

MANAGING CONTRADICTIONS OF MULTICULTURALISM:
NARRATIVES OF BELONGING AND BEING CANADIAN AMONG CANADIAN MIDDLE
EASTERN WOMEN

by

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Abstract

This thesis investigates experiences of belonging and being Canadian among first-generation Canadian Middle Eastern women through one-on-one interviews with 13 women. Since the election of Justin Trudeau in 2015, Canada has recommitted to bolstering discourses of multiculturalism. There have been, however, lasting impacts from mainstream discourses that followed 9/11, which positioned Middle Eastern women as imperiled and Middle Eastern culture as backward. Additionally, liberal multiculturalism in Canada has done little to address systemic racism, and instead encourages a superficial level of acceptance. Contradictions of multiculturalism can be found in the narratives of these women, who sometimes repeat discourses that do not benefit them. Conversely, women who have access to discourses that position multiculturalism as ideological, have a difficult time expressing a Canadian identity and display a critical understanding of their experiences. These narratives are considered in a wider context of how race and racism structure Canada today.

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Dedication

For my mother, Forouzan Yazdan whose own experiences as a racialized, first-generation, immigrant woman I am only beginning to understand. Forouzan, you are the most warmhearted, resilient and passionate woman I know. I dedicate this text to you, and your understanding and inevitable pain in seeing me struggle with my identity and self-acceptance as a young immigrant.

For the thirteen women whose words and experiences are the life of this text. I dedicate this text to you, to your stories, and to your strength.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Introduction	1
Methodology and Research Focus	9
Participants: Criteria and justification for intersectional specificities	9
Methods	16
Finding Participants	17
Consent	18
Semi-structured Interviews	19
Positioning Myself: Researcher, Interviewer, Insider	19
Analysis: Coding and Interpretation	23
Chapter 1: A Brief but Critical History	26
Introduction	26
Colonialism to Confederation: Canada’s treatment of Indigenous people	27
Establishing a Canadian Citizenship: A strategy for whiteness	32
Canadian Citizenship as Raced, Gendered, and a Tool for National Legitimacy	34
Moves Towards Liberalism: A more ‘open’ immigration system	37
The Emergence of Multiculturalism as Policy	40
Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework	42
Anti-racist feminism	42
Theories on Settler Colonialism, Liberal Multiculturalism, and Democratic Racism: An overview	45
Hegemony, Ideology, and Ideological State Apparatus	54
Chapter 3: Literature Review	65
Introduction	67
The First Period of Multiculturalism: Managing and marking ‘difference’ and dehistoricizing and depoliticizing racism	68
Multiculturalism’s Failure: Canadian citizenship as stratified	74
When Racialized Citizens Adopt the Language of Multiculturalism	76
Second Period of Multiculturalism: A movement away from the tenets of multiculturalism	80
Saving the Imperiled through Imperialism: Imperialism, the veil, and white feminism	86

Resisting, Challenging Stereotypes, and Reproducing Ideology: Reactions from North American Middle Eastern women in the post-9/11 period	90
Multiculturalism in its current period: Public divides on a rejuvenation of multiculturalism	97
Chapter 4: Analysis of Interview Data	111
Introduction	111
Chapter 4.1: How Processes of Racialization, Immigration on Impact Expressions of Belonging and Being Canadian	115
Introduction	115
Witnessing Parental Struggle with Belonging, Being Canadian, and Adjusting	116
Reminders of Canadian Exceptionalism from Peers and Family in Country of origin	120
Whiteness as Canadianness: Experiences of ‘passing’ as white and the ongoing policing of identity.....	124
Bullying, Teasing, and Discomfort with Identity.....	133
Impacts of News Media Representations Framing Middle Easterners as Dangerous Outsiders	137
Chapter 4.2: Resisting, Managing and Negotiating Canadian Contradictions in Expressions of Belonging and Canadian Identity	143
Introduction	143
Positioning Racism as Individual versus Systemic	145
Awareness of Canadian Colonialism as Producing Instability in Claims of Being and Feeling Canadian	153
Negotiating and Managing Contradictions through Discourses of Democratic Racism	164
Seeing Gender Equality in Canada as Inherent versus as an Ongoing Goal	170
Questioning Assumptions about Canadian Benevolence Through Dialogue	176
Finding Solidarity on the Fringes and Building Community Outside the Mainstream as Fostering Belonging	179
Conclusion and Discussions	184
Appendix A: Consent Form	191
Appendix B: Interview Guide	196
Works Cited	198

Introduction

Since the late 1960s, diversity and inclusion narratives have been used to uncritically define Canadian nationhood and identity. These narratives, however, largely ignore Canada's history of colonialism, its ongoing involvement in imperialist pursuits, and the systemic racism which still structures much of the nation's institutions, policies, and public life. Gender and race interlock and intersect in structures of domination in shaping the marginalized positions of racialized people, and in particular, racialized women. This is despite Canada's claims of upholding the tenants of both racial and gender equality (Bannerji 2001; Satzewich & Liodakis 2010; Thobani 2007). Multiculturalism, both as a policy and as a dominant discourse defining Canada and Canadian identity, is often pointed to as proof of Canada's accepting and progressive nature, often with little consideration for the socio-economic and political exclusions and exploitations that racialized citizens and immigrants deal with. These beguiled assessments of Canada erase how these exclusions are sanctioned, justified, and encouraged by the state and public institutions. This thesis looks at the narratives of Canadian Middle Eastern women and their experiences and expressions of belonging and being Canadian. It examines if and how promises of inclusion, fostered through dominant discourses of multiculturalism have created feelings of belonging and acceptance among Canadian Middle Eastern women.

Notions of a benevolent Canada are so popular and so strongly held that to even suggest racism exists in Canada is met with immense criticism, from both liberals and conservatives. In exploring the experiences of racialized Canadian Middle Eastern women, my research investigates these contradictions of a racially inclusive Canadian society with the current realities of Canadian race relations. As I will demonstrate, there are renewed commitments to a multicultural Canadian identity since the 2015 elections, which saw Justin Trudeau and the liberal government taking power after nine years of conservative rule on a platform that promised improvements for the lives of immigrants, racialized citizens, and religious minorities alike. These promises are contrasted against the growth and

legitimacy being afforded to right wing extremist discourse, much of which are rooted in anti-immigrant and racist logics.

Based on in-depth semi-structured one-on-one interviews with 13 first-generation Canadian Middle Eastern women living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), this thesis investigates how Canadian contradictions are negotiated and resisted by Canadian Middle Eastern women in their expressions of Canadian identity and belonging. Although multiculturalism argues that immigration and race do not impact a citizen's access to equality, multiculturalism as policy and discourse has done very little in establishing socio-economic and political equality of people from different racial and ethnic groups in Canada. In fact, I will demonstrate that multiculturalism provides fluidity for structural racism, giving it a new, palatable language to speak through, as it gives it the appearance of establishing equality, as structural inequalities continue (Bannerji, 2000; Thobani 2007).

This study adds to a growing body of knowledge in Canadian anti-racist feminist research that seeks to understand how narratives of the “nation,” citizenship, and belonging are expressed by racialized women, in this case, Middle Eastern Canadian women. As an insider to this group, my research has been inspired by my own frustrations and ambiguities about Canadian identity and the difficulties I had in articulating the racism I had experiences. I found it difficult to express the racism I was experienced. When I was able to find the language to describe the racial and gender inequalities I was experiencing, I was often silenced. This denial of my experiences coupled with the ongoing racialized discrimination I faced caused me to feel a deep resentment and even embarrassment for my Middle Eastern heritage. I developed a great deal of self-hate that manifested into attempts to ‘whiten’ myself, such as chemically relaxing my hair so that it was straight; using skin bleaching products to make my skin lighter; or spending hundreds of dollars every month to have every last piece of body hair removed. When I began learning about Canada's history of colonialism and acquired a more critical understanding of multiculturalism, I was able to make sense of my individual experiences of racism more clearly. This ironically fostered a sense of belonging for me.

An analysis of the experiences of Canadian Middle Eastern women will give insights into not only how, at the individual level, they negotiate contradictions, express belonging, and resist dominant narratives that marginalize them, but also what these contradictions mean for the existence of racial and gender equality and belonging in Canada generally. The women in this study immigrated to Canada as children or youth, and have spent most of their young adult lives living in Canada. Formally, they are all legally Canadian citizens. Often the ability to gain citizenship in Canada is pointed to as proof of equal opportunity in Canada. However, formal legal citizenship says little about how citizenship is played out in material spaces, not guaranteeing any sense of actual belonging or acceptance in Canada. As a nation that claims superiority over others for its apparent unwavering pledges to multiculturalism and inclusion, it is imperative that we understand if and how inclusion is experienced by those who are at the margins of society.

It's commonly understood that women hold more vulnerable positions in society than their male counterparts. For Middle Eastern women, this vulnerability stem not only from gendered treatment but also the racist logics of orientalism that have devolved over time. In Canada especially following 9/11, they have been depicted as representatives and helpless victims of the “barbarisms” of their Middle Eastern cultures (Jiwani 2006; Thobani 2007). In framing Middle Eastern women as helpless to the patriarchy and violence that are assumed to plague their cultures, Western involvement, usually violent military involvement in producing or aiding patriarchy and violence abroad is ignored, rendering violence as an inherent trait of the East (Perera & Razack 2014). Conversely, Middle Eastern women have historically been highly sexualized. As such, being needing to be saved by white Western masculinity, they are also depicted as silent and submissive objects of white, male pleasure. In a post-9/11 context, Middle Eastern women are also seen as possessing the seeds of evil, as the vehicles for reproduction of their supposedly backward culture. The popularity of these contradictory depictions—which position Middle Eastern women sometimes as objects of white benevolence or white pleasure,

and even as breeders of violence, make it very important and urgent to study and understand their actual experiences.

After a detailed discussion on methodology, the thesis opens with a critical look at Canada's history of race relations. This section provides a discussion of the history of colonialism in Canada, focusing specifically on the treatment of women and the racist narratives and structures that were established and legitimized from early on. This discussion will provide a basis for understanding how racial hierarchy was first justified and how the marginalization of Indigenous people was pivotal to Canada's development and self-definition as a white settler colony. This section also explores how Canada moved away from overtly racist discourses about national identity not through decolonization, but through efforts to encourage immigration to Canada from non-white countries. Various economic factors motivated the decisions of the Canadian state to create a more liberal and open image of Canada. The thesis also looks at the strategies used by the state to establish this image, and additionally, to the ways in which it fell short of establishing equality. This will then allow for a discussion on how Canada eventually adopted a policy of multiculturalism in 1971.

Chapter two provides a theoretical framework, which is laid in order to better guide discussions in the literature review. First and foremost, anti-racist feminism is identified as the school of thought through which I approach this research. As a paradigm that critically examines structures of power along axes of gender and race and empowers the voices of racialized women, I argue anti-racist feminism is an appropriate paradigm to work with. I then look at the work of anti-racist feminist scholars that have specifically focused on Canada. Their critique on official multiculturalism in Canada helps address initial contradictions that stemmed from the policy and provide an understanding of how those contradictions continue to exist today. As this happens partly through language, I look at the ways in which multiculturalism provides a new, palatable language that enables the continued existence and prevalence of racism in contemporary society. The notion of Canada as a benevolent and non-racist society has become ideologically so popular that it has assumed the status of the

commonsense image through which Canadians and others understand Canada. The thesis will therefore deal with questions of how ideology and ideological hegemony work. While it may appear that the state and white Canadians are consciously making attempts to marginalize and subjugate racialized people, this is not always the case. This thesis will provide an understanding of how racial hierarchy functions in covert and subtle ways in the hegemonic structuring of Canada, and how ideologies of whiteness and multiculturalism exist within this hegemony.

The importance of history and context is stressed time and time again in this research, not only for understanding the lives of Canadian Middle Eastern women today, but also in terms of the evolution of multiculturalism as policy and practice. For these reasons, I have distinguished between three 'periods' or 'expressions' of multiculturalism. The first period marks the emergence of multiculturalism policy. This section looks at how the demands of marginalized people for economic and social equality in Canada were addressed in rather shallow, symbolic offers of ethnic festivals and food. I look at how multiculturalism in this period worked mostly as a tool for nation building and unity, and did little to foster equality between citizens. Additionally, I explore the ways in which racialized people also consent to and internalize the discourses of multiculturalism, even when it may not be beneficial to them in substantive ways.

The second expression of multiculturalism is marked as a blatant retreat from the tenets of multiculturalism. This expression, or iterations is marked by the reaction to the events of 11 September 2001. I explore the ways in which the Canadian state, in its participation in the War on Terror, took steps to assert a white identity and established legislation, procedures and discourses that positioned Middle Eastern people as threatening. I look specifically at how Middle Eastern women were used as justification for imperialist action in the Middle East, and how these orientalist discourses were popular among liberals and conservatives alike. I also look at how Middle Eastern women in North America challenged and managed the narratives that seek to other them.

Although the multicultural image of Canada began fading under the leadership of Stephen Harper and the Conservative government, the 2015 elections renewed Canada's self-image international reputation as a nation committed to diversity and multiculturalism. The end of chapter 3 looks at the ways in which Trudeau has taken steps to rejuvenating the discourses and tenets of multiculturalism in Canada, albeit, largely symbolically. Contradictions emerge between Trudeau's promises and his practices, with many of his legislative actions following in line with previous, stricter conservative policies. The rather shallow appeals to inclusion lately echo the first period of multiculturalism. At the same time, marked by mass migration, induced by global warming and climate change, famine, and civil war and genocide—the present period is alone one which is witnessing the rise of right-wing extremism and anti-immigrant sentiments in Canada. This period, then, represents divides and contradictions in public sentiment, state promises, legislative change, and civic action.

The fourth chapter is an analysis of interview data. The responses to the tragic events of 11 September 2001—which some call 'the day the world changed'—have contributed a great deal to the racialization of Middle Eastern people, in Canada and internationally (Amery, 2013, p.34). The women in this research study were born into orientalist narratives that justified increased racialization and subordination of female Middle Eastern identity. The first part of the interview analysis looks at how this has impacted their expressions of belonging and feeling Canadian. How do these women express belonging and Canadian identity in the face of limitations and contradictions of Canadian multiculturalism? How has having to adjust to a culture that others one's heritage impact feelings of belonging and being Canadian?

Secondly, I'll be investigating how young Middle Eastern women in diaspora manage and resist these contradictions in their expressions of belonging and being Canadian. Beyond negotiating contradiction, how do these women manage and resist such contradictions? Recent research in the field (Maira, 2018; Nagra, 2017; Razack & Perara, 2014) has highlighted the agency and resistance

Canadian and American Middle Eastern women exercise against the marginalization and demonization by the state and popular media following 11 September 2001. These studies however, focus on a specific historical moment, right after the 9/11 attacks, and the resistance which *immediately* followed it. My research focuses on a more recent political moment, many years after 9/11, one which is rife with specific Canadian contradictions, partly induced by the 2015 election of Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. In the face of such contradictions, I wish to see how these women resist and manage dominant discourses of multiculturalism against their own experiences of belonging and Canadian identity.

These questions demand investigation in this current historical epoch, especially as current discourses of Canadian exceptionalism—bolstered nationally and internationally—nearly dismiss racist, sexist, and discriminatory acts and behaviours by the state and general Canadian public. The overwhelming popularity of these discourses means that even those who are impacted the most by racist narratives and contradictory behaviours find it very difficult to articulate the racism that plagues Canada. Research on Canadian immigrant women, and Canadian immigrants in general, has shown that some racialized citizens repeat and employ the very narratives which marginalize them, and speak through the stereotypical representations that work to homogenize their racial identities (Jiwani, 2006; Malhi & Boon, 2007; Tator & Henry, 2006). This makes resistance to racist narratives and racism from racialized peoples important but complicated. This research, then, points to the continued existence of both structural and interpersonal racism in Canada, and how this racism overtime, in its fluidity, adjusts and may not appear as racism at all. In other words, it maintains itself as the common sense through which all Canadians, immigrant or otherwise, understand Canada through.

This research interrogates this ideological and uncritical understanding of Canada, and the contradictions that emerge through it. The narratives of Canadian Middle Eastern women living in the GTA give insights not only into their specific experiences of Canadian identity and belonging, but also on the limits and barriers to being Canadian and belonging in Canada generally. This research aims to

bolster an understanding of the dominant powers that structure Canadian society and the experiences of racialized women, and how, in the face of this, they resist, manage, or challenge oppressive narratives and experience belonging in Canada.

Methodology and Research Focus

This ethnographic study used qualitative methodology to look at the experiences of immigration, identity, resistance and belonging among Canadian Middle Eastern women living in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA). Fourteen one on one interviews were conducted, all of which lasted for a minimum of two hours and often inched closer to three. Participants were found through digital and material postering, and snowball sampling. One participant dropped out of the study, which left the total number of participants at thirteen. The interviews, which took place between February and May 2018, were then transcribed and coded in order to draw out common themes and ideas, as well as differences, between participants. Personal narratives are used as evidence and point to the connection between the experiences of belonging and identity among Canadian Middle Eastern women and the racism underpinning the Canadian state (Henry & Tator, 2006; Nagra, 2017). This section looks at the criteria for participation, who the participants are, and the methods used to collect and analyze data.

Participants: Criteria and justification for intersectional specificities

Participants	Age	Age at time of migration	Origin country	Religion
Saya	28	1	Iraq	N/A
Leilah	22	10	Iran	N/A
Azar	24	4	Iran	N/A
Shadi	28	5 months	Iran	N/A
Tafida	21	11	Egypt & Saudi Arabia	Muslim
Fatima	31	13	Bahrain	N/A
Kamela	27	6	Palestine & Syria	N/A
Zara	24	14	Egypt	Muslim
Nasrin	31	4	Iran	N/A
Calla	28	9	Syria	Muslim (Cultural)
Noor	28	18	Jordan	Muslim (Cultural)
Morooj	34	17	Palestine	Muslim
Lena	23	5	Armenia	Christian (Cultural)

Figure 1.1

This study has focused on first-generation Canadian women from the Middle East, who migrated when they were young, have spent a large part of their youth in Canada, and have lived here

for ten years (immigrated in 2008 or before) or more. This choice of participants aimed to locate women who have lived in Canada for long enough to have a sense of the society and its institutions, and have become part of the society in more concrete ways than those who have just arrived. In the 2018 World Happiness Report, compiled by both Erasmus University and Gallup researchers, they found that immigrants are more likely to express criticisms or unhappiness the longer they live somewhere (Ray & Esipova, 2018). I specifically wanted to interview those who came to Canada as children or youth (not older than eighteen). The eldest age of immigration among participations was 18, and the youngest was five months. I wanted to focus on this age group to examine how their most formative years, as youth, have been impacted by post-9/11 context and Canadian contradictions and racism that emerge from it. In other words, I wanted to see how growing up in a post-9/11 Canada, rife with challenges and contradictions, has impacted first generation Canadian Middle Eastern women. Additionally, I looked for participants not older than 35. Most of these women, then, were rather young when 9/11 happened, either having been in their early teens or late childhood. This was intentional, as it means that unlike other studies which look to see how Muslim and Middle Eastern youth responded to narratives, attitudes, and policies in the immediate post-9/11 context (Jiwani, 2006; Maira, 2018; Nagra, 2017), this study looks at those who grew up in the post-9/11 context, and in a context when the attitudes and policies that emerged after this event gained legitimacy and popularity, and therefore normalcy. This study examines how growing up in a post-9/11 world impacted feelings of belonging and expressions of Canadian identity among those who immigrated when they were young and faced “racially motivated injustices” when they were forming their notions of self-worth, respect, and place in the world. It has been noted in numerous studies about immigrant youth living in North America, that racism leads to experiences of anxiety and “physical and psychological insecurity” that can manifest in childhood or youth or later on in adulthood (Agnew, 2007, p.27; Nagra 2017).

Class and social capital are also important factors in understanding the positionality of these participants. Although I had not intentionally structured it to be so, all of the women who participated

in this research belong to the middle-to-upper class. Many of the women, particularly those who migrated on their own, did so with the financial support of their parents. For many of the women, this also meant funding their post-secondary education. While not all of the women had their parents pay for their schooling, all the women in this study have completed or are currently completing a bachelor's degree. A few have pursued master's and post-doctorate degrees. This means the group is not only middle to upper class but also highly educated, and have received diplomas from Canadian institutions, which comes with its own privileges.

In a post-9/11 world, Middle Eastern youth in Canada have not only been subjected to increased surveillance and policing by both the state and Canadians, but they were also seen as subjects that need to be protected from their 'backward' culture, preserved in a youthful innocence that is vulnerable to the savagery associated with their ethnic roots (Maira, 2018, p.7). A young Middle Easterner is seen as vulnerable to the ills of Islam, and a target for radicalization. They have become "a primary target" in the War on Terror, as many believe that young Middle Easterners are being radicalized online through intricate terrorist networks (Maira, 2018, p.7). Additionally, white children are taught to fear the other, and they stand in to "embody the innocence of the nation," whereas the Middle Eastern child or youth is positioned as a potentially violent and volatile other. (Thobani, 2007, p. 226).

This study diverts from other research in this area in the sense that women did not have to be Muslim to participate. In an attempt to demonstrate the nuance of identity among Middle Easterners, Muslim or otherwise, I did not make it necessary that participants be Muslim. I hypothesized that perhaps Middle Eastern people, Muslim or otherwise, would have similar experiences in terms of belonging and feeling Canadian, as they have been othered and marginalized in similar ways following 9/11. Additionally, I wanted to touch on the conflation of Muslim and Middle Eastern in the West, and see how these imposed labels impact expressions of belonging and being Canadian. Previous research shows that among Muslim youth, solidarity and resistance manifested rather naturally, as they could

come together as a community in natural ways, i.e. after attending prayers at the mosque or through a Muslim Student Association at school (Maira 2018; Nagra 2017). In fact, the research showed that many Muslims distanced themselves from the Middle East and Middle Eastern culture following 9/11 (Nagra, 2017). Seven of the women in this study do not practice any religion. Two women practice Islam, however, only one wears a hijab. Three of the women practice a ‘cultural’ Islamic identity, meaning their families are religious to a certain degree and they partake in some holidays, rituals and celebrations, but do not adhere to practicing Islamic faith. One participant grew up in a Christian household and also participates culturally, but not religiously.

For these reasons, I would categorize my participants as part of what Maira (2018) would call the 9/11 generation. The term is used to denote a group that has “been deeply shaped by the aftermath of this historical event” (Maira, 2018, p.1). It focuses, for the most part, on those living in North America. It is not limited, however, to being Muslims or even by being Middle Eastern. Many racialized communities were impacted by the aftermath of 9/11; however, a large chunk of research focuses mostly on the Muslim community. For participants in my research, their belonging in the 9/11 generation is undoubtable, as they’ve all lived in Canada long enough to be impacted by the popularized narratives, policies, and attitudes towards Muslims and Muslim-looking Canadians, or in this case, Middle Eastern Canadians. Although the 9/11 generation is often looked at in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, as a lot of anti-Muslim, anti-Arab, anti-Middle Eastern sentiments were perpetuated and popularized during this time, these sentiments still circulate in society and I argue, have been further cemented as common-sense logics in narratives of nationhood and societal structuring, both by the state and the Canadian general public. 9/11 has created a context for “new memories, new understandings of the world, and new forms of engagement,” and while a study on the immediate impacts of these understandings of Middle Easterners is important, so too is an interrogation of how these new understandings have shaped the lives of those who were essentially, born into them (Masquelier & Soares, 2016, p.1). Additionally, the growth and increased popularity of electronic and

digital communication technologies allows this generation to feel highly connected to the goings on in their country of origin, including the impacts of the War on Terror (Marshall & Lee, 2017). This heightened connectivity also makes this generation “more aware of the demonization” of their culture, religion, and ethnicity (Marshall & Lee, 2017, p.14). It’s important to note that youth living in the Middle East, in countries such as Afghanistan, Iraq, Yemen, Syria, and Iran have dealt with the brunt of these policies, narratives and attitudes, as they’ve dealt with “military invasions, economic sanctions, targeted killings, increased harassment, surveillance, imprisonment, and travel restrictions” (Masquelier & Soares, 2016, p.7).

