiculturalism Secretariat in 1971 shaped the “boundaries” of ethnocultural communities. Contemporaneously, it also considers how ethnocultural communities have mobilized in response. This investigation is approached in three sections. First, recent scholarly currents on identity formation are addressed and challenged. Second, we enter the post-structural debate on *governmentality* and expand Ian McKay’s interpretation to discursively explore Canadian Multiculturalism as part of a grand political narrative. Finally, monetary incentives from governments are shown to first, empower political institutions with *knowledge*, and second, shape the boundaries within ethnocultural communities. Case studies from the

author's current project on Italian Canadian communities are employed to illustrate the practical outcomes of Multicultural policies.

Benedict Anderson (1991) proposes in his seminal work *Imagined Communities* a question critical for an ethnocultural community: "why are . . . we . . . here . . . now" (n.p.n.). Expressed differently, how does a group come to exist and to see itself as having a shared history, common values, and collective aspirations? Our purpose here is not to define ethnicity or discuss the theoretical minutiae therein. To do so would require more space than is permitted here and would also swing our focus in a different conceptual direction. Instead, we will look at two scholarly currents that explain *how* it develops. The first and most innovative approach is that of Terence Ranger and Eric Hobsbawm (1983). The collection of articles in *The Invention of Tradition* present the creation of a cultural (and ethnic) group as a diachronic process of adopting suitable symbols and historical figures and events for strictly identity rather than pragmatic purposes. Kathleen Neils Conzen (1989), in her treatment of German Americans in the nineteenth century, builds on this trajectory, arguing that the process of creating tradition accelerates in response to perceived threats.<sup>1</sup> All three scholars agree that a group *defines* itself by virtue of the values and messages imbedded in the symbols it selects to represent it. Oftentimes the traditions become linked to the group and are considered "authentic" markers of its character.

There is, however, a key limitation to the paradigm of Ranger and Hobsbawm (1983). Though apt to identify the calculated maneuvering at the heart of the identification process, they see "identity" as something formed solely by "drawing selectively on remembered

pasts" (p. 480). What is missed here is that the boundaries of ethnocultural groups—as well as the "identities" of an assembly at any given moment—are not only "drawn" to strategically appropriate a suitable past: they are both a response to contemporaneous political pressures and the result of the pressures themselves. It is for this reason that Stuart Hall sees the creation of "authentic" ethnic qualities as secondary to the need for *articulation*. His main contribution is the concept of the "articulation lorry." Rather than an organic entity, "continuous and growing through time," he envisions ethnicity as something akin to a "political coalition" in which composite parts of identity can be "hooked and unhooked" *ex hypothesi* (see Clifford, 2001, pp. 477–478). Identity is thus political at its core: ethnocultural communities mobilize themselves only when afforded the opportunity to advance or protect what are considered "group" interests. In the case of post-Trudeau Canada, ethnocultural groups organized in new ways as they mobilized to receive government funding. Evidently, with new boundaries and criteria for inclusion, new concepts and manifestations of identity could be both "invented" and "articulated." Let us now explore the interplay between polyethnic identities and the liberal state.

Recent post-structural debates have shown that the modern liberal state is a dynamic project rather than a static monolith. It never "is" but is always in the process of achieving, and therefore becoming, the mandate it seeks—of course, until these mandates are re-adjusted and new forms are pursued. In other words, it is not a tautological entity, a "given" that is constant or eternal. It perpetually administers itself into existence. As a historical project, it rules to preserve itself and devises a myriad of rational administrative techniques to this end. Ultimately, the state establishes itself in a position of *knowledge*, a point from which relevant activities and information within its reach can be *ruled*. In a similar vein, Michel Foucault

<sup>1</sup> In a similar vein, Michel de Certeau (1997) presents the interesting example of how Bretons lacked a sense of "separateness" until they faced the cultural crisis of increased confrontation with the "other" French after the First World War.

wisely argues that government is “the right disposition of things, arranged so as to lead to a convenient end . . . an end that is “convenient” for each of the things that are to be governed” (pp. 210–211). Knowledge permits those in authority to determine when intervention is imperative. Unlike earlier polities governed by a sovereign monarch, intervention is not the expression of rule *par excellence*, but an extension of a mandate already “managed” through internal structures (i.e., departments, sub-political units). As Foucault notes, the governing of liberal capitalist democracies becomes on the whole an *art*, a delicate attempt to rule so as to appear not to rule.