Their experiences as Middle Eastern youth, a position that most of them have grown out of, as they now inch closer to adulthood, has been further complicated by their position as women. Beyond managing the everyday struggles youth face when transitioning into adulthood, Canadian Middle Eastern girls have to deal with additional racialized and gendered inequalities in employment, housing, and mainstream culture. How Middle Eastern women have been positioned in Canada by policies of the Canadian state, and how they’ve been included (or not) into notions of Canadian citizenship will be outlined in great detail in proceeding sections. The “gendered investment” that Canada has made in its commitments to the War on Terror, for example, leaves Canadian Middle Eastern women as the subject of debate, and research; and rarely in positions to guide and structure debate or conduct the research themselves. (Mis)represented as exotic, mysterious, and suppressed, the Middle Eastern woman walks a line between savage and sexual, however, in both cases her existence only has meaning through the white male. She is rendered powerless in both scenarios; and he is elevated to the status of either benevolent saviour or worthy voyeur. More generally, women are also assessed in terms of whether or not they can attract white men, meaning racialized immigrant women “deal with a more complicated, intersectional, and power confluence in also needing to learn the dominant norms and social codes of the countries they immigrate to.

Middle Eastern women often fall outside of the popularized European beauty norms of the West, however, their light skin tone also means they can sometimes move in and out of these norms, though they quickly learn the limits to being recognized as white, as their non-whiteness will always be marked through either their name, accent, skintone, etc. Additionally, Jiwani (2006) notes that young women are more likely to express dissatisfaction with their own cultural communities, as they face very different pressures from their male counterparts, who are not restricted and regulated in the same way. This does not in any way mean that Canadian Middle Eastern women experience a ‘culture clash’ between Canadian and Middle Eastern culture. It simply means that the empty promises of ‘Canadian’ values, such as gender and racial equality, meritocracy, and inclusion are can become more appealing, and may lead women to be more critical of their country of origin (Jiwani, 2006).

Lastly, their position as first-generation immigrants also makes this group important for studying as they are socialized in Canada, through Canadian social and political institutions and public spaces, but also have physical connection(s) to their origin country. They arrived at a young age, potentially easing difficulties in say, learning a new language, however they are also “beset by the trauma of dislocation, parental deskilling, and the challenges of adapting a new milieu,” where they often have to act as language teachers for their guardians or parents (Marshall & Lee 2017, p.124). Research has shown that processes of dislocation and immigration can have negative effects on a child or youth’s psychological wellbeing, and this can be further exaggerated if it takes a while to navigate and find comfort in their new environment (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010). Unlike second generation children and youth, first generation youth go through the events leading up to the decision to immigrate, initial immigration processes, as well as settlement, all of which have been regarded as unstable times in a migrant’s life. Generally, migrants make the choice to immigrate, unless they are asylum seekers or refugees. Immigrant children and youth, however, do not have a say in these life-changing decisions (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010).

Witnessing their family/guardians face discrimination, prejudice and racism, losing social status they may have held back home, and changes to the overall structuring of their home life, where sometimes they might have to take on leadership roles they never had (i.e. translating), could also lead to anxiety, stress and unhappiness (Potochnick & Perreira, 2010). Beyond helping guardians with language, first generation immigrant youth may sometimes also have to teach their parents certain codes of conduct or normative behaviours, as they learn these codes and rules more quickly than older immigrants, in part because of public school education (Masquelier & Soares, 2016). On the one hand, first generation immigrant youth are regarded as rootless “from the perspective of the parental culture,” and simultaneously they are seen as perpetual immigrants from “the host country’s” perspective (Taylor & Krahn, 2013, p.1004).Unlike their second-generation counterparts, first-generation immigrants go through the process of ‘becoming’ Canadian, meaning they have experienced being a ‘non-Canadian’ living in Canada. Since I’m investigating expressions of Canadian identity and belonging in Canada, this will provide insight on how citizenship, if at all, factors into feelings of belonging for Canadian Middle Eastern women.

It should be noted, however, that the women who participated in this study did not all come with parents or guardians. In fact, five of the thirteen women immigrated to Canada on their own, with only the occasional help of parents, mostly financially, though often always immaterially, through emotional support. These women state they immigrated for educational opportunities, as many of their parents argued a post-secondary degree from a North American school would be more beneficial to them than one from a Middle Eastern school. Their experiences of belonging are complicated by this parental distance, a facet that will be explored in the analysis portion of this study. Figure 1.1 indicates the country of origin for each participant, with some having grown up in two countries prior to immigrating. Often this was due to conflict and tensions rising in their respective origin countries, which of course has been exasperated (or sometimes even produced) by North American imperialism.

The decision to interview women currently residing in Toronto was more than just a choice of convenience, given that I currently reside in Toronto. The city is regarded as the most multicultural city in the world, lauded for its diverse demographic and overall character of inclusivity. Toronto has received the title as the most multicultural city in the world not because of anti-racist initiatives and efforts to include and embrace difference, but because the city's 'visible minority' population exceeds fifty percent. Toronto is also home to more immigrants than any other Canadian city, making it particularly interesting to study, as many assume that the visibility and mere existence of immigrants and racialized people is enough to foster an environment of inclusion, acceptance, and belonging.

Methods

Research was approached with an anti-racist feminist paradigm. This means that methodology was also tackled through feminist approaches. Feminist research is usually conducted by a woman who is researching other women, and tries to avoid inequalities and hierarchy, between the researcher and research participants. For the researcher, there is often a power relation underpinning interactions with participants, as the researcher defines the research questions, guides the dialogue, analyzes and interprets the data, and then write about the experiences that participants have shared. In fact, institutionalized research in general has been fraught with exploitative practices and tendencies since its inception. Furthermore, these institutional research practices have been lauded by several groups, such as women and Indigenous peoples as linked to imperialism and colonialism. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) writes about decolonized methodologies, and outlines how conclusions drawn in research on minority groups—or specifically indigenous groups— have often led to justifications for the oppression and marginalization. Research has been used to justify colonial claims to land, by asserting that their ethnographic observations of Indigenous people prove they are incapable of developing the land. Knowledge is rejected unless it has been validated by a Western institution, such as a University, which points to the elitism that can come with formal research. For years now, the West has been able

to produce discourse about the Other, and often this discourse works to either exalt the West, marginalize the Other, or usually both. This has real impacts, as scholarly research is then used, consciously or unconsciously, as a colonial tool for knowledge building and therefore domination, to support state and corporate policies (Kovach, 2005).

In the data collection process, attempts to avoid hierarchical and exploitative relations involved me sharing parts of my personal biography, my values and feelings about the research, and the goals of my research. I also encouraged participants to ask questions throughout the interview process, whether it pertained to the research itself or otherwise. Many participants did decide to ask me questions about my own experiences of immigrating and being a Canadian Middle Eastern woman, and often these lines of questioning and the discussions that would emerge around them allowed me to also gain a better understanding of my own experiences of belonging and being Canadian. Often, these questions would be asked of me in the second half of interviews, a trend I believe is indicative of a sense of comfort and trust built in the beginning of the interview. As Carol Grbich (2006) suggests, creating a non-exploitative research environment may involve establishing shallow friendships with participants. In the weeks following the interviews, I made sure to follow up with the women and see how they were feeling. Speaking about such personal and often emotional experiences can be draining, or may even trigger potentially painful memories. Following up was my attempt at showing them that their narratives, while important to my research project, are also theirs, and they should not feel like something has been taken from them.

Finding Participants

Participants were found predominantly through snowball sampling. As a new resident of Toronto, I relied on my somewhat small network of friends and family in the city to connect me with their co-workers, relatives, friends, etc. who might meet the criteria. Nine participants were found this way. Two of these participants were found by asking other participants if they knew anyone who

would meet the criteria and be interested in participating. Additionally, I created a digital poster briefly outlining my research, and the qualifications to participate. The poster, shared on my own social media accounts—primarily on Twitter and Facebook— encouraged anyone who was interested in participating to contact me. I shared the poster with ninety-one student associations in universities and colleges across the GTA, who were organizing around themes related to the Middle East, racialized women, race and racism, and immigration. Numerous relevant associations from Ryerson University, York University, University of Toronto, Humber College, OCAD, Guelph-Humber, Michener Institute, Centennial College, Conestoga College, University of Ontario Institute of Technology, and George Brown College were contacted. Additionally, I posted the digital poster on a few Facebook groups, such as *UNAPOLOGETIC WOMEN OF COLOUR | Promoting Entrepreneurs and Business Owners*, and the *Toronto Feminist Collective*. Four participants were found by sharing this poster online with these associations via e-mail or on Facebook.

Consent

Once participants expressed interest in joining the study, they were sent a consent form via e-mail, which outlined the purpose and nature of the research project, their role in the research, time commitments, how long their data would be used for, and who would have access to their data. This only included myself and my supervisor. The form also outlined the voluntary nature of their participation, and assured participants of their ability to withdraw at any point and their right to refuse to answer any questions they felt uncomfortable with. Participants were also assured about confidentiality and told their real names would never be used. I felt that pseudonyms would be the best way to assure confidentiality.

Furthermore, the consent form explained that their data would be stored on a hard drive and in a safe that only I would have access to. Potential risks and benefits were also outlined. Participants were warned that strong emotions might be triggered when talking about experiences of immigration, racialization and belonging. For these reasons, the consent form included the location of various

counselling centres across the city, as well as crisis lines they could contact. They were also informed on the benefit from speaking about their experiences, in that they may learn from them, or feel a sense of relief after sharing them. Additionally, they were told they would be adding to a growing body of research and knowledge. If they were still interested in participating after reading through my consent form, an interview was organized. Before beginning the interview, I went over the consent form again with participants. Here, I was able to better describe my research questions, motives and goals, and give them information about myself and my own experiences of immigration and settlement in Canada. I also made it a point to reach out to contacts about a week after the interview to thank them for their participation, to see how they were feeling, and if they wanted to talk about anything that happened.

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviewing was chosen as my main method for data collection. These interviews were scheduled to last a minimum of two hours. Although I had a guideline of questions I wanted to ask participants, I allowed dialogue to veer in different directions, while also making sure to bring it back so that I was always asking the necessary questions for the research. In his book on interviewing, Harvey Russell Bernard (2006) suggests using semi-structured interviews if you only have one chance to speak with someone, as you can veer off your interview guide and ask for further elaboration in the moment, or dive into a topic that you might never have predicted coming up. Structured interviews do not allow for this, as the interviewer has to stick to the guide. Additionally, semi-structured interviews are useful because they allow for comparable data, in ways that unstructured interviews do not allow for. I wanted to draw out common themes between my participants, but I also wanted interviews to flow, and be about their own personal narrative, and not feel so formal. Semi-structured interviewing, then, was the best choice. Bernard (2006) states that touchy subjects should follow a more unstructured format, so that the conversation can flow naturally

and participants can feel more comfortable sharing personal and potentially uncomfortable experiences. Speaking out about experiences of discrimination and racism can be emotionally painful, making it difficult to do with someone you've just met. I wanted wiggle room to change my questions, the order of the questions, and the language surrounding them to ensure I was creating comfort for my participants, asking the necessary questions, but also being responsive to how they wanted to guide the conversation. Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and then coded.

Positioning Myself: Researcher, Interviewer, Insider

In *Emerging from the Margins: Indigenous Methodologies*, Margaret Kovach's (2005) discusses the value of being an insider to the community or group one is researching. Referring to the exclusion of Indigenous people from research on Indigenous communities and indigeneity, Kovach claims that research conducted by insiders is a step toward gaining control over the narrative, and can be empowering for both the researcher and the participants. If knowledge produced from research informs our understanding, interpretations, and interactions with other people, as well as how we see ourselves in society generally, then "control over its production becomes an integral component of cultural survival" (Kovach, 2005, p.24). As a first-generation Canadian-Iranian woman, who emigrated at the age of three, I am an insider. While this has many benefits, such as allowing me to easily connect with participants, it also comes with its limits. For example, being an insider can make researchers too involved in their own experiences and unable to acquire distance from the data they're analyzing. In order to avoid this, I always made sure to write down my personal thoughts and feelings after every interview, so I could better discern which conclusions were drawn from an understanding of the situation and which were influenced by my own understanding and framework of being a Canadian Middle Easterner and belonging in Canadian society. On the other hand, I did not dismiss my understandings as useless. It was, however, important for me to also practice distancing myself from the data, in order to notice things I might otherwise dismiss as 'normal' or 'common-sense.'

Interestingly, white researchers studying white populations are never questioned on their insider status, and are never assumed to hold any potential biases. Sonya Corbin Dwyer (2009) suggests that whether one is an insider or not, being open and honest about your own experiences and research intentions is essential to positioning one's research and the scope of one's analysis.

Dwyer (2009) also points out that just as being an insider might impact your analysis and understanding of data, the data—in my case, the interviews—may also impact the insider. It would be no stretch to say that I feel changed by the research experience. At the end of every interview except for two, participants asked if we could share a hug. This is indicative of the feeling of connectedness that was fostered through sharing narratives about our lives as women, as Canadians, as Middle Easterners, as first-generation migrants, and as all of the above. The more I interviewed, the more I understood what best allowed for conversation flow. If a participant was more withdrawn at the beginning, I opened up to them to show them that this was a safe space. I also would share more about myself and my own experiences. This always encouraged them to share more. A few times participants messaged me immediately after the interview, thanking me for having that conversation with them, or informing me that they never knew they felt the way they did about their experiences of racialization and immigration in Canada. Admittedly, I too learned a lot about my own experiences. Many times, we discovered things about ourselves together, laughing at things we would do as children who were learning to speak the language, or trying to fit in at school, or admitting that we don't like Tim Hortons as much as others seem to. The process also taught me a lot about the racist narratives and inequalities that I myself had internalized.

I also learned about my position as an interviewer and researcher. First and foremost, I discovered how easy it can be to impose your own thoughts when posing a question, meaning one should always ask open-ended questions, and to never probe by leading. About halfway through I had nearly memorized all the key questions I needed to ask, meaning I was barely looking down at my interview guide. This allowed for a more conversational tone, which I found encouraged participants to

speak more freely and without restraint. It seems that the simple tasks of looking up and down from paper to person re-establishes a hierarchy in dialogue, where one guides the dialogue and the other follows. I found that when interviews went off-topic, and I began veering us back into the interview guide, the conversational tone disappeared, and hierarchy was re-established. I soon learned that I needed a new strategy, as this veering often made participants pull away, with many of them ending their answers with, “sorry, I’m rambling,” or “sorry, I talk so much.” Once I let go of my need to control the direction of the conversation and allowed them to go off topic, I began to realize it created an environment where participants felt comfortable sharing. As I mentioned before, however, it was important for me to notice trends and patterns and compare data sets between participants, so I found myself sometimes veering the conversation back into the interview guide, even if it meant disrupting the flow of the conversation momentarily. Those who went off topic, however, often wanted to stay for longer than the two hours allotted and keep talking. Many of the questions and topics we addressed were new to participants, and they would often tell me, “I’ve never thought about that before,” or “you know me better than my own friends.” It seems then, that for both myself and for participants, this interview process at the very least has allowed us to understand that others share similar experiences to us.

Unfortunately, there is often the perception that women of colour producing research on other women of colour are not proper “academics who have carefully researched an issue, but rather... persons with a personal” agenda and biased analysis (Perera & Razack, 2014, p.6). Initially, this pushed me into ensuring I approach research by striking a balance between feminist methods, which disrupt traditional notions of a detached researcher, and also ensuring professionalism and creating distance between myself and my participants and their data. I, however, slowly realized that I am not writing for a racist audience and I do not need to be palatable to an audience that asks more of me than my white counterparts. In other words, my research is not for those who feel inclined to disregard and devalue the work of racialized women every time we “circulate critical counter-narratives” (Perera &

Razack, 2014, p.6). I still maintain this balance, however, not in order to meet the criteria and appease the concerns of a white audience, but so that I do my best to accurately represent the narratives and identities of the women in this research. If my research resonates and creates a sense of understanding among young, racialized women—in particular, among young, racialized immigrant women, about their own experiences of living in Canada and being both Canadian and Other, then I will consider it successful. I hope that perhaps realizing their experiences are shared can inspire feelings of solidarity and even belonging.

Analysis: Coding and Interpretation

Transcripts of interviews were coded to identify commonalities and differences in the experiences and identities of the women. According to Grbich (2006), coding involves labelling data to make it more manageable and to understand how the data is or is not answering research questions. Once interviews were complete, I transcribed them. During this process I also began coding. Once I transcribed 4 interviews, I was able to begin seeing themes and began a preliminary code, just roughly highlighting bits of interview data that was important, pertinent, or was connecting with other data. This allowed me to see what issues are coming up time and time again.

Once each interview had been transcribed and given a preliminary coding analysis, I went over the interviews again, this time feeling more familiar with the content. I was able to compare aspects with the entire data set, while also keeping in mind my research questions, as well as any relevant theory that could interpret the data. More than once I went back to data to re-interpret or to see if I missed anything. I rethought the themes I had identified and questioned my own assumptions; revised, took a break from the data, and then came back to it with a fresh mind. I went through this process about four times, with some interviews being revisited five to six times. Transcripts were analyzed for roughly two months before I felt confident about the main themes and really understood and felt comfortable with the data.

These themes were then connected to theory, through what Stuart Hall (1983) and other cultural studies scholars would call articulation. Jennifer Daryl Slack (2006), in her understanding of how articulation has historically been employed by cultural theorists, specifically Hall, provides a clear and concise understanding of how it functions as both a method and a theory. In both cases, it refers to the method of “characterizing a social formation without falling into the twin traps of reductionism and essentialism” (Slack, 2006, p.113). In other words, it’s a way of analyzing that considers context and history. Hall (1983) argues that researchers often get caught up in trying to make data fit theory, and in doing so produce inadequate understandings of culture and social behaviour. Articulation means that certain connections between data and theory can be made under certain conditions, and that those connections should always be re-visited. Connections between data and theory, or in other words, conclusions drawn from research, should be seen as existing in a complex context with many influential factors. Even if this means that sometimes parts of data would be awkward or contradictory, and won’t always fit, it may not, however, detract from central arguments. As an example of how articulation works, Hall argues against political economists who reduce the issue of racism and sexism to “the corresponding mode of production and those operations alone” (Slack, 2006, p.117). While the economic structuring of capitalism has certainly induced and legitimized a hierarchal culture under the assumed presence of meritocracy and equal opportunity, it cannot be pointed to exclusively as the only reason racism and sexism still exists in society today. To reduce the existence of racism and sexism to capitalism alone would be inadequate understanding of the forces of domination and subordination at play in Canadian society. Instead, articulation maps the context, and suggests that

...the context is not something out there, within which practices occur or which influence the development of practices. Rather, identities, practices, and effects generally, constitute the very context within which they are practices, identities, or effects (Slack, 2006, p.126).

^[1]This means that state actors, public institutions, citizens, private institutions, etc. act in a network, and should be examined as such. Louis Althusser (2006) argues that the totality of any phenomenon,

event, or idea is made up of numerous elements and factors, all of which live in a particular moment in time and correspond with one another in particular ways. So, while simplified and reductionist explanations can be tempting, as they're easier to understand, it actually works against a more robust and nuanced understanding.

Chapter 1: A Brief but Critical History

Introduction

In order to better understand the social, economic and political forces that currently shape race relations, the experiences of racialized people and women specifically, a brief but critical look at the history and present of Canada as a white settler colony is necessary. This section starts by looking at Canada's history of colonialism and the treatment of Indigenous people generally. I then outline the ways in which Canadian nationhood was established on a racial hierarchy and a violent attempt at erasing Indigenous peoples from Canada. This will allow for a broader discussion on Canada's treatment of racialized people post-confederation. For the most part, Canada is perceived as a nation composed largely of immigrants, and of possessing a benevolent and inclusive character. In some ways, this is true; the current composition of the Canadian population does comprise of people from a wide variety of nationalities and ethnicities, however, this by no means indicates a history of racial and cultural diversity and inclusion. While many points to multiculturalism when discussing Canada's racial climate, the nation's history of colonialism has shaped and informed the current racial climate long before multiculturalism, and laid a foundation for a precarious relationship between the state and racialized peoples. In casting the Indigenous population as inferior, and using race to justify their dispossession and subordination, the Canadian state established itself on the foundations of a racial hierarchy, which still structurally plagues the nation. This is because systems of colonization have not been eradicated, and Indigenous peoples still suffer through its processes and implications in their struggle for decolonization and reconciliation.

Later, this chapter looks at how Canada, having gained formal independence from Britain, established its own, legal citizenship. The gendered and raced stratification of this citizenship is reflective of the persistence of racial hierarchy, and inequalities generally. Following World War II, however, Canada began making attempts to distance itself from racist narratives and policies. I look at the ways in which changes to immigration policies appeared to liberalize racialized criteria, but in

reality did little to address the immigration system's inherent inequalities. The rise of the Canadian nation state, then, involved assigning certain segments "of the population as Other, thereby rationalizing their exclusion" from the rights given to other citizens (Agnew, 2007, p. 325). These exclusions, as I will demonstrate through my research, have persisted. The chapter will close with a brief, preliminary look at the emergence of multicultural policy.

Colonialism to Confederation: Canada's treatment of Indigenous people

Settler colonialism, the process through which land was stolen from the Indigenous population, is based on the elimination and destruction of Indigenous people and structures (Stark, 2016). It has the goal of removing the Indigenous population so that the settler population, in this case, the French and British, can take over the land and establish an ethnically homogenous (read: white European) society. In the early days of colonialism, Indigenous populations across Canada worked with the British and French in a fur trade economy. This relationship, however, was tenuous at best, and many historians say it was maintained through fear, as European fur traders looked down on Indigenous communities and surveyed trade posts "for signs of Aboriginal aggressions and attack" (Furniss, 1999, p. 32). At the same time, the colony (Canada) was becoming further populated by European settlers, most of whom were of British and French descent, and land was being developed in accordance with this influx. The British Crown "refused to provide funds to cover the expense of settling treaties," which would have ensured Indigenous people a larger share of lands (Furniss, 1999; Stark, 2016). Land for Indigenous communities has been an important part of well-being, spirituality, and growth, and was never seen as an economic means to an end. Conceptions of private ownership did not exist in Indigenous communities, and neither did written language. This made treaties problematic, as Indigenous communities did not know what they were signing off on. For settlers, however, wealth, or profit, derived from extracting natural resources from the land, forged a new will for empire (Furniss, 1999; Logan et al., 2006; Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010; Stark, 2016; Thobani, 2007). Protecting Indigenous titles was regarded as in hindrance of national progress and development. This set a

precedent for how the state would continue to view and interact with the Indigenous population— as an afterthought, as a group they could lie to and mislead, as lesser and therefore less deserving than the white population.