In the Canadian framework, as Ian McKay (2000) demonstrates, the nation has been tactically “managed” in order to develop and protect both material resources and the individual “freedoms” necessary for the maintenance of liberal values. Above all, “a liberal order is one that encourages and seeks to extend across time and space a belief in the epistemological and ontological primacy of the category “individual’ ” (p. 623). This value is also the basis for the other key pillars of equality and property rights. McKay notes that the liberal framework has had to compete with alternative political—even what he dubs “aliberal”—forms, defeating, adjusting or incorporating them in the process. In so doing, it maintains its Gramscian hegemony. Unfortunately, McKay’s diachronic analysis concludes with the union politics of the 1930s. His template, however, can and should be extended to the post-war period.

In the two decades that followed the Second World War the state had to address two major socio-political developments: one cultural-political and the other demographic. The first was a nascent sovereigntist<sup>2</sup> movement in the province of Quebec, while the second was

an abrupt change in the nations of origin of immigrants arriving in Canada. Whereas most arrivals previously came from Northern and Western Europe and the United States, these countries were now eclipsed by growing numbers from Southern Europe (especially Italy), Asia (East Asian, South Asian and Middle East), Africa, and Latin America. The Quebec question dominated policy initiatives in the 1960s, as demonstrated by the “two languages, two cultures” paradigm of the *Bilingualism and Biculturalism Commission*. Only Volume IV of the script addressed the contributions of “other” cultures to the historical development of Canada, and this was an afterthought—most likely in response to incessant calls for recognition on the part of the Ukrainian Canadian Student Association. As various scholars have noted, official Multiculturalism served ulterior political motives. The first of these was presentist. An election was looming and the popularity of the ruling Liberal Party was dwindling. The *Bilingualism Act* was derided by pro-monolingual Anglophones. As well, numerous ethnocultural groups expressed their displeasure about their exclusion from the Act. A new bill espousing the merits of cultural equality was designed to temper the negative response. The federal venture into the realm of culture was an opportunity to undercut Quebecois sovereigntist claims of a culture distinct from that outside of the province’s borders. The creation of a Multiculturalism unit under the Secretary of State of 1971 was a clever expedient to present the nation as a polity suffused with internal ethnocultures rather than a condominium of two or three distinct and often disharmonious cultural cohorts.<sup>3</sup>

The draft reflects the first two pillar values of a liberal democracy espoused by McKay:<sup>4</sup>

2 I am aware of the conceptual arguments associated with this term, particularly those that distinguish between sovereignty, sovereignty-association and separatism. I have chosen this term for conventional purposes.

3 The First Nations should also be considered in this vein.

4 Though important, McKay’s third pillar, property rights, will not be discussed here due to spatial and conceptual limitations. This omission should not be seen as a major limitation because McKay positions property rights as of lesser significance than the other two in post-nineteenth century Canadian governmentality.

1. Resources permitting, the government will seek to assist all Canadian cultural groups that have demonstrated a desire and effort to continue to develop a capacity to grow and contribute to Canada, and a clear need for assistance, the small and weak groups no less than the strong and highly organized.
2. The government will assist members of all cultural groups to overcome cultural barriers to full participation in Canadian society.
3. The government will promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups in the interest of national unity.
4. The government will continue to assist immigrants to acquire at least one of Canada's official languages in order to become full participants in Canadian society.<sup>5</sup>

First and foremost, *individual* rights preside over those of a collectivity. The ethnocultural group ultimately serves as a vehicle for individual "members" to attain greater social, political, and economic resources in Canadian society. Second, Objectives 1 and 3 ensure that government will promote the *equality* of all persons. However, equality is here portrayed as intercultural cooperation under the rubric of the national polity. In short, it is politically conditional. Assistance for those who "desire [and show an] effort to develop a capacity to grow and contribute to Canada" in Objective 1 dovetails nicely with the promotion of "creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups in the interest of national unity" outlined in the latter.<sup>6</sup> Objective 4 adds an additional requisite for

"full participation in Canadian society": proficiency in one of the two official languages. The liberal order framework adjusted to "accommodate" French, but it did not extend this privilege to the various communities of what Pierre Trudeau elsewhere called the "Third Force." The internal contradiction of the policy is apparent: Canada is officially multicultural, but only two languages are official. The implication is that language, though critical to an ethnoculture, is of secondary importance. Here is not a neutral cultural mosaic *per se*, but an effort to *tolerate* differences so long as they can be subsumed under national allegiance and linguistic conformity.

Is equality of ethnocultures then possible under the rubric of Multiculturalism? The original 1971 document offers a vague response. It promises to "remove cultural barriers to full participation in Canadian society." There are, however, clear limits to "participation." On one level, no minority group wields *realpolitik*. Unlike the Charter groups of the French and English, they cannot dismember the country or even dictate political change. Change can only be *requested*. In this sense, as Eva Mackey correctly advances, Canadian cultural (as opposed to relativist)<sup>7</sup> pluralism is actually a hierarchy (MaKey, 1991). At the top is a national political culture based upon the objectives of a liberal order framework. All "lesser" minority *multicultures* are subordinated to this project and linked by Multiculturalism to the polity of the dominant majority (Mahajan, 2005). Now officially part of a nation-building project, they must to a certain degree present and organize themselves according to the criteria

5 Canada (1971), *House of Commons Debates*, Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau Responding to Volume 4 of the report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Commissioners André Laurendeau and Davidson Dunton.

6 Canada (1971), *House of Commons Debates*, 8 October, cited in Andrey Kobayshi (1993).

7 Many scholars employ the term "cultural relativism" to describe the ideological underpinning of official Multiculturalism. The problem with this term is that it denotes equality of culture, that the values and aspirations of each are equally valued in Canadian society. Of course, the term does not pass the litmus test of the liberal order framework, in which a clear project with its own objectives is the basis for governance. A better term is "cultural pluralism," which infers "many" cultures, but without the value-added criteria. For the usage of "cultural relativism" see Nickolaos Liadakis and Vic Satzewich (2003).

set by the hegemonic power. For this reason, Michel de Certeau (1997) claims that “minorities lack true power because they do not have it in sufficient quantity for true cultural representation” (p. 69). If “true” here denotes political self-determination for a cultural group, de Certeau makes a salient point. The power to determine a group’s aspirations is conditioned to a significant extent by the state and “culture” is stripped of its political associations. Thus, official Multiculturalism is not a cultural polyarchy, but rather an institutional project that makes “manageable” the cultural causes of subaltern groups.

What is perhaps most remarkable about Multiculturalism is its lack of structural coherence. An ichnographic disaster, it was initially a myopic and hasty attempt to salvage national unity. At each stage thereafter, as we will see, it was also a *response* to a perceived aliberal threat. Jacob T. Levy (2000) insightfully describes its historical trajectory as one of fear, of action to avoid evils that threaten the common good—mainly, violence, humiliation and cruelty. State Multiculturalism is, in short, a corrective. Without pragmatic long-term objectives, it instructs “what to think about but no what to think” (p. 38). One may argue that, given its unclear guidelines and the gap between theory and practical application, Multiculturalism does not in and of itself constitute a state project. It is also not apparent what type of “stage” or “break,” if any, Multiculturalism represents in the Canadian practice of orienting ethnocultures into the national project of rule. It certainly did not mark the genesis of funding for ethnic-based initiatives. This practice was in place since the Massey Commission and handled through the Secretary of Citizenship Branch (Wood, 2002). Most important, it should be considered a monumental *attempt* because neither this nor any other state project lacks internal contradictions or manifests itself “in the form it descended from heaven” (p. 88–89). Undoubtedly, Multicultural policies have left

a remarkable and lasting *effect* on the ethnocultural composition of Canadian society.<sup>8</sup>

As mentioned, the liberal order framework is premised on the primacy of the individual. When extended to include official Multiculturalism, the main question becomes: to what extent are the interests and rights of the individual to be achieved through a collectivity? As its root, claims Charles Taylor (1994), is a paradox: all persons are the same, but there are “unique” groups. Expressed more eloquently, it is a tension between the politics of equal dignity and the politics of difference.<sup>9</sup> The contentious issue here is whether both can be achieved in a liberal order framework, if all citizens can be equal while certain groups have special status. A recent debate between William Kymlicka (1995) and Chandran Kukathus (1995) offers two very different perspectives. Kymlicka contends that individuals can make “meaning choices” (p. 85) only through access to their own culture. Cultures are useful “gateways” for access because they “can sustain a wide range of social relationships” (p. 26). Thus, the responsibility of the ruling polity is to ensure the survival of alternative (but not competing) social units, even if it means forfeiting the institutional cement required for their distinct status. For Kymlicka, the risk of expanding the political capacity of minority groups is tempered by a natural desire among ethnic group to integrate,<sup>10</sup> albeit according to culturally negotiated terms. Conversely, Kukathus (1995) equates the ethnocultural group with an asso-

8 For some of the most scathing critiques of this supposed paradigm shift in Canadian politics see Bliss 1991; J.L. Granatstein 1998; and Bissoondath 1994. The first two consider it a specious brand of “Trudeau nationalism,” designed to replace the well-established British heritage. Bissoondath’s analysis is more thematic, addressing a variety of issues as they relate to multicultural attitudes and policies.