In 1867, formal political autonomy was established through the British North America Act, and allowed colonial rule to extend across a newly formed Canada. Before and after 1867, land, which was framed as ‘terra nullius,’ a term meaning ‘empty land,’ was allocated and sold to French and British settlers, who sought out the total elimination of Indigenous culture in order to “build a nation based on British institutions and social systems” (King, 2016; Thobani, 2007, p. 81). It’s no stretch to say that it was the erasure of Indigenous peoples and their claims to land is what allowed Canada to develop as a nation.

With the expansion of white settler colonialism to central and Western Canada, racist narratives surrounding the biological capacity and inherent traits of Indigenous peoples were further bolstered and popularized. The former colony was gaining legitimacy as a united dominion of European settlers— still formally referred to as British subjects. Indigenous peoples were positioned outside of this newly defined and constructed Canadian whole — their status as deserving and equal human beings was dismissed and instead, they were seen and portrayed as ‘wild savages,’ and as obstacles to the economic progress that Canada was pushing for (Stark, 2016). This is in spite of the dependence of Europeans on Indigenous peoples in the fur trade economy, previously. Without considering environmental and historical elements that would produce different lifestyles and relationships to the land between the Indigenous population and settlers, settlers made moral evaluation of Indigenous peoples, based in ideas of biological inferiority rooted in a racial difference. These ideas of biological inferiority were perpetuated by the Church, the state and the media, who bolstered a Victorian model of civility and colonial law, both of which worked to delegitimize Indigenous land claims, and frame their exclusion and elimination as legitimate (Logan et al., 2006; Stark, 2016).

These racist constructions of Indigeneity, then, legitimized dispossession of their land, forced removal from their homes and communities, and separation from their families. Popularized 'ideas,' or national narratives of progress and Indigenous inferiority guided national policy, as well as the sociopolitical construction of society generally. Racism was legitimized and legislated, and functioned mainly through three political processes: the state-and-church-sanctioned act of separating Indigenous children from their families through the residential school system; ethnic and gender status stratification achieved through the Indian Act; and the Reserve System. Although processes such as the Reserve System, Indian Act, and residential schools have at times been framed as celebratory moments of Canada's narrative of nationhood, these processes are "sites for the physical and cultural extinction" of Indigenous people (Thobani, 2007, p.12). These processes threatened the "language, spirituality, ontology, educational systems and family structures" of Indigenous groups in Canada, thereby threatening their very existence, leading many to label their treatment as genocidal (Logan et al. 2006).

Indigenous peoples were seen not only as an obstacle in the way of nation-building, but a problem onto themselves, with their children being vulnerable to the savage way of life that the state so fervently claimed Indigenous peoples embodied. Residential schools acted not only as a way to impose the English language, Victorian ideologies, and capitalist modes of being, but also to erase legitimacy and value of Indigenous identities, languages, traditions, and economies among Indigenous children. The last residential school was closed in 1996, however, many argue the effects of residential schools still shape and inform the lives and psyche of Indigenous people today. The forced movement of Indigenous populations into reserves, further perpetuated their subordination, as they were "living under state control and surveillance," displaced and deceived, they were (re)moved in order to make room for settlers (Tomiak, 2016, p. 929). While their relegation into reserves was a painful and violent process, Indigenous resistance has disrupted destructive colonial processes. The reserves eventually became, and still are, spaces of resistance and renewal, where Indigenous peoples can maintain cultural traditions and rituals and organize political resistance (Tomiak, 2016).

The Indian Act (1876) not only defined the colonial status and administration of Indigenous peoples, it also stratified the Indigenous communities, as it legislated a subordinate status and created a vulnerable position for Indigenous women. Himani Bannerji (2000) calls this the beginning of the patriarchization of Canadian society and sees the (ongoing) marginalization of Indigenous people as “both genocidal and patriarchal” (2000, p.68). Through the Indian Act (1876), an Indigenous woman who married a non-Indigenous man would lose her ‘Indian’ status, ensuring the gradual elimination of the ‘Indian woman’ and of the Indigenous population in Canada. Additionally, losing ‘status’ meant one could no longer claim Indigeneity meaning you weren’t allowed to live on reserves—spaces many Indigenous women grew up in. This often produced feelings of exclusion from their own communities, and even eventually feeling disconnected from understandings of Indigeneity itself (Lawrence, 2004).

Through the implementation of policy such as the Indian Act (1876), as well as other colonial laws relegating Indigenous peoples to the margins of social and political life (i.e. through the reserve system), the state began to construct an exclusionary ‘Canadian identity.’ Being ‘Canadian,’ then, involved being first and foremost white, but also male and heteropatriarchal, in the sense that the state served “the interest of what is understood now as ‘straightness’” and masculinity (Bannerji, 2000; Furniss, 1999; Jiwani, 2006; Simpson, 2016, p. 2; Thobani, 2007). European women were seen, by the settler state, as replicating “purity, spirituality” and civility, while Indigenous women—especially after the decline of the fur trade economy and its full-scale establishment of a white settler society— were identified “dissolute, dangerous, and sinister,” passing on these traits to their children (Logan et al., 2006, p.439). This is not to say, however, that Indigenous communities sat by idly as their land was stolen, their children taken away, and their culture and tradition obliterated. Resistance to colonialism largely defined Indigenous relations with the Canadian state, and arguably still does. Indigenous resistance, however, was simply seen as further cause to strengthen colonial law in order to ‘protect’ settlers against Indigenous ‘encroachment.’

The first goal of settler colonialism is to eliminate the Indigenous population; however, this has never been fully realized. The existence and persistence of Indigenous people living in Canada is proof, and a daily reminder of the limitations and failures of colonialism as a totalistic project. This failure is attributed to the “resistance and persistence” of Indigenous claims to land and sovereignty (Bannerji, 2000; Furniss, 1999; Logan et al., 2006; Razack, 2012; Stark, 2016, p.10 Simpson, 2016; Tomiak 2017; Thobani, 2007). This resistance continues today, as do processes of colonialism. Examples of the latter can be witnessed in the overrepresentation of Indigenous peoples in the prison system and homeless shelters, in their neglect and treatment by healthcare professionals, in the growing number of missing and murdered Indigenous women (Lawrence, 2004; Razack, 2012; Simpson, 2016). Indeed, the ‘Highway of Tears’ in Northern British Columbia, named as such due to the number of Indigenous women who have gone missing in this area, points to the ongoing elimination of Indigenous women (Simpson, 2016). While a national inquiry into these murders and disappearances has been launched by the new Liberal government under Justin Trudeau, it’s unclear what has actually come from this, especially since the number of murdered and missing Indigenous women continues to grow.

Contemporary discourses tend to confine Indigenous mistreatment to history, rather than acknowledging ongoing problems in the present. This has been achieved in a variety of ways, such as through a historical erasure and denial of contemporary Indigenous issues in public schools, museums, and popular media, but it is also partly due to the apology former Conservative Prime Minister, Stephen Harper. This ‘apology’ was extended in 2006 to the Indigenous communities across Canada (Simpson, 2016, p.1). In addressing their ‘past’ of racial violence and recognizing the need for reconciliation, the Canadian state gave the appearance of admitting to wrongdoing, and therefore felt they “may move on,” without addressing the structural inequalities Indigenous communities continue to face due to the violent processes and ongoing impacts of colonialism. At the same time, Canada can uncritically project a liberal, multicultural and inclusive national identity, far removed from the

histories of colonialism (Simpson 2016, p.1). As the remainder of this research will show, racial hierarchy has been the very structure through which Canada was formed, and as a structure, it extends past a singular moment and informs how other racial minorities are treated in Canada as well. In other words, the impacts of settlement stretch beyond the early histories of colonialism, and still effect people of colour living in Canada in systemic and interpersonal ways.

Establishing a Canadian Citizenship: A strategy for whiteness

In the early post-confederacy days, migrants hailing from non-white nations were considered temporary visitors, and permanent immigrant came largely from Britain and France. The ruling class of Canada, which consisted of British and French economic and political elites, was realizing that the newly formed nation needed to be further populated to fully develop into a capitalist economy and grow its “commercial agriculture” (Satzewich & Liodakis 2010, p.75). Additionally, Indigenous people were considered unfit for the job. The state, then, opened up immigration first to Eastern Europe and then to non-white countries in hopes of achieving capitalist development (Razack et al., 2010; Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010). Essentially, immigrants were regarded as a solution to “short-term labour market problems” as opposed to citizens who would add to a “wider social and political” landscape of Canada (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p.77). Immigrants from the Middle East, for example, were mostly male, and worked on building the railway in the last half of the 1800s (Hennebry & Amery, 2013). It should be noted, however, that Chinese immigrants made up the majority of labourers in constructing the railway. Women from the Middle East were not encouraged to immigrate as they were not considered as physically capable of participating in manual labour and were seen as a threat the goal of establishing an ethnically homogenous population. Once again, othering was not only raced but also gendered, and allowed for an intensified oppression felt by the few female migrants from non-white countries who were able to come to Canada, if only temporarily (Bannerji, 2000).

Immigration from non-white countries increased after this push, leaving many British and French settlers concerned about “the racial and ethnic characteristics of newcomers” who were accused of bringing in foreign customs, languages, and lifestyles (Satzewich & Lioudakis, 2010, p.77). Non-white immigrants were thought to be importing their “backward cultural practices” as well as “their diseases,” political conflicts, and “criminal gangs” (Thobani, 2007, p.4). This meant that immigration recruitment and selection was rigidly controlled, and numerous restrictions were placed on non-white populations. Justified through eugenicist fears of racial and cultural extinction, the settler state attempted to thwart incoming ‘otherness’ from non-white countries (Satzewich & Lioudakis 2010, Thobani, 2007). It’s important to note that non-white immigrants were assumed to be violent, even as the very recent history of Canadian colonial violence was seemingly justified, sanctioned, and erased. Political loyalty was also a condition for immigration, which worked to emphasize the power of the state. In other words, non-white migrants were asked to give an unwavering loyalty to a state that saw them as lesser and did not believe in their access to equal rights and opportunities (Satzewich & Lioudakis, 2010, Thobani, 2007). When non-white immigrants were allowed to immigrate to Canada, their status and rights were often limited and structured by “racialized legal exclusions” (Thobani, 2007, p.90). This points to the continued racial structuring of Canada and the white supremacist logics which inform its immigration policies, even in times of economic demand.

Former Prime Minister Mackenzie King (1947) echoed the concerns of subjects and assured them that the state was dedicated to the racial homogeneity of Canada. Immigrants predominantly from China, but also from other surrounding East Asian nations, such as Japan (referred to here as the Orient) were a threat to this white-colonial goal:

There will, I am sure, be general agreement with the view that the people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population. Large scale immigration from the orient would change the fundamental composition of the Canadian population. Any considerable oriental immigration would, moreover, be certain to give rise to social and economic

problems of a character that might lead to serious difficulties in the field of international relations. The government, therefore, has not thought of making any changes in immigration regulations that would have consequences of that kind (William Lyon Mackenzie King, 1947, cited in, Hennebry & Amery, 2013)

It's clear then that the state's goal was to 'Keep Canada White,' and at the very least, keep the white people in Canada better off than the non-white population. For those able to immigrate to Canada, access to "land, mobility, and employment" was limited. Despite being perceived as an economic means to an end, non-white immigrants in Canada were looked down upon and ridiculed no matter what form of employment they took (Thobani, 2007). White supremacy was "grounded and defended by nationals" who still relied on the lower status of ethnic Others to establish a concrete and "collective sense of selfhood" (Thobani, 2007, p. 84). By defining themselves against unwanted Indigenous and non-white populations, they were able to exalt their own white settler identity.

Canadian Citizenship as Raced, Gendered, and a Tool for National Legitimacy

Following WWII and the Great Depression, many British settlers living in Canada felt that they needed their own distinct citizenship, as their contributions to the war was seen as strengthening their claims to sovereignty (Canadian Museum of Immigration, N.D.). Citizenship was extended to those of British descent, and additionally extended to immigrants if they were considered to have good character, were loyal to the state, and if they could speak either French or English. Citizenship became a necessary status in order to be seen by the state as an equal, however, it was given "only erratically and as matters of exception" to non-white immigrants (Thobani, 2007, p.74). A non-white immigrant's citizenship, if granted, was precarious, and could be revoked if state considered them to be undeserving because of criminal or treasonous acts. What constituted treason or criminality was not properly defined, and only a few Members of Parliament acknowledged that natural-born citizens were also able to commit such crimes. This, however, did not convince the state to extend the same conditions of

citizenship onto the natural-born population (Thobani, 2007). Access to full citizenship then, was limited. White women, Canadian subjects with formally limited rights, championed for further racialized limitations to citizenship, as they “shared the goal of Canadian men to ‘Keep Canada White’” (Thobani, 2007, p.84). In another pivotal moment of Canadian history, white citizens were able to exalt themselves as rightful citizens of the nation, not needing to prove their worth and value in the way non-preferred immigrants had to.

Citizenship rights were only extended to Indigenous peoples if they gave up their Indigenous status, meaning they had to relinquish any claims to land and instead adopt, and give legitimacy to, a system of “private property, wage labour, and the money economy” (Thobani, 2007, p.82). This process of citizenship granting worked to make Indigenous populations appear as “aliens in their own territories” and settlers as “exalted insiders” (Thobani, 2007, p.74). The very existence of Canadian citizenship then, relies on the marginalization of racialized others, and in particular, the continued relegation of Indigenous peoples to the margins of society. Canadian citizenship gained legitimacy and was exalted along this binary; Canada was presented as a nation full of inherently law-abiding, kind, intelligent citizens. Those outside of the nation, and specifically those who didn’t ‘look like’ Canadian nationals (read: non-white people and Indigenous peoples) had to prove that they were not lawless, barbaric, and irrational. Inferiority was presumed to be a biological, and/or inherent trait of all racialized people.

It’s important to note, however, that immigrants are also settlers. Several anti-racist feminist scholars argue that immigrants, in migrating to a colonial state such as Canada, participate in the settler project, and inadvertently become settlers themselves. As immigrants in hopes of one day gaining citizenship, they attribute value and legitimacy to Canadian citizenship, an institution, as I’ve outlined, founded on the marginalization and erasure of Indigenous peoples. The authority they give to citizenship is problematic because Canadian citizenship itself historically excludes Indigenous peoples, and instead gives further legitimacy to the sovereignty of the Canadian state. Authority is extended to

the state as the leading authority in deciding who should and should not be permitted into Canada. In other words, by accepting colonial authority and contributing to the growth of settlement in Canada, immigrants reinforce state power. In settling on Turtle Island, land that is stolen from Indigenous people through breaches of treaties and genocide, immigrants work against the goals of decolonization. As the legitimacy of Canadian citizenship is strengthened, Indigenous claims to land seem increasingly delegitimized. This delegitimization is furthered through a lack of historical understanding of Indigenous plight and resistance in Canada. Not all immigrants came here through their own free-will, however, and some were “coerced into migration” through the slave trade or “under conditions of indentureship” (Thobani, 2007, p. 95; Tuck & Yang, 2012). However, immigrants are not encouraged to learn about Indigenous histories and colonialism in Canada, contributing to its erasure from public knowledge and memory. Interestingly, non-white immigrants were perceived as ‘better’ or higher than Indigenous populations in Canada’s racial hierarchy, as they were still able to access citizenship, though with difficulty. Many migrants internalize this hierarchy and their position within it and therefore reproduce racist narratives (Thobani, 2007).

Non-white immigrants have worked towards gaining citizenship, as they have realized the privileges legal citizenship brought. They have thought that through citizenship, they could potentially be recognized as human and potentially as equals (Thobani, 2007, p.93). Despite their, albeit unstable inclusion in Canadian citizenship, immigrants were still seen as intruders throughout the 1950s and 60s. Nationals would ensure that they felt this way, by publicly humiliating them, petitioning for a reduction in “Asian and Black immigration,” physically assaulting them, boycotting their businesses, and “burning down their camps, homes, and shops” (Thobani, 2007, p. 86). Children of nationals were segregated from non-white children, thereby passing down racist ideas of who is and is not deserving of Canadian citizenry as well as basic human rights (Thobani, 2007). Despite the limitations to citizenship and belonging and barriers to equality that immigrants faced, they still actively resisted claims to their inferiority, and establish themselves in Canada as financially successful, and fought for,

what Hannah Arendt would call, their “right to have rights” (Thobani, 2007, p.93). I argue then, that Canadian citizenship is a system dependent on the uncritical acclaim of white nationals and the marginalization of Indigenous existence and culture and non-white immigrants. It finds legitimacy in its claims to superiority, in its exclusionary nature. In establishing binaries of civilized and uncivilized, of deserving and undeserving, and attributing such traits and characteristics to racial and ethnic identities, Canadian identity was positioned as inherently superior.

A ‘Canadian’ citizen is typically imagined to be white, male, “heterosexual, and able-bodied” (Agnew, 2007, p.325). As Benedict Anderson (1991) argues, most nations are imagined communities, which are not based in living reality, but “operate through discourse of race” that divide citizens and immigrants on faulty perceptions of superiority and homogeneity and “erases differences internal to the nation” (Nagra, 2017, p.9). The presumed unity of ‘Canadians’ depends on the “differentiation of peripheral others,” since there was nothing inherently similar between the nationals, beyond the colour of their skin (Nagra, 2017, p.9). Those who fall outside of “this moral and cultural whiteness” will face the racist consequences, even if they choose to assimilate (Bannerji, 2000, p.42).

Moves towards Liberalism: A more ‘open’ immigration system

The post-war period pushed Canada to reconsider the organization of society around a racial hierarchy. The United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) worked to challenge Nazi ideologies after the Second World War, specifically ideas of biological racism and eugenicism (Satzewich & Liodaksi, 2010). Many Western, capitalist nations began to distance themselves from overtly racist narratives and policies (Thobani, 2007, p.148). Furthermore, Canada’s participation in World War II was applauded for its altruistic fight against a Nazi regime that committed genocide “against Jews and others in the name of ‘race,’” a line of logic the Canadian state was not unfamiliar with (Satzewich & Liodaksi, 2010, p.89).

While racialized minorities were fighting for their rights in Canada since the early days of colonialism, their ideas were gaining political legitimacy in the post-World War II era. In a time of decolonization and disruptions to overtly racist logics, distinguishing immigrants on the basis of race “became scandalous” (Thobani, 2007, p.146). International perceptions had to be managed, if Canada wanted to be part of an increasingly globalized world with interconnected/interdependent economies. Additionally, Canada was dealing with another labour shortage after WWII, which meant that it needed to not only increase international trade to maintain economic expansion, but also to increase its labour force and its population. Essentially, if the Canadian state wanted to attract more immigrants and establish international relations of trade, it had to stop (overtly) marginalizing and demonizing these nations and their citizens (Thobani, 2007). The economic motives behind Canada’s more ‘open’ immigration system become increasingly clear when one looks into the different classes of immigrants allowed into Canada, and sees that historically, the majority of migrants accepted to Canada are economic migrants (Satzewich & Liodaksi, 2010).

While the state had hoped to attract more European immigrants, “high taxation and lack of access to lucrative professions and trades” discouraged migration from Europe (Nagra, 2017, p. 11). Immigration from the “Third World,” however, increased significantly (Thobani, 2007, p.146). Categories of ‘race’ were removed from immigration policy, in order to avoid any comparisons between the Canadian state and the Nazi regime. A globalized economic system was being established at this time, as the economies of many powerful nations, including Canada, were becoming increasingly intertwined. This meant that the politics of nations were also becoming more visible and therefore open to criticisms from other nation states, who have the power to decide with whom they want to create economic and political relationships with. It is commonly argued by many scholars of Canadian immigration, that changes to immigration policy were not motivated by an idealistic desire to create a “cultural utopia” but more to do with aspirations regarding growth in Canada’s economy at home as well as international clout (Bannerji, 2000; Nagra, 2017; Thobani, 2007, p.146). Global

capitalism, then, was a greater motivation factor for change in terms of immigration policy in Canada than altruism, humanitarianism, or a desire to establish equality.

At the same time that the federal government was claiming it had eliminated racist immigration criteria, racist attitudes within the bureaucracy continued to affect decision-making about which groups would be let into the country and their conditions of entry (Satzewich & Liodaksi, 2010, p.91). Entry into Canada became regulated through the points-system, introduced in 1967. The point system was meant to formally eliminate racial and gendered discrimination and instead, focus on the merit of potential immigrants. It was meant to focus on an applicant's "education, progression, occupation, language, and skills levels" rather than the applicant's nation of origin (Thobani, 2007, p.97). The point system was presented as an objective way to decide who was and was not permitted in the country, however, this did not assure fair treatment of racialized immigrants once they had landed, or for their children, who still seemed to carry the 'immigrant' label with them, even if they were born in Canada (Nagra, 2017; Thobani, 2007). Additionally, recruitment for immigrants from predominantly white countries was still favoured over recruitment for immigrants from non-white nations; secondly, discretion was left in the hands of immigration officers, whose own logics and moral evaluations, presumably shaped by the popularized and dominant discourses of colonialism, would undoubtedly influence their decision on who is and is not fit to live in Canada (Thobani, 2007). This is exemplified in the fact that more men were accepted as economic migrants even long after discriminatory legislation was removed.

While overt racial criteria were eliminated from immigration policy, there were still numerous limitations to non-white entry into Canada and access to citizenship; and even more limitations to their acceptance by the Canadian national public. In fact, in their study of white supremacy in Canada, Barbara Perry and Ryan Scirvens (2016) find that right-wing extremism grew in the 1960s, after changes to immigration policy were implemented, and migrants became an easy scapegoat for problems of unemployment. Racism, then, continued to shape the immigration process and experience

in Canada, and immigrants were still seen as ‘outsiders’, despite the removal of overt racism from policy (Bannerji, 2000; Satzewich and Liodaksi 2010; Thobani, 2007).

The Emergence of Multiculturalism as Policy

Challenges to whiteness, induced by an increase in the number of non-white immigrants as well as Indigenous demands for decolonization were addressed by the state through a policy of multiculturalism. Following the amendments made to immigration policy, Canada’s non-white population began growing rapidly. Non-white citizens and immigrants were entering the social, political, and economic spheres of Canadian society and contributing to their growth and becoming their own “cultural force” (Thobani, 2007, p.77). Despite efforts from the state to frame the nation as a modern, liberal democracy, fears of the immigrant Other, or ‘visible minorities’ grew. Non-white immigrants were discriminated against and treated as cultural strangers, and labelled as “newcomers, new Canadians, visible minorities, even after” they had acquired citizenship (Thobani, 2007, p.76). ‘Immigrant,’ became not just a legal category but an imposed social label, reserved specifically for non-white Canadians, who were never fully be regarded as rightful ‘Canadians,’ but as outsiders to the mythical, homogenous national whole, even if they were born in Canada (Thobani, 2007). This racist logic created barriers for many immigrants and racialized citizens, not only against their economic success, but also for their acceptance in society. For these reasons, many immigrant and non-white communities demanded fairer treatment. Again, this was a threat to the white population of Canada, whose claim to national belonging and superiority relied on the continued marginalization of racialized populations.

Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau introduced multiculturalism as a way to address these national tensions. It was introduced as a policy in 1971, making Canada the first nation in the world to legislate it (Satzewich and Liodakis, 2010). This was after pleas for change not only from racialized communities and Indigenous people, but also the Quebecois and the Francophones, who felt that

Canada was also ignoring them and their linguistic and cultural distinctiveness. Multiculturalism has been met with cynicism by Francophones or the Quebecois, however, as they believe it marks them as the same as all other ethnic minorities in Canada.

It's important to note that multiculturalism emerged at the same time that political and economic structures around the globe were shifting. The simultaneous emergence of multiculturalism and neoliberalism is significant. Neoliberalism is a set of economic policies predicated in notions of a free, globalized market, with increased privatization "of public resources" (Melamed, 2006, p.14). It purports individual market freedom as the epitome of success; valuing self-sufficiency and degrading concepts of state dependency or aid such as a welfare state; and argues that the government should have little say in how the economy functions, meaning deregulation on a massive scale. This economic restructuring emboldens former tenets of capitalism such as individualism, extending them globally and bolstering the idea that everyone can participate, succeed and take advantage of this network of global economies and markets. This response to racism now serves as an identity trait for Canada and Canadians generally. Canada's international reputation for being a multicultural, inclusive and tolerant nation, however, contradicts with the realities of race and gender inequality. A critical history of colonialism allows for an understanding of how these disparities between Canadian policies and realities emerge.

Chapter 2: Theoretical Framework

This thesis will be drawing from the theoretical framework of antiracist feminism. This section seeks to outline the central themes, tenets and approaches of this school of thought. Additionally, I will provide a more focused discussion on anti-racist feminism in Canada, outlining the key scholars of anti-racist feminism that are most central to my research. This will involve looking at those who theorize on and critique multiculturalism through an anti-racist feminist lens. A brief overview of these theories will help guide and contextualize the literature review. In the proceeding section I'll provide a comprehensive overview on more broad theories of ideology, ideological state apparatus, and hegemony. Although these theories did not stem from anti-racist feminism, they are important theories that are frequently used to discuss systems of racism and sexism and their ongoing existence in Western society.

Anti-Racist Feminism

As a school of thought, anti-racist feminism encapsulates various insights and theories on issues of race, racism, gender, and sexism. Scholars of anti-racism feminism understand racism and sexism as both historic and ongoing structures, and explore its existence societally, systemically, and institutionally across the world. Research is approached with an understanding that women of colour deal with racism, sexism, and classism in varying ways, especially when compared to white women. Anti-racist feminism does not value race over gender or vice-versa, but instead argues that intersectional identities impact experience. The intersections of identity, it is argued, all influence one's experiences of marginalization and oppression. For example, upper-class racialized women might be exempt from some processes of racialization and oppression because they possess economic capital (Dua, 1999). Power, then, is a closely examined by antiracist feminist scholars, who concern themselves with the inequalities that stem from systems of patriarchy and racism. Scholars from this school generally agree that language, discourse, and media are vehicles for producing and reproducing power. These are the tenets and beliefs that I too have embodied in my research.

Anti-racist feminism argues that society and its institutions are structured through perceived differences between male and female, black and white, rich and poor, etc. These differences are understood as socially constructed, and based in histories of colonialism, genocide and slavery. The socially constructed nature of these dimensions of identity, however, still very much shapes the realities of marginalized people. Racialized women, then, hold a particularly vulnerable position in society, as they are subject to both gendered and raced oppression. In this way, anti-racist feminism differs from mainstream feminism because it takes on a critical anti-racist perspective, which purports that the violence, oppression, and systemic inequalities women face are also raced. Anti-racist feminism argues that racialization produces difference in the experiences of women, and that the mainstream feminism movement has, for the most part, ignored race and racism and instead has defined womanhood through a white lens (Dua, 1999; Dei & Calliste, 2000). While the mainstream women's movement was concerned with fighting 'male power,' anti-racist feminists were more concerned with fighting off state power (Bourne, 1983). Both racism and sexism were seen as existing systemically, sanctioned by the state and upheld by various public and private institutions.

Anti-racist feminist scholars point to the value in having a fully formed understanding of the ways in which racial, gender, and class minorities are systemically marginalized and the every-day ways their marginalization is reproduced. Women, both racialized and white, however, are not regarded as passive, victims to racism, patriarchy and classism. In fact, a large part of anti-racist feminism looks at the various ways racialized women resist oppression and work against systems of colonialism to promote and produce change. This is done in part by listening to and understanding the experiences of racialized women and providing them the space to disrupt normalized conceptions of race and gender. It should be noted, however, that not all women of colour will actively be aware of their marginalization in highly politicized ways, and may in fact consent to the systems that produce their oppression. It's clear then that anti-racist feminist research is very much interested in the levels of "agency and resistance" that women of colour employ in the face of Western society, and the specific ways in which these are impacted by both racism and patriarchy (Dei & Calliste, 2000, p.15). Additionally, anti-racist feminism never claims to provide

simple and universal truths about identity, be it in terms of race or gender or both. Instead it seeks to produce historically-specific truths about particular group of women and in doing so “accord women authority as knowers and producers of knowledge and thus empower them” (Agnew, 2007, p. 332).

The role of the anti-racist feminist scholar, then, is to disrupt common sense understandings of race and gender by questioning norms, and creating space to imagine new possibilities for how race and gender are understood. In the last thirty years or so, this has, in part, been achieved through the use of personal narrative in research. In the 1990s, new methodologies for studying race and gender were introduced and legitimized among anti-racist feminist scholars (Dua, 1999). The use of personal narrative, and not just observation and statistical evidence, started being seen as legitimate evidence in research on the lives of women of colour. This move was about raising the authority and power of the voices of women of colour, and also understanding how these narratives provide insight on the ongoing existence of colonialism and patriarchy, and by extension, sexism and racism. These narratives are used as evidence to explain different structures and expressions of racism or discrimination. Narratives are then linked to larger processes of slavery, colonialism, imperialism, etc. (Dua 1999).

Anti-racist feminism in Canada has experienced four waves, all of which address issues pertinent to their historical epoch. The school of thought was first and foremost defined by Indigenous resistance to colonialism, as the women negotiated treaties and organized “armed resistance to the appropriation of Indigenous lands” (Dua, 1999, p.11). Throughout all four waves, however, themes of nationhood and national identity and citizenship, have been addressed in varying degrees. The following section looks at some of these theories, with a specific focus on multiculturalism and Canada in the 21st century.

Theories on Settler Colonialism, Liberal Multiculturalism, and Democratic Racism: An overview

Although the work of many anti-racist feminist scholars have informed my research, this section looks closely at the insights of Himani Bannerji (2000), Sunera Thobani (2007), and Frances Henry & Carol Tator (2006). These scholars provide critical, politicized, historical understandings of what have generally been regarded as benign narratives of Canadian nationalism and identity. All of these scholars question commonly held assumptions about Canada's commitments to both racial and gender equality. Their contributions to a critical understanding of Canada and Canadian identity will inform my discussion on what I've outlined as three periods, or iterations of multiculturalism in Canada. It's important to note that there have been many critiques off multiculturalism, conservative, liberal, or otherwise. This research reflects the antiracist feminist critique of multiculturalism in Canada. While some theories apply more stringently to a certain period, they also overlap and intersect.

Multiculturalism is not a monolith, so variations of its expression account for its fluid and evolving existence in Canada. This section looks at the more general theories on how multiculturalism functions in Canada, and by extension, how this impacts the lives of the racialized Canadians. I will be using the work of Bannerji and Thobani to look at the ways in which multiculturalism functions as a top-down, liberal policy that actually works to maintain racial hierarchy, center whiteness in Canadian identity, and renders the very existence of people of colour in Canada as problematic. Conversely, it renders the racism that racialized people face as individual, and not systemic. Bannerji and Thobani also see multiculturalism as central to establishing narratives of nationhood and Canadian identity.

Additionally, I will look at the cultural racism stemming from multiculturalism, and how it acted a new, palatable language for racism. This will allow for a discussion of Henry and Tator's insights on democratic racism. In this discussion, I will look at discourses of democratic racism as a linguistic strategy that justifies racist attitudes and behaviours.

Canada in the early 1900s was established as a nation of nationals, citizens, immigrants, and Indigenous peoples, all ranked hierarchically in terms of intrinsic value and therefore access to resource, citizenship, and acceptance had to deal with their growing contradictions. Clearly, this

structuring of society does not hold the properties of a unified nation. This instability threatens the exaltation of Canadian identity, as it highlights the cracks in the racist foundations of nationhood. If Canada wanted to be a legitimate participant in the emerging globalized economy, the UN, and as a powerful Western nation with a thriving and growing population, internal contradictions had to be addressed, and these changes had to go beyond a few adjustments to immigration policies.

Interestingly, while Canada had been made up of a multitude of cultures for many years prior to the implementation of multiculturalism policy— inhabited by citizens who spoke many different languages, practiced various religions and traditions— it wasn't categorized as 'multicultural' until the arrival of non-white immigrants. In fact, the language of 'diversity' wasn't a part of the Canadian political narrative until citizenship was granted to "previously indentured Chinese and South Asians," who were brought in through changes in Canada's immigration policy that allegedly removed racialized barriers to entry (Bannerji, 2000, p.43).

These changes, which came in the form of a point system, however, did not eliminate racism from Canada's immigration system. As previously outlined, this 'ethnic' visibility was one of the many reasons multiculturalism became state policy in 1971. Official state multiculturalism, Bannerji and Thobani argue, has largely functioned to sustain homogeneity and rigidity of both white and non-white identities. The very presence of non-white bodies and their demands for equality were answered with multiculturalism and its parent discourse of diversity, both of which became the state's strategy "of containment and management" of this growing population (Bannerji, 2000, p.43). Whiteness remains the core, the 'culture' that is defined "against 'multi-cultures,'" thereby asserting an alleged homogenous cultural identity held by national Canadians— a Canadianness, that is defined in binary opposition to cultural Others (Bannerji, 2000, p.10; Thobani, 2007). White Canadians, then, rely on the 'multi' for a definition of self. Whiteness is established as the 'norm,' what a 'Canadian' is assumed to be. Multiculturalism then, is viewed by Canadian anti-racist scholars as being a 'multiculturalism from above,' meaning it is a solution not based off of the demands from below, from the marginalized

communities, but instead from the very body that is marginalizing these communities (Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007). Non-white citizens and immigrants are the ‘multi,’ the ‘ethnics,’ the newly-accepted minority groups that get invited into the Canadian nation, but only conditionally. The assumed and constructed dichotomy between ‘visible’ minority, and this supposed ‘invisibility’ suggests that there is a particular universal, ‘normal’ identity, an ‘invisible’ identity that can be used as a “measuring rod for others,” in order to mark them as other (Bannerji, 2000, p.111). This means that difference was measured and defined not by the possessors of cultural difference, but by the ‘invisible’ culture, and more specifically, by the colonial state and white settlers.

Diversity, an accompanying narrative to multiculturalism, then, is constructed through narratives of whiteness, which marks some cultures as ‘normal,’ and others as ‘different,’ or ‘diverse.’ Non-white Canadians are still considered Canadians, by the legal definition, however, through multiculturalism, they are framed as a deviation from the norm. Minorities, then, “become acutely sensitive to the differences between themselves” and those around them, including other minorities, as cultural difference is valued as their main identifying attribute (Thobani, 2007, p.161).

Human beings, however, are shaped by numerous factors that are always subject to change, depending on history and environment. Arguably, if non-white communities were given the opportunity to define their own communities, outside of folklore understandings of ethnic identity, it would become clear very quickly that ethnic ‘culture’ is much more variable and fluid than liberal multiculturalism assumes it to be. For example, asking one Iranian person what Iranian culture consists of will yield different results if you ask another Iranian from a different region, belonging to a different age bracket, class, gender, sexuality. It can be argued, then, that multiculturalism extends colonialism in that it continues to differentiate, and subordinate based on notions of assumed and inherent traits of racialized peoples. In fact, other Western countries with similar colonial pasts such as Australia looked at Canada’s multicultural policy as a way to “manage a colonial history, an imperialist present, and a convoluted liberal democracy” (Bannerji, 2000, p.10).

Values that are generally associated with whiteness, such as beauty, intellectualism, and modernism are not inherent traits of white people, but ideologically asserted, and defined in contrast to non-white people. If whiteness embodies such qualities, then racialized people embody the opposite of such qualities— they are rooted in tradition, outside modernity, in backwardness, and exoticisms. It's clear then, that the idea of 'whiteness' is in some ways, replacing the colonial ideas of 'Englishness' and 'Europeanness' that worked to justify the unfair treatment of Indigenous peoples (Bannerji, 2000, p.107). In reproducing and further inscribing superior characteristic to the state and extending these to the white nationals, the power that informs such relations remains concealed, as the characteristics and groupings appear natural. If the 'multi' is culturally, morally, and intellectually inept, according to these binary and colonial definitions, then Canadian nationals, equipped with the power to tolerate (or not tolerate) others, are superior. The exalting of Canadian identity, a term borrowed from Thobani (2007) which means to raise to a higher rank or position or to think highly of, not only allows "for the grounding of the subject, for 'fixing' its inherently unstable sense of self," it also creates a bond between the Canadian public and the state, thereby cementing a Canadian identity, one that is superior to others (Thobani, 2007, p. 10). In this way, racial hierarchy is maintained and Canadian identity is cemented. Multiculturalism produces a national narrative for Canada and Canadians, one that appears inclusive and accepting, while also presenting itself as white.

As Thobani has argued, multiculturalism "stabilize[s] white supremacy" by providing it a new language to speak through, one that appears liberal and inclusive, but still works to other, stratify and oppress (Thobani, 2007, p.146). It rejects statements of biological inferiority, but reproduces similar, racist logics by collapsing race and culture and homogenizing the social meanings attributed to cultural differences, to the point where they mimic racial difference (Thobani, 2007). This new mode of racism is commonly referred to as cultural racism, or culturalism. Culturalism is often legitimized through narratives of national cohesion and cultural incompatibility. It assumes that there are certain groups with "inferior cultures" who are "wedded to" modes of being that are inherently incompatible with the

homogenous national, Canadian culture; or, in other words, cultures that are simply too ‘different’ to be ‘recognized’ (Chon & Arzt, 2005, p.13). In moving away from statements of biological inferiority, culturalism serves as an acceptable form of racism, as its assumed that ‘culture,’ can be altered and tweaked, adjusted to match an alleged and elusive, but superior, Canadian culture. Statements of culturalism then, are not seen as racist, despite the fact that they are rooted in colonial and orientalist logics that paint racialized peoples as stuck in time, culturally homogenous, and folkloric. By not addressing the existence of systemic racism, and the history of racism that has shaped Canada, the discrimination racialized citizens face, say for example in being highly skilled but not finding employment, is seen as “the immigrants’ own cultural problems” (Bannerji, 2000, p.45). This is in part because Canada is now assumed to be accepting and tolerant, thanks to multiculturalism.

People point to the (limited) entry of individuals into certain occupations as a proof of the eradication of racism and the existence of a meritocracy. This makes the structural and subtle nature racism extremely difficult to address, as it is fervently denied and justified through the language of ‘cultural difference.’ Besides structural racism, racism is now commonly expressed in subtle ways, a strange look in an elevator; the mocking of an accent that gets dismissed as ‘just a joke;’ the enforcing of an office culture rooted in whiteness, where others have to adjust and are penalized if they are not able to; the assumptions an employer makes in their hiring processes; the overrepresentation of white bodies in academia, in the media, etc. — all of which are nearly impossible to actually address as they’re not expressed in overly racist ways. Racism, then, should not be understood simply as a moment or expression, but as a common sense logic, or structure that guides thinking and perceptions of the world and those who inhabit it. Its purposes is not exclusively to marginalize racialized citizens, but more importantly to maintain power within institutions and civil society. Culturalism allows for whiteness to maintain this power and maintain its position in the racial hierarchy that structures Canadian society, while still giving the appearance of being a liberal state by providing a new, palatable language for its expression (Thobani, 2007). Canada, as a nation that has allegedly taken on

the tenets of multiculturalism, is assumed to be fair, equal, and just, as are Canadian nationals. Narratives of culturalism, then, justify the continued marginalization of racialized citizens. If they are excluded, it is not the fault of Canada, but assumed to stem from a racialized citizen's own shortcomings. Structural and systemic racism are not considered, and instead, the immutable difference of racialized citizens are pointed to as proof of their cultural incompatibility with Canadian culture and economy (Thobani, 2007).

In addition to expressions of cultural racism, or culturalism, Canadian anti-racist scholars often cite the work of Henry and Tator (2006), in their seminal piece, *The Colour of Democracy: Racism in Canadian Society* to discuss the covert, but violent ways racism still structures Canada and Canadian mentality generally. Liberal multiculturalism, I argue, in some ways needs discourses of democratic racism, because it provides a verbal strategy to maintain power, while appearing inclusive. Henry and Tator (2006) coin the term, democratic racism, specifically to describe the racism observed in Canada, following the implementation of multiculturalism as a policy. Henry & Tator (2006), believe the popularization and circulation of discourses of democratic racism allow Canada to maintain “two apparently conflicting set of values” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.15). Essentially, discourses of democratic racism manage contradictions between Canadian multiculturalism and the reality of inequalities that structure society. These discourses are “a set of justifications arguments and mechanisms” that allow contradictions “to coexist” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.19). Democratic racism denies the existence of racism through a set of “myths and misconceptions” about race and racism generally, such as the fact that racism is an individual experience, only overtly and violently expressed, and must also have the intention of being racist (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.22). I will outline most, but not all of the discourses Henry and Tator outline in their work, as these discourses are not only pertinent to my research findings but are also commonly used in Canadian discussions surrounding race and equality.

Discourses of democratic racism “stifle dissent” and disregard criticism as untrue, thereby never having to re-structure society (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.25). The most commonly used argument is couched in the idea that racism does not exist in Canada. This is what Henry and Tator (2006) would label the “discourse of denial.” All other discourses of democratic racism, to some extent, deny the existence of racism. In addition to ‘discourses of denial,’ there are a variety of discourses that can be used to deny the existence of racism in Canada, to promote the notion of a liberal and democratic society, and thereby manage the contradictions between multiculturalism, colonialism, and the continued marginalization of racialized people. For example, the ‘discourse of political correctness’ suggests that demands from marginalized communities in terms of inclusion and equality are unnecessary because racial equality has been achieved. Additionally, ‘discourses of colourblindness’ work to suggest that some people ‘don’t see’ race. In that denial, those who use discourses of colourblindness argue that since they are not aware of racial difference, their actions, behaviours and interactions are not racist. This discourse assumes that the intention of being racist is required in order for racism to manifest. If someone doesn’t intend to be racist, in the case of colourblindness, because they allegedly do not notice racial difference, they cannot be labeled as racist. In reality, intent has very little to do with impact. Additionally, to ignore the existence of race, however constructed it may be, and the realities of racial discrimination, means that those who argue colourblindness largely don’t understand racism’s structural existence, as part of “everyday values, policies, programs, and practices” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.25).

‘Discourses of equal opportunity’ assume that Canada is a meritocracy, thereby ignoring the privileges of white Canadians, as well as other “social markers of privilege, including gender, class, sexual orientation and able-bodiedness” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.25). ‘Discourses of victim blaming’ and ‘reverse racism’ also manage Canadian contradictions in similar ways. Victim blaming argues that there are some cultures that are “deficient” or “lacking intellectual prowess” or are simply incompatible with the Canadian whole. In other words, it manages contradictions through culturalism,

as previously defined. If a racialized person cannot find success, it is because of their own doing, thereby depoliticizing their racialized plight in Canadian society. Furthermore, since narratives of culturalism assume that *any* culture can be incompatible with Canadian culture, discourses of reverse racism find legitimacy, in that white people can claim they are being discriminated against for their race or culture. Often, the plight of Eastern Europeans, who faced discrimination when they first emigrated is pointed to as proof that white people deal with racism as well. Additionally, because it is assumed that equality has been achieved, any attempts at establishing anti-racist or “equality policies are discredited” and regarded as “apartheid in reverse” (Henry and Tator, 2006, p.26). This then justifies assertions that anti-racist activists are radical and are trying to destroy Canadian values and beliefs.

‘Discourses of binary polarization’ and ‘moral panic’ build on assumptions of cultural homogeneity. Through binary polarization, a ‘we’ group and a ‘they’ group is constructed. In being powerless to self-representation, racialized communities are pointed to as the ‘they,’ being accepted by a ‘we.’ ‘We’ have a set of values that ‘they’ need to learn. If ‘they’ don’t, there’s a chance ‘their’ differences will “imperil national culture and identity” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.27). This is also the ‘discourse of moral panic,’ which usually acts as a sort of propaganda, where ‘they’ are framed as a threat to the ‘we.’ Lastly, I argue that ‘discourses of multiculturalism,’ and ‘discourses of national identity,’ function similarly. Discourses of multiculturalism’ have been outlined above; they suggests that harmony and acceptance has been achieved, through an (very shallow) appreciation and recognition of racial diversity, however, there is still a “ceiling of tolerance” (Henry and Tator, 2006, p.27). ‘Discourses of national identity’ are what allow these discourses of multiculturalism and liberal values to be perpetuated so unproblematically— it’s the erasure of a history of nationhood that is based in colonialism and therefore racial violence. The plight of Indigenous populations is erased, the resistance of racialized communities is ignored, and minorities are “placed outside the ‘national project of Canada” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.28). The stories we tell about nationhood are important, they

present a picture of national identity, however, in Canada “the dominant culture is reluctant to include identities of ‘others’” as their historical treatment of them does not serve hegemonic assumptions of a benevolent, liberal, democratic Canada (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.28).

Discourses of democratic racism then, appease Canadian contradictions and provide a discourse of justifications for a lack of any sort of structural change. Even those who are generally considered ‘progressive’ often end up speaking through these discourses, and “unknowingly, unwittingly contribute to racial inequality” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p.327). This is not due to a lack of care or desire to change the reality of racialized citizens in Canada. Instead, this shows that multiculturalism, and the discourses which stem from it, like culturalism and democratic racism, are ideological. Multiculturalism exists ideologically and contributes to the hegemonic understanding of Canada as a benevolent, inclusive country. Multiculturalism, inclusion, diversity, and equality are terms commonly associated with Canada, Canadian values, culture, and even extended onto all Canadians generally. These are the common sense understandings held by many about Canadian identity, institutions, and culture, and need to be understood not as truth, but as ideology. The ideology of multiculturalism, of course, is riddled with contradictions that end up working to maintain white supremacy and racial discrimination. The ideologies are produced and reproduced in the arts through the devaluing of racialized artists; in policing through the we-they dichotomy of security; through the justice system in the biases and attitudes of justice officials; in the human services and the inconsistency in delivery to racialized communities; and in the state in how immigration is racialized. Before examining the ways in which multiculturalism as ideology has structured Canadian society, we must understand the concepts of ideology and hegemony, generally.