9 Charles Taylor provides an expansive history of the modern concept of *dignity*. He argues that a combination of the decline of social hierarchies after the late 19th Century and the theories of Rousseau (equal respect as common goal of a virtuous society) and Kant (individual as rational agent) gave shape to its modern face of “equal citizenship and rights.”

10 His term, not mine.

ciation. In this paradigm, members function as free agents in their relationship to the community. As such, they can egress at any given time if their values and aspirations do not dovetail with those of the social group. “Exit” from the group is here proposed as a matter of individual choice.

Neither approach is conceptually sufficient on its own merit. Kymlicka (2001), in his desire to demonstrate the symbiosis of special groups and integration, fails to explain the foundational values of the culture to which the subculture integrates.<sup>11</sup> Thus, one is left to wonder if the two are politically compatible. As well, he assumes immutable and impenetrable ethnocultural boundaries in which one existed in a single cohort and finds his needs met only through ethnocultural apparatuses. He is a free individual within his “community” *in situ*. Most scholars agree that ethnic boundaries are quite porous and that both the minority and dominant cultures are affected through dialogue with one another. Kymlicka also overlooks the possibility that greater material advantages can be found outside of a so-called enclave. Comparatively, Kukathus does not take into account the ties that bind the individual to his ethnocultural community. She is correct to suggest the possibility of *exit*; however, this is often a difficult option. One is heavily influenced by various ties to his ethnoculture, whether they are *inter alia* familial or social relationships, “race,” or customs. An individual might even forgo more economically advantageous ventures because it does not comply with values he shared with his ethnocultural group. Let us now consider how the Canadian liberal order framework sought a balance between the polarities of the Kymlicka-Kukathus discourse.

By committing to the cultural survival of both minority groups and the nation itself, the imprimatur of the Canadian government,

originally designed to dissolve special interests into those of the state, made possible alternative outcomes. Pierre Trudeau later lamented that funding practices actually strengthened collectivities and undermined the primacy of the individual within them.<sup>12</sup> In a theoretical sense, the “reality” on the ground more closely resembled Kymlicka’s paradigm. The diachronic development of Multicultural policy after the 1970s was a response to this illiberal threat—an effort to shift the “balance” closer to the exigencies of Kukathus. First, the emphasis in the 1980s was a leveling of cultures, whereby equality of dignity could be made manifest through inter-ethnocultural cooperation. The “symbolic” agenda, long criticized by scholars for supporting so-called anachronistic cultural expression (particularly through heritage festivals, derogatorily dubbed “singing and dancing” events) was replaced with initiatives to address material inequalities caused by incongruous “race relations.” A unit of the same name was set up in 1981 to investigate participatory disparities in public life. Interestingly, similar language was articulated here, albeit for a different policy. In 1987, the time at which Multiculturalism became a *de jure* institution, the House of Commons Standing Committee on Multiculturalism stated that “the desire for harmonious race relations is paramount for all Canadians”<sup>13</sup> (Liadakis & Satzewich, 2003, p. 50). Though tempting, here is not the space to elaborate upon the myriad effects of reifying race as a category of legislation. This second stage overlapped with a third, best described as Brian Mulroney’s Progressive Conservative “Multiculturalism Means Business” agenda. Minority groups henceforth were viewed as

11 He relies heavily upon the example of Sikh members of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police permitted to wear a turban on duty. He sees their enlistment, rather than an affront to a traditional institution, as emblematic of a desire to participate in a “dominant” institution.

12 Trudeau despaired that the policy became “twisted to celebrate a newcomer’s country of origin rather than a celebration of he or she becoming a part of the Canadian fabric” (paraphrased in Martin Collacott, 2006).

13 A key section from Trudeau’s speech reads: “The government will support and encourage the various cultures and ethnic groups that give structure and vitality to our society. They will be encouraged to share their cultural expressions and values with other Canadians and so contribute to a richer life for us all.

repositories of nascent market potential. Their *worth*—insofar as material support is concerned—was assessed according to the pecuniary feasibility of participation in multi-ethnic initiatives. Thus, the nation-building project, which at first sought to remove “cultural barriers” for the sake of unity, later revised itself to correct racial and economic impediments and to orient marketable “products” into the growing global economy.