Hegemony, Ideology, and Ideological State Apparatus

By looking at the work of Antonio Gramsci (2006), Louis Althusser (2006), and Stuart Hall (1986), I put forward a historicized, politicized, and contextualized understanding of *how* the ideas which uncritically define Canada and Canadians generally are produced and reproduced. In particular, I'm interested in exploring the ways in which multiculturalism as ideology is upheld not only by those who benefit from its logics, but also by those whose exclusion and marginalization is legitimized by and through these ideologies. Gramsci's understanding of hegemony will be outlined, with the help of Hall, who contextualizes Gramsci's work and relates it to topics of race and racism. Althusser will be used to discuss concepts of ideology and ideological state apparatuses (ISA). ISA's vary, however, the media will be given the most attention in this text, not only because it is often seen as the most powerful ISA, but also because it provides context to discussions of news media dispersed throughout the literature review. It is important to understand how multiculturalism functions ideologically, as an inherent national quality.

Ideology, as outlined by Marxist philosopher, Althusser (2006) is a system of meanings we use to make sense of the world around us. They are ideas that function as 'natural' inclinations we have to certain modes of behaviour, ways of speaking, and how we go about interacting with one another. These deeply embedded ideas, or frameworks of knowledge guide the decisions we make in our day-to-day lives, so much so that they function subconsciously. Althusser argues that ideology needs a subject, it needs people in order for it to exist. Conversely, people exist through ideology. Althusser (2006) argues that ideas are material and should be understood as such, as they manifest in material ways. It's argued then, that "all levels of social formation" such as class, race, gender "are ideological formations" that are then embodied by "cultural institutions and artifacts such as schools, churches, political parties, texts, and paintings," and people (Lewis, 1992, p. 280). Ideology hails us as subjects: as Canadians, as a friend, as a mother, a daughter, a co-worker. Ideology then, is not only how we view others, but also how we view ourselves, and understanding how both of those things are connected through ideology (Althusser, 2006, p.85). It is easily reproduced, as it functions without one recognizing that it is ideology, without acknowledging that perhaps, things could be different. For

Althusser, then, ideology can only be ideology so long as it doesn't claim to be ideological. Without acknowledging and unpacking white supremacy as a founding ideology of Canada that still defines and guides the state and its institutions, it becomes almost impossible to move past it. When ideology is questioned, it is seen as ideological and not as 'how things should be.' This opens up spaces for wondering how things *could* be. Ideologies structure our reality so deeply that questioning their validity, however, is seen as radical, disruptive, and even treasonous. These common sense understandings and ideas that guide our day-to-day lives are specific not only to a place, but also time. Ideologies can, and in fact must shift over time and space (Gramsci, 2006). For example, racism as an ideology had to shift to expressions of culturalism, in response to Canada's new benevolent brand.

Ideologies of whiteness, then, are "central to the programme of multiculturalism" as well, as they legitimize the concept of an 'other' and inherent 'differences' between 'us' and 'them,' and "brings out the irreducible core of what is called the real Canadian culture" (Bannerji, 2000, p.110). Whiteness creates unity among white immigrants and nationals, and establishes an "ideological core, a national identity, around which other cultural elements may be arranged hierarchically" (Bannerji 2000, p.109). Through multicultural policy as well as changes to immigration policy, however, the settler state, or Canada, was able, over time, to move away from the ideologies of overt white supremacy and colonialism, and instead move toward a benevolent, humanitarian ideologies of multiculturalism, diversity, and inclusion, which upon closer examination, are really white supremacy with a veneer of benevolence.

Althusser (2006) argues that ideologies are produced and maintained by ideological state apparatuses (ISAs) and repressive state apparatuses (SA). ISAs can be both private and public institutions, such as religion, education, the news and popular media, family, etc. Both of these apparatuses, the SA— government or police force— and ISAs influence one another and work to uphold each other (Althusser, 2006). A cycle is established, where ideas manifests into action and the action reproduces the ideas, which gives power to the apparatuses (or institutions) that

established/promoted the ideas in the first place. Those who are loyal to an ideology act through that ideology, in their language, behaviour and decisions— meaning it has very real and material effects. For example, although it has been established for many years now that race is a social construct and the meanings attributed to race are purely ideological, racialized peoples are deeply impacted by these ideologies in both immaterial and material ways (Satzewich & Lioudakis, 2010; Agnew, 2007).

It's important to note, however, that ideologies not only gain their legitimacy through ISAs and SAs, but also in their everyday circulation by citizens. This is expressed through one's political beliefs, behaviours, manners, actions, and attitudes. In other words, citizens embody ideology (Lewis, 1992). Although it is not a conscious process, citizens accept ideologies as fact and bring them into their everyday lives, not because an authority told them to (though this might sometimes be the case), but because there is something compelling enough about the ideology that citizens can agree with, connect to, or support in some capacity (Lewis, 1992, p.281). This means, as previously stated, ideologies have to move through space and time, and be both historically and locally specific and fluid. In other words, ideologies have to build off of what already exists in a given society—they cannot be so far outside of already-established ideologies, otherwise they will be dismissed as radical, utopian, removed from reality, etc. It must, in other words, “bear traces” to other or previous ideologies. As Hall puts it, there needs to be a “recognition of the self within ideological discourse,” (Hall, 1985, p. 107 cited in Lewis, 1992, p.283). This means that citizens consent to ideology just as much as they are subsumed by it. Indeed, citizens make up the very institutions that Althusser calls ISAs and SAs. Police officers, judges, members of parliament, and journalists are informed by and consent to ideologies of their institutions and thus act through them.

The dominance of ideas, then, stems from the consent of the majority. People must consent to the dominance of an idea by never questioning it and its underlying assumptions, by reproducing it in their own speech and actions, even when it might not benefit them entirely. This is how the ideology of a benevolent Canadian state maintains itself. Even those who are treated poorly by the state do not

always question such ideas. For example, Jiwani (2006) and Malhi & Boon (2009) discuss discourses of denial in their work on the narratives of racialized Canadian women. Many of the women in their studies reproduced the ideology of multiculturalism in their narratives, and used discourses of democratic racism to deny their own experiences of racism, and the existence of structural racism generally. In consenting to the very ideologies that marginalize them, the racialized women in both studies lend legitimacy to these narratives.

Although some ideological apparatuses are repressive, Althusser argues, meaning they function predominantly through violence, and some are ideological, meaning they function predominantly through ideology, all apparatuses function through both, to some extent. A repressive SA, such as the police, exerts violence in obvious ways, but it also is ideological because of the ideas of law, order, and justice it reproduces. The ISA of say, the school, is ideological in obvious ways, but it also is violent as it has the power to mute or erase certain curriculums, for example, Indigenous history and the history of residential schools. Althusser positions the media as an ISA. As both a state and private institution, it's guided by a set of practices, principles and goals that are shaped, both actively and unconsciously by Canadian hegemonies of white supremacy and racial hierarchy. The media "presents a hegemonic view of social reality and the particular positioning of groups within that reality" (Jiwani, 2006, p. 32). Gramsci believed that the structures which can alter and form public opinion are the most dynamic parts of ideology and should be interrogated and deconstructed as such. The press, he argued, was one of these dynamic structures (Gramsci, 2006, p.16).

News media is part of the public sphere that citizens turn to for insight on politics and policy, social life, the economy, and for entertainment. It is a powerful ISA in that it is able to set the agenda, in terms of determining what is and is not important enough to report on (Antonious, 2013; Kowalski, 2013). The public sphere, in Habermasian terms, is "the ideal democratic politics," where average citizens can discuss and debate "issues of public concern" (Salha, 2013, p.160). As an ISA, however, it speaks through ideology and therefore echoes the logics of the time's ruling ideologies. What is

reported on and considered to be issues of public concern, then, is determined and structured through these ideologies, and in turn, reproduced there. It's important to note, however, that the media does not simply work as a mouth piece of the state, it also reproduces ideologies in private interests. In fact, it would be difficult to separate ideologies stemming from the private or public sphere, as they are so deeply interwoven, and influence one another.

As an ISA, news media reproduces and maintains ideologies in both immaterial and material ways, mainly in its ability to call subjects into being. In other words, it wields considerable influence in constructing communities. By employing a 'us' and 'them' rhetoric, or using discourses of binary polarization they send a specific message to the public about who is included in the 'us' and who is excluded and relegated to the 'them' (Agnew, 2007; Henry & Tator, 2006). Additionally, while the media gives the appearance of inclusion in its many representations of racialized peoples, it functions largely to reduce a heterogeneous group of citizens to a "distilled abstraction" in an attempt to "capture" and manage "difference" (Bannerji, 2000, p. 111). In such attempts, Canadian news media "create moral panics with regard to a particular community" through its reliance on colonial stereotypes that reduce and generalize people of colour at best, and criminalize, exclude, and dehumanize at worse (Salha, 2013, p.159). Middle Eastern peoples, for example, have been framed as either threats or vulnerable and passive victims of their violent culture. During crises in particular, SAs and ISAs use stereotypical, often bordering on racist, language to describe and define the actors involved and the situation generally. Indeed, the chaos of crisis is often difficult to understand and grasp, even for those involved. In news media, this often means "essential facts of their history of the people are ignored or distorted, and essential aspects of their political struggle are misunderstood or misrepresented" (Antonious, 2013, p.110). Relying on simplified stereotypes and understandings of history, and context is common among news media outlets in Canada — in depth research on history, politics, and social context is a time-consuming and therefore costly undertaking for news organizations. Complex histories, cultures, economic and political relations are then ignored, and

simplified stereotypes take their place. Nothing better exemplifies this in modern history than media representations of Middle Eastern peoples in the post-9/11 context.

It's important to not think of news media as conspiring against the well-being of society. While it may feel as though the CEOs of news organizations are meeting with corporate heads and discussing ways to maintain white superiority, this is simply not the case (Downing, 2011, p.157). In fact, many have argued that the "extent and impact of media ownership concentration" is exaggerated (Downing, 2011, p. 159). Dominant ideologies of a society are reinforced in the media not in conspiratorial ways, but because most people make sense of the world through ideology. While many commonly argue that white men control the media and therefore dictate what is reported on and how it is reported, this is a rather reductive understanding of the very intricate ways in which ideology functions. Gillian Doyle (2002) argues that creating a more diversified media ownership model will not necessarily solve the problems of a lack of diversity in thoughts and opinions. To think outside of ideology and therefore establish a diversity of thought requires, in part, understanding ideology as ideological. This is not to say that a diversification in hiring will not bring change to how news media is structured and presented, however. It is simply to say that ideology guides and shapes understanding and thinking regardless of age, sex, gender, race, or class. Additionally, this is not to say that altering views and perspectives are never be circulated in news media. In fact, critical ideas will still be circulated, and pointed to as a proof of a diversity of thought in news media. A general public acceptance of these critical perspectives, however, is rare, and they will exist largely as anomalies in mainstream media.

Herman and Chomsky (2006) also disrupt this conspiratorial media myth by arguing that there are variety of factors that inform the news media and work to maintain ideology, consciously or otherwise. While they argue that wealth and power influence media choices, they believe this happens at various moments of news production, in fluid ways. Herman and Chomsky (2006) argue that there are five 'filters' that structure and influence different news organizations in varying ways, with some impacting certain outlets more than others. For the sake of scope, I'll outline the four filters which

pertain most to my scope of research. Media ownership, size and profit motive is one of the first filters Herman and Chomsky outline. As businesses existing in a capitalist market, media organizations need to make money, and therefore generally need to structure their content so that it produces a profit. Stockholders, bankers, directors and other private funders are important to a news organizations economic capital, as they can invest and fund organizations that they feel might be economically successful or align with their personal values. This means that quality can sometimes suffer in the place of producing the most popular content that will yield the most attention from audiences, but is also is not extremely critical of the beliefs and values of wealthy investors, be they individuals, organizations, or partisan figures. Also, depending on the size of the organization, news media can rely on other larger companies and news wires for information, thereby reproducing the thoughts and opinions of other mainstream media, due to a lack of time, resources, and staff.

Additionally, advertising also influences media content (Herman & Chomsky, 2006). Advertisers, like stockholders and private interests, have the power to fund media. They also decide who to fund based not only on what ideas they want to support and advance, but also on what news organizations create or interfere with a ‘buying mood.’ Entertainment or light news programming, then, will attract bigger advertisers and more financial support. Thirdly, the media’s reliance “on information provided by government, business, and ‘experts’ who are educated, funded, and approved by” powerful, often elite groups and institutions, also impacts how news is reported (Herman & Chomsky, 2006, p. 257). To say that the media acts as a mouth piece of the state would be a reduction of the complex and dynamic ways the two are related. State representatives and actors, are however legitimate sources for news media, as they possess an inherent authority, made clear in the fact that their legitimacy as a source is rarely questioned. State institutions are turned to, as they hold the most information about big news stories and provide insight on how the state will respond (Herman and Chomsky, 2006; Kowalski, 2013). The state relies on news media to distribute and legitimize their ideologies and policies to the public. How the policies are framed, however, depends on the journalist

and the structure of the news organizations generally. Corporate sources also hold “status and prestige” and therefore lend themselves a level of credibility, despite the fact that they may be motivated by private interests (Herman & Chomsky, 2006, p. 270). Additionally, finding new sources is costly, and might even invite criticisms if the source is not deemed trustworthy, reliable or unbiased. News organizations can feel confident in using similar sources over and over and feel assured that they are meeting deadlines and also protecting themselves from libel, as they are using established and approved sources for their reporting. Government official and corporate press releases, the police, courthouses, “turn out large volumes of material that meet the demands of news organizations for reliable, scheduled flows” (Herman & Chomsky, 2006, p. 270). Lastly, Herman and Chomsky point to flak “as a means of disciplining the media” and therefore influencing content (2006, p. 258). Negative responses from governments, corporations, or private individuals that could eventually lead to lawsuits, threats, or punitive action push news organizations in the direction of status quo, whether consciously or not. In their daily reporting, journalists do not actively consider these five filters. They are however, also shaped and influenced by Canada’s dominant ideologies. This is not to say that there is no critical reporting in the Canadian news media landscape. Critical reporting is however, rare, and often framed as provocative. Even more left-leaning news outlets, which give the appearance of progressiveness work within dominant ideologies. For example, in an attempt to display the hardships women in the Middle East face, liberal reporting in the aftermath of 9/11 presented Middle Eastern women as passive and powerless to the ills of their own culture. An attempt to provide insight and create empathy instead worked to homogenize and marginalize Middle Eastern women. Ideologies of whiteness, white supremacy and liberal multiculturalism are dominant in Canadian society, so it’s not surprising that the media’s understanding of the events of 9/11 as well as the War on Terror, would speak through such ideologies, consciously or otherwise.

Networks of ideological and repressive state apparatuses working together, though not necessarily consciously, in what Gramsci (2006) labels as hegemony. He defines hegemony as “not

only a union of economic and political aims, but also intellectual moral unity” (Gramsci, 1971, p.182). Hegemony does not determine the actions, behaviours, attitudes, and beliefs of various economic and political institutions. Instead, hegemony is a dynamic existence of all ideologies and their apparatuses, which are always shifting and therefore historically specific, “actively constructed and positively maintained” and yet also not absolute (Hall, 1986, p. 15). Hegemony “encompasses all aspects of life” (Bannerji, 2000, p.114). This includes the contradictory bits that seem to go against the mainstream, dominant discourses, but actually work to maintain them. For example, the implementation of a multicultural policy in a settler colonial state. In fact, Hall, in his reading of Gramsci, argues that hegemony must be understood as multi-dimensional and flexible, influencing and structuring spaces and narratives that appear contradictory or outside of the mainstream hegemony (Hall, 1986). Racial hierarchy has served as the hegemonic structuring of Canadian society since its inception, though the ideologies within this hegemony have altered in appearance, and slightly shifted, according to the historical epoch so as to maintain the structure, but give the appearance of change. For example, the ideologies of colonialism, which permit overt racism had to be tweaked and altered to fit with the changing attitudes of the historical epoch. A shift in the acceptable expressions of racial inferiority and white superiority is one very important catalyst to the birth of Canadian multiculturalism, as it still worked within the racial hierarchies of colonialism, while appearing inclusive, accepting, and humanitarian.

It would be a mistake, then, to see hegemony as a consciously imposed and maliciously planned system of ideas. Instead, hegemony should be understood as a series of alliances that may not be consciously established, but which correspond and maintain one another. In fact, in order for a hegemonic bloc or epoch to be maintained, it needs to be consented to by a majority of people, otherwise it will appear coercive, thereby leaving more room for revolt or resistance. Gramsci is careful to distinguish between dominance and consent, as dominance means a group holds power and is coercing other groups. This is not the case in hegemony. Hegemony requires that the dominant

group, the group which holds the most power, to coordinate their interests with the interests of subordinate groups, so that it gives the appearance of wide appeal, but in reality, produce interests and logics that are beneficial for a small minority (Gramsci, 1971, p.182). This is why colonialism should not be seen as a project of hegemony. Colonialism is violent, it imposes without consent, it does not extend already-established morals and values. Hegemony requires compromise. An “equilibrium” of interests must be established, “in which the interests of the dominant group prevail, but only up to a certain point” (Gramsci, 1971, p. 182). It’s important that “the interests and the tendencies of the group over which hegemony is to be exercised” are taken into account, meaning the “leading group should make sacrifices of an economic-corporate kind” (Gramsci, 1971, p.161). These sacrifices, Gramsci argues, however, do not “touch the essential,” and still allow for this dominant group to maintain their interests (Gramsci, 1971, p.161). Hegemony, then, is an ongoing process, even once it has been achieved, it needs to be extended, altered, and morphed to fit the context and historical epoch.

In looking at Gramsci’s work and its relevance to race, Hall (1986) asserts that hegemony explains one of the “least explained features of racism” by showing how the very ideologies of whiteness and multiculturalism can get taken up by racialized citizens, who can fall blind to the “very racist ideologies which impassion and define them” (1986, p. 27). Ideologies of multiculturalism and Canadian exceptionalism, which give the appearance of being benevolent and accepting but really work within hegemonies of racial hierarchy, get taken up by racialized citizens, who do not benefit from the reproduction of these ideologies. This is the equilibria in action; although the ideologies of liberal multiculturalism purport racial acceptance and inclusion, they do not shift from the ‘essential,’ in this case, a maintenance of racial hierarchy. Multiculturalism as policy gave the appearance of addressing the issue of racialized citizens, in co-opting some of the language used by subordinate groups demanding equality, however, only in an “attempt to disarm the colonized subject psychologically through facades of respect” (Ali, 2015, p.249). The realities of racialized people are shaped by this hegemonic understanding of Canada being multicultural, accepting, and tolerant,

making resistance not impossible, but difficult. It's clear then, that many consent to their own marginalization. For example, racialized working-class people who do not deal directly with the violence of colonialism, but who would benefit from a decolonized re-structuring of Canadian society consent to their subjugation in the workplace. For the working class, especially racialized, immigrants, obtaining financial and social capital are goals of survival and personal growth. They wish to have better living conditions, better pay, better policies of workplace equality. Toppling regimes of hegemony falls outside of these goals, and in fact, may appear threatening to these goals, as these goals very much reinforce established systems and logics, rather than subvert them (Ali, 2015, p.248). To question multiculturalism and point to its contradictions would be counter-hegemonic, as it works against the hegemonic understanding of Canada and begins to establish a new, perhaps not as humanitarian understanding of Canada and Canadians generally.

Assertions of acceptance and tolerance of the 'homogenous cultural stranger,' and erasure of a history of racial violence helps construct an apparent connection between whiteness and benevolence. This is what structures a hegemonic understanding of Canada. These ideologies further notions of whiteness as rational, logical, intelligent and now, tolerant. This exaltation of white Canadian identity only worked to create a "fashionable and politically acceptable form of white supremacy," though in various ways, depending on the historical epoch and socio-political context. (Thobani, 2007, p.148). Multiculturalism as ideology works to explain away racism. It allows for expressions and systems of racism to persist without appearing hateful or exclusionary. As I will demonstrate, the effects and functions of multiculturalism as ideology differ depending on the period, however, its ideological existence, as an assumed national trait is maintained. Various contradictions emerge from this commonly held assumption, and these will be explored through a chronological exploration of multiculturalism in Canada.

Chapter 3: Literature Review

Introduction

While a critical overview of the history of both colonialism and multiculturalism in Canada is vital to understanding the ways in which they function today, it's important to outline the inevitable contradictions that emerge in their co-existence. Additionally, it's important to see how these contradictions have altered over time, so that their contradictory nature itself is concealed. This literature review will focus on what I loosely identify as three periods of multiculturalism in Canada, with one period being marked by a movement away from multiculturalism. The first period is marked by the introduction of multiculturalism, as I previously outlined. The first part of the literature review explores how multiculturalism functions in its initial implementation. I argue, it largely functioned to maintain racial hierarchy, while giving the appearance of progressive, social change. I look at how this first period functioned to erase Canada's colonial legacy and allowed the state to present itself as unified. In an attempt to manage the growing demographic diversity and the legitimate demands that were stemming from various disenfranchised communities, multiculturalism worked to homogenize and devalue non-white ethnicities, while simultaneously asking that they be 'tolerated' and recognized as equal by white Canadians. I look at how multiculturalism relied on colonial stereotypes to delineate ethnic groups, and presented the assumption that simply recognizing their inherent differences as 'equal' would eventually eradicate their grievances. This positioned racialized citizens as one-dimensional and stereotypical, but it also positioned racism as an individual issue and ignored its systemic existence. Following this discussion, I look at how multiculturalism failed to establish all citizens as equal, by looking at how Canadian citizenship is stratified. This section argues that certain citizens have more privileges of citizenship than others. Later, I look into how ideologies of multiculturalism and hegemonies of racial hierarchy that structure Canadian society are maintained by racialized people. During this first period of multiculturalism many racial minorities began adopting the language of liberal multiculturalism and abandoned their previous, anti-racist feminist demands for

equality. I look specifically at how young racialized women reproduce these narratives and in doing so, consciously or otherwise participate in maintaining their marginal position in society.

The second period of multiculturalism looks at Canada immediately following the horrific events of 11 September 2001. This period is marked by both state and public's distancing from the tenets of multiculturalism. While the state did not relinquish all efforts at maintaining the *appearance* of being an inclusive and accepting state, policies and legislation enacted in this period, justifications provided for such racially charged policies, and the public's acceptance of such racist legislation and exclusions reflected a 'letting go' of even the most shallow attempts at establishing racial equality. This section will open up with a brief overview on how Canada initially responded to the attacks of 9/11. I'll then look at how this response was, intentionally or otherwise, ignited movement away from the tenets of multiculturalism. Specifically, I will look at how the rights of some citizens, those who are racialized and particularly those assumed to be Muslim or Middle Eastern, were suspended in the name of national security. In asserting their loyalty to the United States and actively participating in the War on Terror, I will argue that Canada re-established a white Canadian identity and further marginalized racialized citizens, in particular, Middle Easterners.

The proceeding section looks specifically at the highly raced and gendered justifications for Canada's militaristic involvement in the War on terror. In this section, I'll be looking at how Canada's involvement in the war in Afghanistan was framed as humanitarian and even feminist. This positioning of Canada as benevolent white saviour is in binary opposition to how both Middle Eastern women and men were understood and framed by the dominant white culture. These binary understandings draw from logics of orientalism, which still exist in Canada today.

Lastly, I look at how North American Middle Eastern women challenged and resisted the narratives that position them as passive, backward, and in need of salvation during this second period of multiculturalism. I explore the ways in which women found solidarity and support in the post-9/11 context, with religion being a common uniting force in a variety of anti-racist feminist research

emerging at this time. I also look at the ways in which North American, and specifically Canadian Middle Eastern women, in an attempt to resist stereotypical labels or better understand their own plight, can sometimes work within dominant narratives or ideologies of whiteness. Consciously or otherwise, sometimes Canadian Middle Eastern women draw on binary understandings of West and East and in doing so, give legitimacy to the narratives which justify their marginal position in society.

The third and final period will be a discussion of multiculturalism today. I argue that this period is marked by a renewal of Canadian commitments to a politics of inclusion, bolstered by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the Liberal government of Canada. This section will shed light on how contradictions emerging from the first period multiculturalism have re-emerged, though under new sociopolitical and economic contexts. Attempts at re-establishing the tenets of multiculturalism on behalf of Trudeau and the liberal government, however, are rather shallow and rooted mostly in gestures as opposed to structural change. This section will critically look at the ways in which Trudeau maintains systemic racism and sexism while also giving the appearance of championing equality. Since taking office, the liberal government has asserted a pro-immigrant attitude— part and parcel with attempts at rejuvenating the tenets of multiculturalism. Growing anti-immigrant sentiments in Canada among not only right-wing extremist groups, but even among more left-leaning groups and peoples, highlights the heterogeneity of opinions in Canada when it comes to the value of immigration and diversity. These divisions between Trudeau's promises of establishing anti-racist policies and practices and the reality of his actions will be critically examined. Additionally, the growth of right-wing extremist groups in Canada, the circulation of anti-immigrant discourses in the news and civil society will also be discussed. Despite Trudeau and the liberal government's pledges to establishing an open, welcoming and inclusive nation, discourses that reduce migrants to their economic worth; position them as culturally incompatible; and position Canadian society as somehow inherently superior are common in this period of multiculturalism.

The First Period of Multiculturalism: Managing and marking ‘difference’ and dehistoricizing and depoliticizing racism

This period of multiculturalism is marked by a strong commitment to and praise of multiculturalism from both the state and general Canadian public. Multiculturalism, as state policy, however, did little to address the concerns of immigrants and racialized groups in Canada. This first period, I argue, attempted to manage a growing and demographically diverse population and present, at least the appearance of national unity. Relying on colonial stereotypes that position racialized people as inherently ‘different’ to the white population, multiculturalism in this first period furthered stereotypical, folkloric representations of ethnic others, and in doing so extended a myth of white superiority. This section also looks at how diversity was managed by homogenizing and stereotyping ethnic identities; dehistoricizing and depoliticizing race and racism in Canada; and reducing the demands of racialized groups to cultural recognition and the need for tolerance.

Between 1971 and 1980 multicultural policy focused on folkloric understandings of race and “celebrating difference,” making it a rather benign attempt at addressing the systemic issues of racism that non-white citizens were dealing with (Satzewich & Lioukakis, 2010, p.162). We can better understand the importance of multiculturalism to the Canadian state, however, when we consider the fact that nations need unity in order to be considered as legitimate sovereign states. A nation loses legitimacy, particularly in a post-World War II context, when it is fractured and divided by narratives of hate (Bannerji, 2000). In an address to House of Commons in 1971, Pierre Trudeau outlined the goals of multiculturalism policy:

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...Second, the government will assist members of all cultural groups to overcome cultural barriers to fully participation in Canadian society. Third the government will promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups in the interest of national unity. Fourth, 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 (Thobani, 2007, p.327).

Immigrants and racialized citizens, however, were asking the state to address issues of “racism, discrimination involving immigration and family unification,” workplace discrimination, and other hardships immigrants deal with after migrating (Bannerji, 2000). The structural and institutional demands of immigrants were answered with cultural gestures of acceptance, expressed through street festivals and food, thereby reducing the barriers and threats of racism “into questions of curry and turbans” (Bannerji 2000, p.38). Offers of English language classes and funding for cultural events were unneeded as immigrant communities across Canada were already providing language classes for new immigrants, and had established cultural communities in their own neighbourhoods that would allow them to “maintain elements of their own culture and transmit them to new generations” (Satzewich and Liodakis, 2010, p.12).

In the 1980s, multiculturalism policy shifted in an attempt to address the “equity concerns” of immigrants, claiming to bring in an “anti-racist approach” (Satzewich and Liodakis, 2010, p.163). The state felt that beyond celebrating a variety of cultures, racialized citizens should also be *recognized* as equal. A politics of recognition emerged, and issues of “class, gender, or other socio-economic and political differences” were tabled (Satzewich and Liodakis 2010, p. 166). Once again, it seemed that the policy did not consider an antiracist restructuring (Ziadah, 2017). By framing non-white immigrants as the ‘cultures to be tolerated,’ white Canadians become the group that tolerates, the dominant culture that has so graciously accepted and tolerated the ‘Other’ cultures. This also allowed for Canadians and the state to argue it had a homogenous culture, that was being invaded by this multitude. This made non-white communities the possessors of cultural difference, a difference that was managed through narratives of tolerance. Cultural differences understood through multiculturalism, then, is shallow and reductive, and additionally made palatable for white audiences. Culture becomes stereotypical and neatly packaged as a commodity for the white Canadians to

consume, despite the fact that these reductive cultural characteristics were once used to point out the ‘savagery’ of ethnic Others (Jiwani, 2006). It’s argued that thanks to multiculturalism, assimilation is eradicated and difference can be maintained.

Difference, however, can only be expressed in non-threatening ways such as “exotic dress,” or “in their food,” through street festivals and performances, and never in ways that might question the superiority of the Canadian state, Canadian culture, or Canadian identity (Thobani, 2007, p.168). In other words, possessors of cultural difference should be careful in their expressions, as there are limits on what is and is not acceptable. Demands can be made on the part of immigrants and racialized Canadians, but “if the demands go a little deeper than” basic cultural recognition, the racism which so deeply structures the limits of acceptance in Canada is revealed (Bannerji, 2000, p. 79). In fact, the “superior mores of Canadians” must be addressed when minorities express their difference, because that expression was only permitted by an allegedly, and self-proclaimed, generous and tolerant Canadian (Thobani, 2007, p.168).

It’s very possible and in fact more than likely, however, that some racialized Canadians share more similarities with white Canadians than other white Canadians (Nagra, 2017, p.12). One’s ethnic background cannot simply be equated with their cultural values, and such an argument would deny the varying cultures within nations and social groups. Additionally, the nation’s immigrants come from have gone through “many political and social struggles, changing their forms” and are not reducible to a singular culture or identity (Bannerji, 2000, p.49). The identities within these nations are diverse and changing, and will continue to alter in transform, in Canada or wherever else immigrants reside (Bannerji, 2000, p. 49). As race theorist, Stuart Hall (1990) argues, cultural identity is in no way static, but shaped and altered by “history and social forces,” as well as shifts in political power (Jiwani, 2006, p.180). Cultural identity is fluid,

Far from being grounded in mere recovery of the past...which when found will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to different ways

we are positioned by, and position ourselves within the narratives of the past and present (Hall, 1990, p.225).

In disregarding the diversities and nuances of cultural and racial identity, the ideology of multiculturalism in this period has suggested that equality could be achieved through recognition and tolerance. This understanding of equality ignores the fact that some have the power to recognize and tolerate, while others are being recognized and tolerated, not for who they are, but for the colonial stereotypes connoted with their race (Bannerji, 2000). Narratives of 'tolerance' work to further exaggerate unequal power relations and give legitimacy to the idea that the state has no role in reducing and deconstructing racism. In her book, *Dark Side of the Nation*, Bannerji (2000) interrogates Canadian philosopher, Charles Taylor's politics of recognition. Taylor believed that white Canadians needed to recognize non-white immigrants as equals. In doing so, however, he does not seem to recognize the very power relations that a one-sided flow of recognition inherently manifests. He does not recognize the power inherent in the idea that there are some who need to be told that others are equal and deserve fair treatment (Bannerji, 2000; Nagra, 2017). This shows that even in academic and intellectual communities, the narratives of racial hierarchy were naturalized and part of everyday understandings of identity and position and value in this first period of multiculturalism in Canada.

Multiculturalism allows for immigrants to be brought into the Canadian nation, but "under white supervision" (Thobani, 2007, p.173). It fails to address "redistributive issues at any substantive level," (Yoo-Hyeok Lee, 2007, p.9). Recognition cannot on its own create equality, it "needs respect and dignity" and an acceptance of "the autonomy of the other and being honest about power relations that hinder this autonomy" (Bannerji, 2000, p.149). For these reasons, despite the limits and assumptions of this politics of recognition, it's important not to dismiss recognition all together. In fact, "identity is partly shaped by recognition or absence" or a mis-recognition of the self from others (Yoo-Hyeok Lee, 2007, p.9). If one feels that they are not being seen for who they feel they are, this can create a rather "demeaning or contemptible picture of themselves" (Yoo-Hyeok Lee, 2007, p.9).

Because understandings of cultural ‘others’ are structured through colonial and orientalist structuring non-white immigrants, it’s clear then that mis-recognition, is an inevitable part of the politics of recognition. For example, if an immigrant feels that they are not being recognized as Canadian, by the state or in their everyday interactions, this will impact their understanding of themselves as Canadian. The criticisms, judgement, and/or exclusions racialized Canadians face, for example, in the mocking of their accent, the strange looks they get around the lunch table, or lines of questioning about their clothing, become lessons about what needs to be done if they wish to be treated as equals, as Canadians. These are commonly referred to as policing tactics, as they police what is and is not allowed in Canadian society. Policing tactics can become internalized, and behaviour becomes regulated “in concordance with the dictates of the dominant society” (Jiwani, 2006 p. 131). Even the simple act of asking a citizen where they’re *really* from can be seen as policing, as it assumes that anyone who doesn’t ‘look Canadian’ (read: white) can’t be Canadian; it sends a clear message about who does and does not ‘look Canadian,’ that can lead one to alter their physical appearance.

It should also be noted that multiculturalism subsumed issues of Indigenous oppression and their resistance of the colonial state into the rest of the ‘multicultural’ whole. Indigenous culture was framed as just ‘one of the many’ cultures that existed in Canada, and therefore the demands of Indigenous peoples were not seen as any more or less important than the demands of other citizens and settlers, despite a long history and ongoing violence of colonialism (Thobani, 2007). It appears, then, that the ideology of multiculturalism in this early period, in addition to depoliticizing, also dehistoricized racism in Canada. First and foremost, multiculturalism furthers a colonial myth of Canadian nationhood. It posits that the country is the “outcome of two ‘founding’ nations,” further erasing Indigenous history in Canada and delegitimizing demands for decolonization and sovereignty by reducing them to ‘just another minority’ (Jiwani, 2006, p.11). Multiculturalism assumes that a supposed principle of equality now exists between different cultures and ethnicities, making any additional aid to Indigenous communities appear as ‘special treatment.’ This overlooks the fact that

Indigenous communities are entering this supposedly 'equal' field in a vulnerable and disadvantaged position, and so 'special treatment' would actually result in real attempts to reduce their marginalization and oppression in Canadian society. The same can be said for other minority groups, who are accused of receiving special treatment through initiatives such as affirmative action. Again, this would only be 'special' if they were starting from an equal playing field, however, racialized citizens, and Indigenous people in particular, are not starting on any sort of equal footing. An antiracist approach on the other hand, would have required the Canadian state to engage in their history of racial violence, a remembering of "racial degradation and relating contemporary to historical," however, multiculturalism encouraged a "forgetting, getting over, moving on" despite no real structural or systemic change to the conditions that allow for racial oppression (Goldberg, 2008, p.21, cited in Feldman, 2016, p. 295).

Depoliticizing and dehistoricizing the plight of Indigenous people and other racial minorities in Canada means that inequality is not addressed in systemic and structural ways. Without acknowledging the power that works to exalt some and marginalize others, the deeply political processes of oppression and the maintenance of a racial hierarchy go undetected. These processes impact both Indigenous populations and immigrant populations, in varying ways that can sometimes overlap, however, without politicizing and pointing to power, these common experiences remain invisible. Multiculturalism works to conceal the discriminatory structuring of Canadian society and its social institutions and claims that inequalities can be resolved if Canadians simply "adopted the central tenets of multiculturalism: tolerance, accommodation, harmony, and diversity" (Malhi & Boon, 2007, p.129). When immigrants and other minorities adopt this language, a trend later explored, the state's exalted status is even further legitimized and political pleas to dismantling systemic racism are further delegitimized.

Multiculturalism's Failure: Canadian citizenship as stratified

Although multiculturalism promised to position all Canadian citizens as equal, this was not achieved. Despite the fact that former, racist restrictions and criteria had been removed from the immigration process, and racialized people had access to citizenship, not everyone experienced the same sort of citizenship. In other words, citizenship remain stratified, even after it was opened up and multiculturalism as policy was implemented. This section looks at the ways inequalities were maintained following the implementation of multiculturalism. In large part, these disparities in experience still exist today. Citizenship is a legal status that provides those who possess it with numerous privileges, however, some citizens have fewer privileges. This shows that despite the state's pledges to establishing racial equality, racism persisted in Canadian society. The inclusion of racialized people into the Canadian whole was limited and largely gestural. This section shows that citizenship does not on its own establish equality and ensure fair treatment. It shows that although some may be included in the institution of citizenship, it does not guarantee that they will be treated with respect and dignity, two important factors for inclusion and recognition, as previously outlined (Bannerji, 2000). Multiculturalism is a demographic fact of society, and its shallow implementation as policy does not guarantee inclusion or belonging. Despite the fact that citizenship and non-citizenship are seen to exist in binary, the reality is more complicated (Villegas, 2018). This is not to say that racialized citizens do not have citizenship; they do, however, have a different kind of citizenship than white, mostly male Canadians.

According to Vijay Agnew (2007), identifying with a group or an identity, or feeling like you belong to a certain group requires three factors. The first being that there needs to be a word to delineate the group or identity, for example, immigrant, citizen, newcomer, etc. and there usually is a consensus surrounding the "set of stereotypes" that are attributed to this group, whether based in truth or not (Agnew, 2007, p.6). Secondly, members of the group need to feel as though they can take on that label, or in other words, they need to internalize the labels of immigrant, citizen, or newcomer and see themselves in that category. Lastly, identification and belonging often means participating in

certain patterns of behaviour, often which are rooted in histories of sexism and racism (Agnew, 2007). These different factors of identifying with a group or identity demonstrate how little legal status impacts feeling Canadian or belonging to Canadian society. This means that while one can be Canadian, there are numerous things that could be happening (or not happening) that would prevent them from *feeling* Canadian. Agnew (2007) also notes that there are certain identifications that will never happen because of one's race, gender, and sexuality, no matter what choices or moves the individual makes to identify with the collective.

For example, if one was not born in Canada, they are constantly reminded of the fact that they are in fact an 'immigrant.' The fact that Canadians passports still indicate a citizen's place of birth points to this differentiation between those who are 'natural-born Canadians,' and 'naturalized' Canadians. The term 'naturalized' citizen points also to this stratification and to an assumed homogeneity of Canadian identity, despite its claims to be multicultural. To become naturalized, is to assume that becoming a citizen is a process which involves "acquiring the natural essence of the national group" (Andreouli & Howarth, 2012, p. 366). Essentially, immigrants have to become Canadian and take on Canadian values, which assumes that there are ways of being Canadian and specific Canadian values that all national citizens hold.

Nationals, or white Canadians possess what Evelyn Nakano Glenn (2002) has coined 'substantive citizenship,' which is the "ability to exercise rights of citizenship" (Nagra, 2017, p.113). Substantive citizenship consists of two essential components: a citizen's "ability to exercise...formal rights"; and secondly, how those rights are "recognized and enforced by national, state, and local government agents," and regular citizens (Nagra, 2017, p. 30). Belonging then, is in part determined by symbolic national capital. Symbolic national capital refers to the valued norms in a society, such as how one dresses, the way they speak, the interests they have, and their behaviour (Nagra, 2017). In order to practice substantive citizenship and have that practice recognized by other citizens and the state, racialized people need to display a certain level of symbolic national capital. The more national

capital is accumulated by Canadian citizens or in other words, the more one moves closer to whiteness, the more likely they are to practice substantive citizenship, the more likely they are to feel a sense of belonging and identify with the presumably ‘white’ Canadian identity. National symbolic capital is precarious for racialized citizens, however, as their moves toward whiteness are subject to constant policing.

When Racialized Citizens Adopt the Language of Multiculturalism

For many years prior to the adoption of multicultural policy, racialized Canadians fought against structural and systemic racism, such as racist labour laws, “access to social entitlements,” and overall inclusion in social institutions (Thobani, 2007, p.159). Non-white Canadians challenged the state, which as I mentioned, partly inspired multicultural policy. After its implementation, however, the dominant discourse of multiculturalism, with its accompanying narratives of diversity, tolerance, and recognition became the most common and hegemonic language used when talking about issues of racial equality in Canada. While adoption of this discourse cannot be generalized and applied to all racialized minorities, as many continued with anti-racist resistance against systemic racism, many racialized people adopted this language and depoliticized their own experiences of racism.

This created a class of ‘model minorities,’ representatives from non-white communities whose “claim to political space [were] articulated within the terrain of multiculturalism” thereby derailing much of the efforts of antiracist activists (Thobani, 2007, p.159). Multiculturalism and diversity discourses ask that one “disarticulate from his or her real-life needs and struggles,” since racial equality has been achieved through multiculturalism, thereby making “organization of anti-racism, feminism, and class struggle” seem unnecessary, too radical, or even tyrannical (Bannerji,2000, p. 117). Funding provided through multicultural policy was given to these ‘un-threatening model minorities,’ as the representatives of ethno-cultural communities that “worked to contain the demands for racial equality,” and continued to conceal the very real existence of white supremacy (Thobani,

2007, p.160). Multiculturalism became the language both politicians, immigrants, and racialized citizens alike used to speak about race, inclusion and immigration in Canada. As Canadian sociologist Bannerji put it, “it is as though we were asked for bread and were given stones, and could not tell the difference between the two” (Bannerji, 2000, p.90).

Mainstream perceptions of racism, as I’ve outlined, are limited, and multiculturalism and diversity, as dominant Canadian viewpoints, are pointed to as alibis “for the denial of racism...even if it smacks one in the face” (Maira, 2018, p.54). This means that racialized Canadians often do not feel they are victims of racism. Research on the awareness of racism among minority ethnic groups has shown that although many do not see themselves as discriminated against, they more commonly admit to others in their racial group as dealing with discrimination (Taylor et al. 1990). This is what Taylor et al. (1990) refer to as ‘personal/group discrimination discrepancy.’ It works to not only distance racialized citizens from narratives that may mark them as ungrateful and unappreciative of an allegedly multicultural and equal Canada, but also works to position racism as first and foremost an individual experience of overt violence or racial slurs. Most immigrants are aware of the inequalities they face, but because of how fervently it is denied, the erasure of colonial history in the education system and other social institutions, the insidious and subtle ways in which racism is expressed and its structural existence, there is difficulty in identifying and addressing such complicated and contradictory experiences of discrimination (Thobani, 2007, p.172). In fact, in numerous qualitative studies on racialized communities in both Canada and the United States (Jiwani, 2006; Maira, 2018; Nagra, 2017), it appears that it is not uncommon for racialized peoples to use the same narratives “used by the dominant group to dismiss or even erase racism,” and in doing so, give legitimacy to the structures that ensure their marginalization (Malhi & Boon, 2009, p. 126). Pointing to the structural ways racism still exists in Canada indeed, risks making one appear un-Canadian. In an attempt to be included and feel equal to white nationals, racialized citizens may deny their experiences of racism to avoid further othering (Malhi & Boon, 2009). Additionally, some may deny racism and repeat dominant narratives

because they find it painful to talk about “the deleterious effects on their identity and self-esteem” (Malhi & Boon, 2009, p.144). Lastly, young immigrants may especially feel deterred from expressing experiences of racism, as they recognize the sacrifice their parents went through in migrating and do not wish to seem ungrateful (Taylor & Krahn, 2013, p.1011). Regardless of the specific intention or motives behind such internalizations, in reproducing dominant narratives that not only speak of racism as “an isolated personal event,” but also exalt Canadian multiculturalism and Western superiority, some racialized immigrants actually help maintain the power and dominant of whiteness (Malhi & Boon, 2009, p. 137).

In her book, *Discourses of Denial: Mediations of Race, Gender, and Violence*, Yasmin Jiwani (2006) discusses how the logics of racial hierarchy and Western superiority, expressed through a more liberal and inclusive veneer of multiculturalism, can also become internalized. This internalization is then “articulated by young women of colour,” who “posit the dominant Western culture as being an idyllic landscape of gender equity and freedom from gender-based discrimination and structural violence” (Jiwani, 2006, p.115). Young women of colour are looked at specifically in Jiwani’s work, as she believes they hold a particularly vulnerable position in Western society. She argues that young racialized women are constantly promised “to be liberated through the embrace of Western values,” while their ethnicity is often devalued and even demonized by the dominant, Western culture (Jiwani, 2006, p. 115). They are promised a better life if they assimilate and adopt Western values, however, this can sometimes mean a loyalty to ideas that limit and marginalize racialized people. Additionally, young racialized women are often seen as experiencing a “cultural clash,” because of assumed differences between the culture of their country of origin and Western culture. This is a problematic and limiting perspective on the difficulties young racialized women face, as it “assumes that there is cultural homogeneity” (Jiwani, 2006, p. 115). Jiwani (2006) found that the young women in her study had internalized not only dominant discourses of multiculturalism, that reduced their demands for structural change to cultural recognition, but also discourses of Canadian, and Western superiority, or

in some cases even white supremacy. Young racialized women can take on “dominant social values and normative expectations” that are often couched in a whiteness, such as values of “slimness, beauty, sexuality” and other colonial, Westernized standards based around class privileges and heteronormativity (Jiwani, 2006, p.120). Policing tactics push racialized women, and racialized people generally, to take on these dominant norms. In doing so, they can sometimes repeat colonial and orientalist narratives that legitimize their own marginalization and the continued marginalization of other racial minorities. This can be ultimately “damaging [to] their psychological and physical well-being” (Jiwani, 2006, p.115).

Internalization of multicultural ideology, however, does not imply a sort of weakness or inability to hold on to individuality or cultural uniqueness. Just as other Canadian citizens accept the discourses of multiculturalism, with its accompanying narratives of diversity, tolerance and inclusion, and Canadian superiority, so too do some racialized citizens and immigrants. Additionally, if one identifies as Canadian and aligns oneself with Canadian norms in their attempt to belong, it’s unsurprisingly that they would use the “socially available discourses associated with” Canadian norms “even when those discourses contradict their own experiences of racism” (Malhi & Boon, 2009, p143). In fact, immigrants are often “expected to express total allegiance to dominant viewpoints” as well as “gratitude to the nation,” whereas white Canadian citizens “can express their views, regardless of how controversial they may be” (Nagra, 2017, p.74). When minorities seek to challenge the structures of racism in Canada, they are all too often seen as “angry, with a proverbial chip on [their] shoulder” (Thobani, 2007, p.170). The fact that racialized citizens also repeat these denials of racism, as well as racist discourses legitimizes their existence in Canada. It seems then, the denial of the existence of racism is deeply woven into Canada’s understanding of self, in very complicated ways that can no longer be attributed to the white population alone.