A short point of departure is necessary to address a conceptual limitation. Although the liberal order framework is a single historical trajectory, the projects operating under its aegis are by no means ubiquitous. Federal Multiculturalism functions alongside similar programs at the provincial and municipal levels, each marked by its own institutional and theoretical idiosyncrasies. Therefore, negotiation takes place not only between the federal government and the ethnocultures but also between the latter and the two lower political tiers. Thus, there is no single version of “Multiculturalism” in place, but rather variations of the federal version. The provincial government of Manitoba, for example, did not adopt the “Multiculturalism Means Business” policy as wholeheartedly as its federal counterpart. It continues to fund the “symbolic” schemes generally abandoned by Ottawa. In fact, Manitoba expounds a *mélange* of all three stages of the federal project, supporting “singing and dancing” events, race-relations imperatives, and ethnic cooperation with private enterprise. The Province of British Columbia has been less comprehensive in its approach to funding ethnocultural initiatives. In 1980 an advisory panel called the Affiliation of Multicultural Societies of B.C. was set up to recommend financial support for noteworthy ethnocultural projects.<sup>14</sup>

14 This society advised the government about ethnocultural events worthy of financial support. Initially given a budget of \$15 000.00 from lottery revenues, the panel was divided into five regions of representation and represented over one hundred ethnic organizations. *British Columbia Archives*, British Columbia Provincial

After this point the Multicultural post shifted among departments. However, a more indepth is necessary to determine the precise *shape* or version of Multiculturalism at play in each province. In the early 1980s we already find evidence of tension among the political strata when the B.C. government criticized Ottawa for not consulting them when funding local ethnocultural projects (B.C. Archives, Box 49, File 4). Given the variety of approaches and the limit space of this essay, our approach must remain chiefly exploratory and therefore not concerned with legislative particularities.

Given the major ideological shifts affecting government funding, applicants needed an adept understanding of the political climate within which they were negotiating. This “climate” could be read by the language or criteria needed to determine the suitability and feasibility of the various requests—terms by which funding was allocated, and, most important, a dollar amount affixed. On one level, as “lobby” groups approached governments for assistance, they became subjects of what Foucault calls *knowledge*, “a type of power which is constantly exercised by means of surveillance”<sup>15</sup> (Foucault, 1980). Although not as conducive to a classificatory table such as a census (Curtis, 2001),<sup>16</sup> the applications submitted by ethnocultural groups were informative documents. Consider the lengthy form for federal government funding circulated in 1976. Applicants were asked to state the following information for their institution: cultural background (interestingly, only “culture” is asked; ethnicity does not factor into the equation), annual

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Secretary, Box 49, File 3. A Multiculturalism Act was not established until 1993.

15 The state rules not by “right” but through the presence and function of its institutions; a quality that Foucault terms “disciplinary power.”

16 For an investigation of the census as a tool for government knowledge, see Bruce Curtis (2001). It is interesting to note the similarities between early census administration and Multiculturalism. Both began as “loosely” organized ventures and later became more sophisticated, standardized and rationalized.

income, size of executive, constitution, membership size, annual expenditures, objectives of and final budget (including receipts) of the project for which funding is request, and if relevant, evidence of a democratic election process. Once completed and submitted, forms provided the government with a window into the size, demographic composition, financial resourcefulness and solvency, present aims, and geographic location of the ethnocultural “community.” One key question—“what will be the benefits for the community?”—made clear the government’s liberal order agenda. This intent was not lost on the Italian Colombo Lodge in Trail, B.C., who responded as follows: “The scope [of this project] will be local and national as it would satisfy local cultural needs of our ETHNIC GROUP and contribute to Canadian Culture on a national scale.”<sup>17</sup> The Lodge was also aware of the stipulation that the Canadian government be recognized by all participants and be in all publicities. In the language of the latter, the project—a large archive room to store and display the history of its Italian members—was both a venture for cross-cultural dialogue and a signpost of the cultural and political reach of the national polity.