Second Period of Multiculturalism: A movement away from the tenets of multiculturalism

This section looks at what I've loosely outline as the second period of multiculturalism in Canada, though it ironically is marked as a movement away from multiculturalism. Despite this retreat from the liberal tenants, I still mark it as a period of multiculturalism, as the state still maintained that it was a multicultural and inclusive, despite actively moving away from narratives of diversity and equality. Following the attacks of September 11, 2001, Middle Eastern people living in Canada became targets of state sanctioned harassment, surveillance, and regulation. Arabs, Muslims, and anyone who looked Middle Eastern were no longer considered just 'exotic' but became racialized in new ways and were targets of violent hate crimes in both Canada and the United States. This group was thought of as a threat to the Canadian state and public, even if they were Canadian citizens (Nagra, 2017). This section will be looking at Canada's involvement in the War on Terror and the ways in which the state justified their movement away from multiculturalism and establishing of racist state policies and practices. In fact, multiculturalism itself is pointed to as a point of weakness and vulnerability for Canada. Racism and discrimination targeted towards Middle Eastern people since 9/11 by both public institutions and actors has been legitimized during this movement away from liberal multiculturalism (Thobani, 2007). First, I'll look at the policies and actions taken on behalf of the Canadian state immediately following 9/11. This will allow for a discussion on the suspension of basic human rights for Middle Eastern people, or those assumed to be Middle Eastern. Then, I'll provide a discussion on how these policies and practices dehistoricize and depoliticize relationships between the West and East as well as the events of 9/11; further exalt Westernness, and legitimize the exclusion of racialized peoples from Canadian society. The section will end with a discussion on Canadian's role in Afghanistan and the racialization of Islam.

The devastating events of 9/11 and the seeming randomness of the attacks acted as justification for the state's response. This response resulted in the of suspension of basic human rights for thousands of Muslims, Arab, and Middle Eastern people living in Canada (Choudhry, 2001; Hennebry

& Momani, 2013; Jiwani, 2006; Kowalski, 2013; Nagra, 2017; Perera & Razack, 2014; Thobani, 2007). Although the attacks took place on American soil, the Canadian state, as well as other Western allies such as Britain and France, boldly asserted their allegiance to the United State and its proposed 'War on Terror' (Thobani, 2007). Understandably, many grieved with the American public and wanted to show their solidarity. Beyond geographic proximity, Canada and the United States have always shared a closeness, both economically and politically. After 9/11, the Canadian state and public reestablished their allegiance to the United States, claiming to share commonalities, pointing specifically to language and culture and thereby further cementing the notion that Canada is demographically and culturally anglophone and more importantly, white. It also reasserts assumptions of a homogenous culture, held by all nationals (Hennebry & Momani 2013; Nagra 2017). Canadian citizenship, as Thobani (2007) argues, was affirmed once again as first and foremost, white. It appears that the work done in the first period of multiculturalism, that alleged commitment to a racially inclusive citizenship crumbled. As Canadian race scholar Sherene H. Razack (2014) puts it, "Canada's entry into the club of white nations" was once again, secured (p. 58).

As Canada entered the War on Terror with their ally, policies and action on behalf of the state that were formerly seen as unethical, immoral, or racist were justified through narratives of national security and anti-terrorism. George W. Bush, the president of the United States at the time, made bold assertions about why the events of 9/11 occurred. The terrorists responsible were positioned as being against Western democracy, freedoms, and culture (Maira, 2018; Nagra 2017). This moral assumption was extended to Middle Eastern culture generally. This scope of understanding depoliticizes and dehistoricizes centuries of ongoing conflict between and imperialist interventions by the West and the Middle East. It reduces such complexities to a clash of cultures and values, and positions Middle Eastern peoples as static perpetrators of violence, savagery, and backwardness and Westerners as the noble, rational, benevolent, and in this case, perpetual victims of terrorism. So long as violence perpetrated by a Western state is reframed as protection or self-defence, it is justified (Maira, 2018).

As perpetual victims of terrorism, any existence or understanding of Western state terrorism, then, is erased. Violence perpetuated by Canada onto, for example, Indigenous populations at home or NATO operations abroad, are legitimized and not considered acts of terror.

The state also made moves to prevent more Middle Easterners, and other racialized peoples from immigrating to Canada through a tightening of immigration policy. Strengthening controls on immigration came in large part due to criticism Canada received from the United States, who claimed that terrorists were immigrating to Canada with ease and then making their way into the United States to execute their heinous acts of violence (Nagra, 2017). The border had previously been hailed as ‘the world's longest undefended border.’ Now, however, it was seen as “a source of vulnerability” (Abu-Laban, 2013, p. 77). In fact, Canada’s multiculturalism, its valuing of racial diversity, and its self-proclaimed commitment to establishing racial equality were being pointed to as creating the very vulnerabilities of Canada and its neighbour to terrorism.

In response to such criticism, Canada also introduced several anti-terrorism policies and loosened surveillance restrictions. Anti-terrorism Bill C-36 modified several existing laws in the Criminal Code, loosened privacy protections, and also made “facilitating and enticing terrorist acts” a criminal offence (Nagra, 2017, p.98). ‘Terrorist acts,’ however, were never clearly defined in the legislation. Changes and amendments were to be time limited, however, in 2013 the Combatting Terrorism Act (Bill S-7) removed time restrictions and “imposed stiffer penalties and introduced new prohibition against individuals leaving Canada to commit terrorism abroad” (Nagra, 2017, p.98). This was coupled with increased border security, which has “significantly altered the political climate in Canada with respect to transnationalism, mobility, and human rights” (Hennebry & Momani, 2013, p.3). By this I mean, the allegiance of certain Canadian citizens, those who are racialized and assumed to be Middle Eastern, is questioned. Any sign of trans-nationalism was marked as suspicious, such as making plans to visit relatives in the Middle East, or simply speaking fondly of their experiences of the Middle East. Middle Easterners had to pledge their allegiance to the Canadian state and be careful not

to show outward loyalties to the Middle East if they wished to avoid public scrutiny at best, and criminal accusations at worst. Although white Canadians are applauded for being ‘global citizens’ who can travel, Middle Eastern people who did the same became highly suspicious. Seen as a threat to the safety of the Canadian public, Middle Easterners were guilty until proven innocent, with their every action and utterance being subject to state scrutiny and investigation. A state of exception is established, where the rights of some are to be put on hold (Thobani, 2007). State and governmental security is positioned as the same as civilian security, which means many “accept that they must sacrifice their freedoms for the sake of defending the nation” (Maira, 2018, p.197). This is despite the insecurity felt by lower to middle class peoples, Indigenous peoples, and racialized communities before, during, and after 9/11 (Maira 2018). It seemed that some Canadian citizens were barely considered ‘Canadian.’ In particular, Muslim citizens, and by extension anyone who ‘looked’ Muslim lost, what Arendt (1949) has called, their ‘right to have rights.’

In the following years, Canada introduced several more bills in compliance with the demands of the War on Terror, such as Bill-C24 and Bill C-51. Bill C-24 allowed the state to revoke citizenship from anyone believed to be “committing national security offences” (Nagra, 2017, p.98). Again, security offences are only loosely defined, leaving room for interpretation on behalf of the courts and justice system, which is also an ISA, and therefore structured through dominant ideologies that serve the hegemonic structuring of Canada through racial hierarchy. Bill C-51 broadened already widely stretching surveillance powers, allowing for “the internal sharing of information across all government departments” (Nagra, 2017, p.98). Surveillance, it is argued, is a technology of “control, containment and regulation” (Jasbir Puar, 2007, p.152 cited in Maira, 2018). The imminent and invisible threat of being watched leads one to self-survey, to self-censor, and to “accept that they must sacrifice their freedoms” out of fear of persecution in the name of national security (Maira, 2018, p. 197). Again, such sacrifices are rarely made from the white population, who is assumed innocent until proven guilty.

Canada's participation in the process that led to the torturing of Canadian citizen Omar Khadr by the U.S. in Guantanamo Bay is but one example of the state's movement away from multiculturalism through their devaluing of racialized people, in particular, those of Middle Eastern descent. The fact that a child was tried like an adult goes to show that demonization and devaluing of Middle Easterners did not exclude children and youth, but in fact, included them as the seeds of an inferior, dangerous and violent culture. By imprisoning and torturing Khadr as opposed to rehabilitating him—a more humane process common to dealing with child soldiers in Canada—the state showed that they saw the 'evil' tendencies of Middle Easterners as inherent and insurmountable. This is similar to how the state viewed Indigenous populations at the time of confederation. It's unsurprising, then, that many academics point to the treatment of Middle Easterners living in Canada after 9/11 as revealing Canada's "foundations as a racial state" (Nagra 2017, p.9). Although they don't explicitly claim to target any one particular group, these policies have disproportionately impacted those of Middle Eastern descent. This is exemplified for example, in the fact that those from a Middle Eastern background, regardless of their citizenship status, are consistently and disproportionately 'randomly' checked at airports and border crossings. Although racial profiling is in direct violation of the law, profiling based on race not only continued, but became institutionalized after 9/11 (Thobani, 2007).

These measures, restrictions, and international interventions also point to the racializing of religion. Now connoted with the same homogenous and dehistoricized attributes and qualities ascribed to racial categories, 'Muslim' became a racial identity marker. Being Muslim was associated with a region, the Middle East, and therefore it became inscribed with the traits that were, albeit discriminatorily and through racist logics, ascribed to the East (Thobani, 2007, p. 238). Regardless of religious affiliation, people from the Middle East are commonly thought to be Muslim, and regardless of their nationality, Muslims are assumed to be from the Middle East (Masquelier & Soares, 2016). The War on Terror provided the necessary political and social context for the racialization of a religion

thought to be antithetical to Western values, in part because the West is positioned as secular (Razack, 2007). By racializing a religion, thereby inscribing it with racist narratives that justify that marginalization of a racial group, the delegitimizing and subordination of Muslims was justified. The racialization of Islam is a result of a combination of state and press legitimized racist stereotyping of the Middle East and a renewed sense of nationalism in the West. As the actions of those responsible for the attacks of 9/11 came to represent all Muslims and Islam generally, an entire religion was homogenized, conflated with a region, and subsumed it into the binary of the logical, rational West versus the illogical, un-modern East. Although the idea that racialized others are not inherently inferior was commonly held, the culturalization of racism permitted a devaluing and subordination of aspects of ‘culture,’ which as I’ve discussed, really came to replace ‘race.’ Islam was framed as a large part of Middle Eastern culture, as intrinsically tied to it (Razack, 2007, p.184).

Furthermore, in racializing Islam, the Middle East is presented as religious itself, and therefore as traditional, un-modern, and backward, whereas Western governments can project a secular and therefore presumably logical, rational, and modern state (Razack, 2007). By framing Muslims and Middle Easterners alike as un-modern, violent measures “are defended as civilizing measures, necessary in order to bring democracy, human rights, and women’s rights” to nations that are framed as ‘Muslim’ (Razack, 2007, p.148). This allows for the drawing of a what Razack calls a ‘colour line,’ or in other words, of attributing the faults of Islam with the region itself. This means that some can be rescued from the ills of Islam if their religiosity is not so ‘extreme,’ though what is meant here is that their expressions of religiosity are not threatening to the dominance of whiteness. This has led to an increase in hate crimes targeted towards groups that ‘look Muslim.’ For example, numerous Sikh men, who wear turbans, became targets of hate crimes thanks to this lack of understanding.

Saving the Imperiled through Imperialism: Imperialism, the veil, and white feminism

This section looks at how the marginal and passive position of Middle Eastern women is justified through ideologies of Canadian benevolence and feminism. The section will begin with a look at how militaristic action was justified on humanitarian terms. This will be followed by a discussion on how some of these humanitarian justifications were highly gendered, and actually positioned Middle Eastern women as oppressed, agency-less, and in need of saving. Ongoing support and aid for the war in Afghanistan was garnered through this one-dimensional and rather orientalist understanding of Muslim women and women from the Middle East generally. This will allow for a discussion on how the veil was viewed in popular Canadian culture and society, in order to better understand how Middle Eastern women were viewed and portrayed and positioned during the retreat from multiculturalism.

The Canadian state justified militaristic intervention on the grounds of Western humanitarianism, commitment to the War on Terror, and even feminism. In their participation in the War on Terror, the Canadian government, which at the time was led by Jean Chrétien and the Liberal Party, followed the American's lead and sent troops to Afghanistan. Canadian support for American troops in Afghanistan continued, from Paul Martin to Stephen Harper, who actually increased the number of troops committed to the operation, aptly titled, 'Enduring Freedom.' It would be no stretch to say that Canadian troops have been an essential part of the war in Afghanistan. Support for the war was garnered through emotional, and nationalistic appeals to the Canadian public. Harper provided three main reasons for Canada's continued and extended presences in Afghanistan: to protect Canadian interests; to assert Canadian leadership; and to assist innocent Afghans (Thobani, 2007, p. 217). The state's militaristic action abroad was "deemed as a reflection of the nation's innate masculine nobility, its virile goodness" (Thobani, 2007, p.217). This reconfiguration of Canadian identity in this period has served as a reminder and assurance to white people, "of both their unquestionable cultural and political belonging in Western countries, and their superiority over the non-Western world" (Arat-Koç, 2010, p.164). Continued occupation of Afghanistan was supported by feminists and liberals, and

conservatives alike, as the wars were regarded as “being waged against hypermisogynist and medieval male fanatics,” though the Orientalist and racist structuring of such a justification was not questioned by the mainstream (Thobani, 2007, p.221).

The War on Terror was highly gendered. White Canadian nationals, simply by being white and Canadian were deemed as “possessing superior civilizational values” that could save Middle Eastern women from these ‘male fanatics.’ Canada’s own mistreatments of women, Indigenous people, people of colour, and lower-class citizens was ignored. Middle Eastern women, unlike their male counterparts, could be considered ‘human,’ if they openly and fervently moved away from their own background, gave up traditions, and even spoke poorly of the Middle East. They needed to “subscribe to superior norms and values” and recognize their superiority, openly and without hesitation (Thobani, 2014, p.473). The Middle Eastern woman who resisted assimilation and Western exaltation is marked for elimination, seen as incurable of the disease of backwardness that allegedly plagues all Middle Easterners (Chon & Arzt, 2005; Thobani, 2014). In short, imperialist intervention employed these gendered and racist discourses, “justified by a discourse of liberal democracy and individual freedom,” with women seen as targets for salvation (Maira, 2018, p.8).

Middle Eastern women are used in popular discourse, such as news media to simultaneously point to the threat of Middle Eastern culture, and also to the possibility of managing such threats. Popular representations of Middle Eastern women reduced their identity to that of the ‘terrorists daughter,’ whose entire identity is based around a “patriarchal kinship,” and whose actions, thoughts, and life is determined and constructed by the evil Muslim men in their lives (Naber, 2013, p.202). It’s no surprise, then, that Middle Eastern women who are visibly Muslim, and therefore more easily identifiable, “disproportionately encountered Islamophobia attacks” (Naber, 2013, p.202). Canada’s participation in both Iraq and Afghanistan was justified through an allegedly feminist pledge to Middle Eastern women. It seemed that suddenly the Canadian state was in the business of establishing

feminism abroad. It's important to note however, that this positioning of Middle Eastern men and women does not exist in vacuum, and instead is rooted in logics of Orientalism.

Understanding racism targeted towards Middle Easterners as a product of 9/11 would be an injustice to a group that has been marginalized for years and years through ideological misunderstandings produced and reproduced in the West. In fact, to understand the relations between the West and East exclusively through the War on Terror and 9/11 would be helpful to the goals of a racist state that wishes to erase a complex history (Maira, 2016). The concept of Orientalism was first introduced by Edward Said in the late 1970s in order to describe and define the Western world's past and present interactions with, understandings of, and structuring of Eastern culture. It is, as he argues, the discursive way in which the West understands the East (Thobani, 2007). Orientalism was the polarizing and fracturing ideas produced by the West about the East, established through their voyeuristic travels, and functioning to divide the world "into two unequal parts: the larger 'different,' The East, known as the Orient and the smaller one ('our world') called the Occident or the West" (Nagra, 2017, p.17). The difference between these two binaries is significant, as once again, colonial bodies positioned themselves as superior and modern, and the East as "inferior, traditional, and backward" (Nagra, 2017, p. 18).

Men that come from the Orient were framed as sexually deviant and violent, as corrupted by bewitching religion, full of spirits, djinns, etc. (Thobani, 2007). The women, alternatively, were regarded as seductive yet virginal, "imprisoned in a degenerate culture," and vulnerable to this "devilish' religion" if they do not choose to openly and outwardly denounce it (Thobani, 2007, p. 485). Additionally, they were positioned as exotic and highly sexualized, there for the enjoyment of the voyeur, the white man. Essentially, the Middle Eastern women were passive beings, with no control over their own will. Her veil only adds to her mystery, and the white man's curiosities grow as does his duty to 'unveil' her. In both scenarios, Middle Eastern women are at the mercy of men, hailed as either trapped or exotic, or both. It's unsurprising, then, that the veil often stands in as a symbol of the Orient.

In mainstream Western understandings, the veil, one of the only ways to visibly tell if someone is Muslim or not, connotes the oppression of women, the ‘evils’ of Islam, and the visible difference(s) between citizens of the West and East (Jiwani, 2010).

The ideological and ongoing existence of Orientalism is reflected in white feminist musings on the veil. As previously stated, the veil has been a controversial symbol of the East for many years now. Despite the fact that not all women living in these countries are Muslim, Middle Eastern women have become the targets of white feminism, which uncritically imposes its ideals onto racialized women. White women in Canada, then, find racial affinity with white men who also understand the East through Orientalist ideologies. Both groups, white men and women, can come together as sovereign subjects with a common enemy, or common goal of salvation. This debate about the veil and whether or not it encourages and/or reproduces the oppression of women has existed in modern society for many years now. It is brought up time and time again, and rarely, if ever, by Muslim communities themselves, and more often by white communities who either feel threatened by it, or who point to it as proof of cultural backwardness (Jiwani, 2006; Nagra, 2017). White feminists establish a standard for female equality that all other women must aspire to in order to be considered empowered or free. It is assumed that if a Middle Eastern woman is wearing a veil, then she is being forced or coerced into doing so. Conceptions of female empowerment and autonomy are measured against a white standard. The violence that plagues white women in Canada, and women generally, is “ignored or minimized” by white feminism (Thobani, 2007, p.228). This understanding of gender equality is not only harmful to racialized women but also white women, who understand the violence that they may deal with as individual, as opposed to systemic and “emblematic of Western cultures” (Thobani, 2007, p. 228).

Resisting, Challenging Stereotypes, and Reproducing Ideology: Reactions from North American Middle Eastern women in the post-9/11 period

This section looks at the ways in which North American Middle Eastern women rejected discriminatory, racist, and culturally ignorant understandings and framings of the Middle East and of being Middle Eastern. They are critical of state action following 9/11, and they challenge the racist discourses and policies that were legitimized during this time. Furthermore, I look specifically at the ways in which both Muslim and secular Middle Eastern women find solidarity in North America. Looking specifically at Canada, I discuss the ways in which they resist the idea that somehow being Middle Eastern, or Muslim is at odds with being Canadian. Despite facing racism both in their day-to-day interactions as well as systemically, in terms of legislation passed during the time, Canadian Middle Eastern women maintain a strong connection to Canadian identity and assert their own agency. I argue, however, that North American Middle Eastern women can also reproduce the narratives that marginalize them, consciously or otherwise.

There is good research on resistance on the part of Middle Eastern women in North America to depictions and assumptions of themselves in the post 9/11 period. To assume that Middle Eastern women, or racialized communities generally, have fallen completely victim to these efforts to marginalize and oppress them would be false. As Michel Foucault (1992) asserts, “as soon as there is a power relation, there is possibilities of resistance” (cited in Ali, 2018, p.10). I will specifically focus on Jiwani (2006), Baljit Nagra (2017), and Sunaina Marr Maira’s (2018) research. It’s important to note that even though Maira’s research is based in the United States, in Silicon Valley, California, insights drawn from her research are relevant. In fact, many parallels can be drawn between Silicon Valley and Canada in terms of an assumed culture of acceptance and equality (Maira, 2018). In their qualitative research, which focused largely on interview data they had gathered, these authors found that Middle Eastern women do not accept both state responses to 9/11, everyday racism, or popularized, orientalist understandings and representations of themselves and their heritage.

It should be noted that the participants in both Nagra and Maira's studies were also part of a variety of activist collectives, student associations, and religious groups. While they perhaps didn't alter policy or legislation, they established spaces of acceptance and circulated narratives of inclusion and in doing so, established solidarity in the face of exclusion and marginalization (Maira, 2018). Their ability to access these groups is a privilege, and indication of the social class they occupy.

In Nagra's (2017) study, Muslim women living in Vancouver and Toronto were interviewed. In her interviews, Nagra (2017) found that while the women were aware of the increased demonization of Muslim and Middle Eastern identity, and the vilification of the hijab, they did not adjust their behaviour in any way. Although they were "encouraged to deflect attention away" from their Muslim identity by say, unveiling, "they refused to do so." (Nagra, 2017, p. 42). Maira's (2018) research also reflects similar refusals, which she attributes to the solidarity manifesting from a shared experience of being othered. She looks at both male and female youth that she defines as the "9/11 generation"—those who have grown up in narratives popularized during 9/11, and have been impacted by the policies, politics, and narratives that followed it. Her participants did not necessarily find solidarity through religion, but through the events of 9/11, which they explicitly pointed to as a pivotal moment in shaping their political consciousness, and by extension, their feelings of inclusion in North American society. Her participants, as well as Nagra's (2017) feel impacted by surveillance policies, and understand the ways in which their rights have been reduced in the name of 'anti-terrorism,' which in reality homogenizes Middle Easterners and positions these women as passive, powerless, and sometimes even as violent. Maira (2018) found that in the immediate aftermath of 9/11, although being 'political' was "viewed with anxiety and suspicion" by these youth, many created very political bonds through cross-ethnic alliances (Maira, 2018, p.37). In particular, she found there to be a "strong sense of pan-Islamic solidarity," as well as a "return to the 'true' tenets of Islam" (Maira, 2018, p.56). This observation points to two key findings in Maira's research. The first is that religion often united these women, who hailed from varying national, regional, and cultural backgrounds in the Middle East. This

leaves the question: where do Middle Eastern women who are not religious find solidarity, support, and systems of resistance? For the participants in both Nagra (2017) and Maria's (2018) research, Islam in particular was a major source of inclusion, acceptance, and even strength for these women to resist hate and exclusion.

The second key finding that emerges from Maira's research, is that her participants understood Muslim and Middle Eastern marginalization as stemming from 9/11. This positioned tended to dehistoricize and depoliticize the racism that has impacted this group for a much longer period. Additionally, in ignoring this history of racism in the U.S., the participants tended to believe that a 'return' to the 'true tenants' of Islam is a solution to racism. This is predicated on the assumption that Islam has to now prove itself to be peaceful, to distance itself from the terrorists of 9/11, to show white populations that Islam is not the 'menace' it might commonly appear to be. This position tends to work within narratives that frame Muslim identity and Western identities as homogenous, and also within ideologies of racial hierarchy, that leave white citizens with the power to judge and tolerate and racialized citizens with the burden or representation. This position additionally ignores the racial and gender inequalities that plague the west, and perpetuate the idea that Western nations, like the United States and Canada are inherently liberal. Assuming that the racism they deal with today stems only from a misunderstanding of the 'true' Islam, it tends to not see and address the structural and systemic ways racism works.