More telling was the criteria stated by the Winnipeg Folk Arts Council—a quasi-governmental body<sup>18</sup>—for the inclusion of an ethnocultural organization in the multicultural festival *Folklorama*. In 1985 it included, *inter alia*, an “acceptable” claim of ethnic heritage, an elected board of governors, a demonstration of the “aims” of the organization, a constitution, and a list of non-profit performance or funding groups functioning under its aegis. Applicants also needed to explain how they planned to finance their festival operations (Manitoba

Archives, 1985). These requirements had to be met before a group could represent itself to the roughly 400,000 festival visitors. Not surprising, smaller or less financially endowed communities did not comply. Approved applicants became objects of knowledge. In the case of *Folklorama*, exclusion not only represented a loss of potential revenue; it also meant that an ethnocultural group was not *recognized*. Since the festival’s apogee in the mid-1980s there have been between forty and forty-seven pavilions in operation. Since the event has served as a showcase of the province’s cultural heritage, an omitted group is neither acknowledged for its present existence nor its past contributions. Understandably, refused applications have not been taken lightly. Some groups fulfilled all requirements except a *distinct* ethnic heritage. The history of the Arts Council is speckled with cases of refused applications, and, in turn, groups taking legal action to ensure their inclusion in the festival. The Sicilian and Irish debacles are significant in this regard.<sup>19</sup> The Council determined what constituted an ethnocultural group and because their policy was to allow only one pavilion per cohort subsequent applications from the “same” community were rejected. Through their appeals groups emphasized the behaviours, attitudes, beliefs, and practices that supposedly made them *distinct* from their compatriots. A whole new process of ethnic invention resulted in this effort to secure access to tourism revenue.<sup>20</sup> As such, by determining “*what* is a valuable contribution” (Taylor, 1994, emphasis mine), we can argue that the state and its arms, by virtue of their hegemonic power, standardized or homogenized the forms

17 Form and response from *Trail City Archives*.

18 The Winnipeg Folk Arts Council originated in 1970 with support from all three levels of government. In recent years, however—particularly since the “Multiculturalism Means Business” mantra emerged—the Council has had to rely on funding from corporate sponsors such as Pepsi and Molson and operation fees from the various ethnocultural pavilions.

19 See, respectively, *Manitoba Archives*, Folk Arts Council of Winnipeg, FACWI, Box 6, Various correspondence in 1984, *passim*; FACWI, Box 6, Letter from Irish Association of Manitoba to FACWI, 6 August 1976.

20 The *Club Siciliano di Winnipeg*, for example, was awash with revenue from hosting bingo nights. The Manitoba Lotteries Commission ordered them to dispense of the funds or risk losing their charitable status. The most attractive option was to form a separate Sicilian pavilion at *Folklorama*. Interview with Mario Audino, President of *Centro Caboto*, 17 July 2005.

by which ethnocultural coalitions presented and organized themselves. They provided a template of cultural knowledge with which ethnocultural groups had to operate in order to access funds—either from the various levels of governments or the market economy.

In conclusion, there is much room for further debate on the interactions between the nation-building project and ethnocultural identities. The limited amount of space here makes necessary some important omissions. There is much room for case studies of how the state conditioned ethnocultural boundaries at various stages through the vehicle of funding policies and programs. Still, Multicultural policies are but one of many influences shaping the terms of ethnocultural identities. “Identity politics,” funding for ethnocultural spaces,<sup>21</sup> as well as ethnic and non-ethnic media (particularly press, television, film and radio) are worthy of detailed investigation. Also, attention should be given to Ian McKay’s concept of *innocence*,<sup>22</sup> which explains the vested interests of government and business in promoting an idyllic historical past for cultural or ethnocultural groups. This essay, however, provides a useful starting point for future ventures. An interesting dynamic emerges when the state seeks to incorporate the cause of its subaltern groups into its own liberal framework. Ethnocultural groups and the state refashion themselves in order to survive. In this process the latter rules or manages its subjects in the most efficient and inconspicuous manner. It tables, enacts, and enforces policies to this end. The former mobilizes in response to the state project to secure what it considers necessary for a positive future.

Historically speaking, the Canadian case has been a struggle to simultaneously ensure indi-

vidual rights and support cultural differences. Multiculturalism created a politically infused space for the recognition of ethnocultures. A group was acknowledged, but within the context of a sovereign state that had only two official languages. The onus of enacting “full cultural participation in Canadian society” thus fell on grant programs and more specifically, the application process. Ethnocultural groups did not and could not all benefit from the programs because they did not homologously meet the criteria for financial support laid out by the three levels of state. Those that did, however, mobilized and presented themselves in ways that enabled the state to extend its project of rule in Canadian society.

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21 For examples of how public funds helped to create “ethnic” spaces where they did not formerly exist see: Fielding, 2007; Culos, 2002; de Maria Harney, 2002.

22 McKay offers a brilliant study of how government and private industry have collaborated to create the image of an idyllic provincial heritage as a tourism scheme.

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