I argue, then, that Maira's (2018) participants create spaces of solidarity and resistance, but do not challenge hegemonic conceptions of racism and culture. In fact, Maira (2018) even argues that because her participants engage around a specific moment, in this case 9/11, their resistance is limited in some ways. She argues that a more powerful solidarity, or as she says, 'true bond' would be based around a resistance to "the imperial state and neoliberal capitalism" (Maira, 2018, p.259). For this to happen, women would need to engage in resistance that surrounds their common histories, political struggles, and "overlapping cultural processes" that racialized women experience (Maira, 2018, p. 68).

In other words, a counter-hegemonic understanding of Western and Eastern culture, identity, and politics would allow for a more sustained sort of resistance. It seems, however, that participants in Maria's research focus largely on challenging specific assumptions and misconceptions, but not on challenging hegemony.

Nagra's (2017) research also highlights resistance narratives that in some ways, uphold hegemonic framings of Western and Canadian culture. Nagra's (2017) participants are Canadian, and all identify as Muslim. Her participants express a solidarity manifested through religion. They also express a sense of solidarity emerging through the common experiences of being othered, as Muslims, in a post-9/11 context. Nagra's (2017) participants however, also express a distancing from Arab and Middle Eastern culture, and for the most part, try to disassociate themselves from Arab Muslims, even if they themselves are Arab. Nagra (2017) labels this as 'defensive othering' and argues that in doing so, participants express an internalized racism, and end up repeating racist narratives that homogenize and subordinate the Middle East and Middle Easterners generally. While her participants distance themselves from negative stereotypes, they do not challenge the stereotypes, in fact, they sometimes claim that the stereotypes are true, just not for them (Nagra, 2017). In doing so, they lend legitimacy to narratives which marginalize them.

Nagra's participants share that in a post 9/11 context, their claims to Canadian citizenship came under question, as average citizens, border agents, and others questioned where they came from, how long they've been living in Canada, if they had gone back to the Middle East; all questions which work to police, manage, and delimit their identity. Many women even had people tell them to 'go back' to the Middle East. This however, did not weaken their claims to Canadian citizenship. If anything, the women had weaker ties to Middle Eastern identity and culture, as a result of such policing. Their ties to Canadian citizenship never faltered, and in the face of racism, they continued to claim Canadian citizenship and belonging. In fact, they often labelled and excused the racism they faced as un-Canadian. Nagra (2017) argues that in doing so, they do "the opposite of what is expected of them by

society,” and challenge conceptions of a white Canadian citizenship. Additionally, she states that in asserting their Muslim identity and attempting to create a ‘revitalized’ Islam, like Maira’s (2018) participants, they also challenge assumptions made about Muslims and Muslim women specifically. I argue that although they do disrupt ideologies of whiteness and Canadian citizenship, I believe that like Maira’s (2018) participants, they do so in limited ways. I do, however, agree with Nagra (2017) that their statements challenge the idea that Muslim or Middle Eastern immigrants do not integrate into Canadian culture.

As previously mentioned, participants in Nagra’s research distance themselves from Arab and Middle Eastern people, culture, and history, and in doing so, lend legitimacy to dominant discourses which subordinate Middle Eastern culture and Middle Easterners. Nagra’s participants point to cultural defects of the Middle East and Middle Eastern culture as responsible for the negative perception of Islam. They work within binaries of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Muslims, with good Muslims being those who are removed from the Middle East and instead project a more North American, white culture. The tenants of ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Muslim create boundaries on acceptable forms of “politics and youth activism” (Maira, 2018, p.63). They also are seen as pluralist, moderate in their political beliefs, which are closely aligned with liberal-democratic values. Good Muslims are mostly women, and they generally celebrate their Muslim identity in cultural terms, through food, and are willing to unveil themselves. In asserting their Canadian citizenship in the face of discrimination and attempts to devalue their belonging, they on the one hand challenge the assumptions of the perpetrator. However, they also working within hegemonic discourses of deservingness in claiming not only that they have earned their citizenship by following the laws, but in that they are deserving particularly because they are ‘safe Muslims’ or ‘good Muslims.’ Nagra (2017) does address her participants fervent desire to assimilate and give the appearance of being ‘safe’ Muslims, and how such tropes point to the racial hierarchy that so deeply structures Canadian society. She however, falls short of explaining how the participants themselves work to maintain this hierarchy in their allegiance to Canadian citizenship.

Nagra (2017) also recognizes the confluences between Muslim and Middle Eastern and how both identities have been demonized by Canada and the West.

Nagra's (2017) participants work within binaries of West and East, in that they position gender equality as a Canadian value, and as oppositional to Middle Eastern values, thereby ignoring the gendered violence that still plagues Canadian society. Responses from Nagra's (2017) participants feed into a discourse that divides humans through their ability to display the arbitrary traits of a 'true' Canadian, by repeating dominant discourses of 'good' and 'bad' Muslim as well as 'model immigrant' narratives. This process of outlining 'good' and 'bad' immigrants or citizens "discipline[s] populations through notions" of worthiness (Maira, 2009, p.84). The fear that stems from potentially forever being an immigrant, or as Maira (2009) would say, 'forever foreign,' not only disciplines racialized people, but also divides internally and "uphold[s] the racial order" (Maira 2009, p.82). Additionally, in distancing themselves from Middle Eastern cultures and positioning it as oppositional to Canadian culture, they reaffirm the ideology that being Canadian and being Middle Eastern are different and separate. In fact, in some ways it suggests that in order to be Canadian, one has to lose some of their Middle Easternness. Nagra's (2017) participants, however, challenge conceptions of Middle Eastern women as voiceless and powerless. Nagra (2017) argues that despite Western conceptions of female Middle Eastern passivity, her participants display agency in asserting their identity in the way they choose.

It's important to also note that for the most part, participants in Nagra (2017) and Maira's (2018) research do not frame racism as structural and instead mostly talk about as an individual experience, tied to a moment in history, or to a lack of acceptance from certain individuals that fundamentally do not understand Muslim identity. Jiwani (2006) highlights this individualized understanding of racism among her participants as well. Jiwani's (2006) research also shows an internalization of dominant narratives that reproduce and lend legitimacy to discourses of Middle Eastern inferiority and their exclusion from Canadian citizenship. The participants in her research do

so in similar ways to Nagra's (2017) participants, in that they view experiences of racism as one-off, and not as structural, and instead "attributed racism to ignorance on the part of their peers" (Jiwani, 2006, p.143). Jiwani (2006) states that this only "reinforces elite notions of racism...in which racism is portrayed as being due to a lack of education" or relegated to "a few loonies" (2006, p. 143). In denying the existence of structural racism, and also in dehistoricizing the state sanctioned racism that exploded after 9/11, they work to erase the power dynamics that allowed for their marginalization to so easily be accepted by the Canadian public.

My criticisms are not meant to downplay importance of the efforts of youth participating in Nagra (2017), Jiwani (2006), Maira's (2018) research to resist and cope with the climate of exclusion and hate. Instead, I wish to point to the limits this sort of resistance and how they participate in hegemonic articulations, despite the fact that they appear to resist certain ideologies. This in turn, gives us a better understanding of how hegemony can be articulated in ways that appear seemingly contradictory. Such expressions work to uphold hegemony, as they may give the appearance of producing change, while doing little to establish that change. Hall (1990) states that different components of hegemony might not mirror one another, but they always are "over-determining on and for one another" (1990, p.12). In other words, ideologies that appear to be contradictory to racism, exclusion, but actually work within ideologies of whiteness and white supremacy are needed, so that the appearance of change is projected. Resistance that does not question the assumed exceptionality of Canada, the inherent evils of the Middle East, and adopts uncritical histories of both is working within a hegemonic understanding of racism, acceptance, and power. For Hall (1990), then, a change in hegemony, or in other words, a change in the ideas that prevail and structure society, are pivotal to "the type of social struggles we identify with national, anti-colonial and anti-racist movements" (Hall, 1990, p.21). Common sense understandings shift, and are replaced with new logics and frameworks, that emerge through ideological struggle, that happens, for the most part, between and through "cultural, educational and religious institutions, the family and voluntary associations" as well as "political

parties” (Hall, 1990, p.21). This does not account, however, for the varying and important forms of resistance that work outside of ideological struggle. Indeed, the resistance and challenges produced by women, and Middle Eastern people generally, in these studies should not be dismissed because it does not alter structural racism.

It seems then, that North American Middle Eastern women resist dominant narratives that paint them as passive and in need of saving, while also challenging the idea that Canadian citizenship is white. They often, however, work within a hegemonic understanding of racism and Western liberalism. Jiwani (2006), Nagra (2017) and Maira (2018) all recognize this limitation, to different degrees and in different ways, though they all point to similar solutions. Jiwani (2006) and Nagra (2017) both stress the importance of solidarity and community. Maira (2018), believes that within these communities of solidarity, it’s important to have critical conversations surrounding shared histories, cultural and political processes that impact varying racialized groups

Multiculturalism in its current period: Public divides on a rejuvenation of multiculturalism

The final section of this literature review looks at what I outline as the current, or third period of multiculturalism in Canada. It is important to note that very little academic analysis exists on this period, given that it’s the period we currently inhabit. This period is rooted in the Canadian state’s renewed commitments to dominant discourses of multiculturalism. In other words, this period is an attempt at restoring what was lost in the second period of multiculturalism. This section opens up by looking at how the first period and the third differ, despite both employing a shallow multiculturalism. The 2015 election of liberal Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, the son of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, pushed forward attempts at restoring a dying international reputation. This push, however, is largely symbolic. I look at the ways in which policies and practices of Trudeau and the Liberal government fall short of producing the real, structural, anti-racist change they promise, despite giving the appearance of an undying commitment to addressing both gender and race inequalities. I explore how these confusions

and contradictions between state promises and practices is reflected in the attitudes and sentiments of the Canadian civil society. This is exemplified in the discussion provided on the growth of ring-wing extremism in Canada, as well as anti-immigrant sentiment popularized in mainstream media. Because very little academic research currently exists on this period, this discussion will be based off my own preliminary observations and analysis.

This period differs from the first not just in the specific events that unfold, but also in the political, social and economic context in which it is situated. This period lives in a globalized economic, political and social context, where nations and citizens are more connected than ever, not only through their economic systems, but thanks to information and communication technologies (ICTs), such as the internet and social media. Unconstrained by the limits of travel and restrictions of borders and land regulations, privileged nations, citizens, communities and cultures can communicate and connect online. This also means citizens are more aware of international news. In Canada, news surrounding the United States is unsurprisingly quite popular, and arguably has become even more popular since the election of Donald Trump. His election, however, reflects the growth and legitimization of conservative and anti-immigrant discourse globally, including in Canada. Both the first and current period attempt to move Canada towards more cultural inclusivity, following a period of intensified racial and gendered discrimination. Both, however, do so in shallow ways that do not address structural racism and sexism. This allows for contradictions to emerge both in state practice and in public beliefs. Just as the increase in the racialized immigrant population in the late 1960s induced both the policy of multiculturalism and simultaneously, increased racial violence and discrimination, the current period of multiculturalism deals with similar contradictions.

The 2015 elections were in no way a landslide victory for Trudeau and the liberal government. Stephen Harper's Conservative government lost by only 7.6 percent of the vote (CBC 2015). Clearly, and unsurprisingly, Canadian politics are divided. Two hot button topics during the 2015 elections was over refugees and regulations concerning Muslim women. The hijab ban was a major point of

contention, as the effects of the state's response to 9/11 and the media's continued orientalist framing of Middle Easternness had lasting impacts on the Canadian population (Milewski, 2015). Despite these tensions, the election of Trudeau was interpreted as proof of Canada's commitment for racial and gender equality; that Canada was not going to follow its European and American counterparts; that in the face of narratives of hate, it would assert its commitment to a benevolent multiculturalism (Sakroury, 2013).

Canada was once again lauded as inclusive and accepting. This perception not only erases a colonial history, but also the more recent history and involvement in imperialist violence in both Afghanistan and Iraq. It seemed then, that although Trudeau was voting in the same racist legislation that the conservative government introduced— such as the Barbaric Cultural Practices Act, which criminalized practices like female genital mutilation, but attributed them to a certain culture, or racial background— his outward pledges to multiculturalism and feminism made him revered as a beacon of liberalism in a sea of rising conservatism. In large part, this was due to his electoral promise of bringing in more Syrian refugees, which he fulfilled. These numbers are rather small when compared against the number of refugees many smaller, less economically capable countries have accepted.

It should be noted that since being elected, Trudeau has abolished the Barbaric Cultural Practices Act. This does not mean, however, that the state is seeking to establish anti-racist feminist policies and practices. Trudeau's commitments to re-establishing the tenants of multiculturalism are for the most part symbolic, and have not yet taken the form of concrete, socio-economic policy changes that would produce structural shifts in Canadian society and foster racial and gender equality. Trudeau, however, is praised internationally for his feminist policies and practices. Shortly after assembling his cabinet, Trudeau was asked why his cabinet was half female half male. He responded, "because it's 2016," implying that it's about time more females were included in high ranking government positions. This click-bait-soundbite, however, not only reduces gender equalities of the Canadian state to an issue of simple numerical representation, it also ignores the ways in which Trudeau and the Liberal government

maintain sexist systems. In his inability to address the concerns of Indigenous populations and the ongoing murder of Indigenous women in material ways, for example, Trudeau's feminist moves appear shallow, and lacking in intersectionality. While he consistently speaks to the importance of establishing positive, non-exploitative relationships with the Indigenous population, very little legislation or action has been implemented to reduce the economic, political, and social suffering of Indigenous people. For example, many attribute the existence and growth of pipelines to the violent trend of missing and murdered Indigenous women (Simpson, 2016). As previously mentioned, the 'Highway of Tears' in Northern British Columbia, named as such due to the number of Indigenous women who go missing and are murdered in this area. As pipeline work begins, Indigenous people are dispossessed from their land, that is now inhabited by white, Canadian men hired to build a pipeline. Historically, Indigenous women have been "rendered less valuable," through systems of colonization, and this creates an environment where Indigenous women, in their new interactions with white, Canadian men, "disappear" because they have been deemed killable, rapeable, expendable" (Simpson, 2016, p.13). Their deaths are considered random, 'unexplainable,' and at best, tragic. They are rarely seen as systemic, and if they are, they are not addressed as such by the state. In refusing to acknowledge the violent social impacts of the Trans Mountain pipeline project, or other pipelines that interfere with Indigenous land claims and reservations, and justifying its construction on economic logics, Trudeau points to the limits of his feminism and commitment to women's rights, and Indigenous reconciliation.

The Trudeau government has, however, taken steps to remove or amend a lot of the Harper government's racist and sexist policies, such as Bill C-51, the Anti-Terrorism Act that worked to expand the powers of CSIS and thereby reduced the rights of thousands of Canadians 'suspected' of criminality or who were postoned as having criminal tendencies, sometimes purely because of their religion or race. These amendments however, often fall short of establishing racial and gender equality. For example, amendments made to Bill C-51, now Bill-C-59, provide clearer and more concise

definitions of what does and does not constitute as ‘promoting terrorism.’ The policy was also altered, however, to state that these charges can apply to anyone interfering with ‘critical infrastructure’ (International Civil Liberties Monitoring Group). This means that Indigenous peoples protesting a pipeline can be charged for terrorism, as they would be interfering with ‘critical infrastructure.’ In addition, someone can be accused of terrorism if their actions are assumed to be impacting the sovereignty of other states as well, if Canada is an ally. These international relationships between the Canadian government and other nation states is, as previously stated, an important and desired outcome of Canadian liberal multiculturalism. Framed as welcoming, inclusive, and accepting, Canada positions itself for political and economic ties to other nations. The motives for such relations, however, are largely economic and less so about fostering and reproducing narratives of inclusion, democracy, and acceptance. For example, Canada’s relationship with Israel and the limits to political dissent in Canada that stem from this relationship. Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movements are not permitted in Canada, and in fact, Trudeau has spoken out against numerous times. In fact, in 2016 Trudeau passed a motion which condemned any and all BDS movements in Canada and Internationally (Zerbisias, 2016) In an increasingly globalized and connected world, constructed and sanctioned through neoliberal policies, international relations, economic partnerships, and political loyalties are important and point to what the state is willing to tolerate, ignore, and bolster. Examining the Canada governments relationship with Israel unearths the contradictions between Canada’s international and economic loyalties and alleged national commitment to multiculturalism.

It’s argued that in terms of international relations with the Middle East, there is little difference between Harper and Trudeau (Seligman, 2018). Canada’s relationship with Israel, a nation with a colonial relationship to the Palestinian people, is an example of a political, economic, and social partnership that embody and outline the values of the Canadian state. Harper had projected a fervent commitment to supporting Israel, both through policy and in gestures and statements. For example, in 2008 Canada became the “first country to announce it would not attend the UN follow-up to the 2001

World conference against racism” because they felt it bolstered anti-Israeli and anti-Semitic rhetoric (Seligman, 2018, p.86). The liberals have always swayed back and forth on the issue of Israel. Arguably, this pushed Trudeau to stress a loyalty to the state, in order to gain the Jewish Canadian vote in 2015, as they “saw a steep decline” in the years prior, in part because of their movement away from Israel (Seligman, 2018, p.89). This can be seen in the aforementioned delegitimization of BDS movements, as well as decisions made by Trudeau immediately following his election. He had voted against resolutions affirming the Palestine right to self-determination, the illegality of Israeli settlement in the occupied Palestinian territories and the applicability of the Fourth Geneva Conventions to occupied areas under Israeli control (Seligman, 2018, p.89).

This decision does not fall in line with what Trudeau and the liberal government promised in terms of their commitment to human rights and equality, in the unequivocal way they pledged during elections, as well as after coming into power. The continued colonization of Palestinian territory and their ongoing struggle for basic human rights is ignored by Canada, who is itself a modern settler state. Instead, legitimacy is given to Israel and actions taken on behalf of the state. Although Trudeau promised to divert from the racist national and international policies of Harper, his attempts of renewing Canadians commitment to multiculturalism and inclusion do little to actually achieve this diversion (Seligman, 2018).

The difference lies in the rhetoric Trudeau projects, in his commitment to addressing every religious holiday on social media, in his greeting of refugees at the airport, and in the implementation of motions like M-103, the motion to condemn Islamophobia. Through the study of hate crime statistics, a government sanctioned research team will look at how religious discrimination and racism can be reduced. This motion, however, is predicated on the assumption that the discrimination and racism is ‘out there.’ It does not consider the ways in which the Canadian state also participates in racism and discrimination, towards Muslims and other minority groups. Trudeau and the liberal

government continue to project racism as “individual ignorance” and push forward a “let’s talk’ approach” (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p.168). Additionally, M-103 assumes that hate can be measured through statistics, and that victims of hate will always report these incidents, and furthermore, that they’ll recognize them as hateful. It should be noted, however that since its implementation, M-103 has been accused of sidelining “the issue of Islamophobia” despite it being “the original impetus” for its implementation (Zine, 2018).

This approach is also reflected in the very loosely defined ‘antiracist’ strategy Trudeau and the liberal government have released. At this point in time, the strategy involves considerable funding to antiracist organizations in Canada, though it does not say who decides which organizations get the funding and what criteria they must meet. Additionally, this strategy involves creating a national dialogue on racism, and encourages people to share their experiences and point to solutions. Again, this ignores systematic racism and the problems that come with a settler state facilitating conversations where racialized people “share their experiences and feelings, while whites are expected to express their show and show sympathy,” with no real plan of changing their circumstances (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2010, p.168). In proposing his anti-racist strategy, Trudeau received quite a bit of backlash. First and foremost, he was warned against starting a national dialogue because the debate was deemed too ‘contentious.’ Debate, contentious or otherwise, is an essential part of democracy. To suggest that a discussion on racism is contentious and should potentially not happen points to the fragility of the Canadian public’s commitment to racial equality. Many worried that the debate would reduce their freedom of speech and felt that motions like M-103 were already reducing their freedoms (Press, 2018). This supposed attack on freedom-of-speech is an argument used rather frequently by many right-wing citizens and politicians alike in both Canada and abroad. In fact, this works within discourse attacking “political correctness,” as outlined by Henry & Tator (2006), as it argues that people, in particular marginalized people, are being too sensitive and furthermore too demanding when it comes to the language and behaviours they’re willing to tolerate. Their sensitivity is so extreme, it is argued,

that it infringes on people's freedom of speech (Henry & Tator, 2006). This argument is used frequently as a way to ignite fear and garner support by right-wing extremist groups. In using this argument, right-wing extremist groups in Canada has been able to frame Trudeau as against Canadian values and as anti-democratic.

Trudeau has also made promises to increase the number of immigrants accepted into Canada every year. Right-wing groups in Canada have marked Trudeau as a 'jihad supporter,' as a leader that's trying to destroy Canada in his, as they argue, careless increase in migrants permitted in Canada. It should be noted, that the proposed increase of the current intake to 250,000 immigrants every year, and then the gradual increase to 350,000 by 2021 is in no way astronomical or even unprecedented for an economically developed and geographically vast nation such as Canada. In terms of humanitarianism and international responsibilities as a country that brands itself as inclusive and benevolent, Trudeau's proposed intake is actually rather small when one considers the influx of migrants and displaced peoples across the world. To turn our backs on vulnerable people and refuse to claim any responsibility in influencing their migration through imperialism, environmental carelessness, and hypercapitalist expansion is not only contradictory to Canadian claims to multiculturalism and acceptance, but also socially irresponsible and cruel. Right-wing extremist groups, as well as many who consider themselves to be centrist or left-leaning argue, however, that this increase is irresponsible and destructive to Canadian nationhood. In fact, numerous recent polls show that a majority of Canadians are concerned about the growing number of immigrants coming into Canada (Vomiero & Russell, 2019; Desmarais, 2018).

Although the existence of right-wing extremist groups remained largely on the fringes following the Second World War and into the twenty-first century, it has gained popularity and become increasingly normalized in this third period of multiculturalism (Perry & Scrivens, 2016). Its worrisome growth has led researchers, law enforcement, civil liberties advocates and journalists alike to begin reporting on the trend in Canada with greater urgency. Very little academic research has been

done on right-wing extremism in Canada, “despite the fact that law enforcement officials” now see it as a “significant threat” (Perry & Scrivens, 2016, p.820). The Three Percenters, or ““threepers,”” an anti-Muslim militia that began in the United States and has found its way to Canada has been dubbed as the “most dangerous” group in Canada, by Maxime Fiest, himself a former neo-Nazi who now works at the Centre for the Prevention of Radicalization Leading to Violence (Hunter, 2018).

Academic research has not been able to keep up with this steady growth. Experts like Evan Balgord, co-founder of the Canadian Anti-Hate Network point to the election of Trump and the Charlottesville Protests as catalysts for the growth of right-wing extremist groups, and white nationalistic hate. I argue that since then, right-wing extremism and the anti-immigrant narratives they perpetuate have become to some extent, normalized.

In their research, Barbara Perry and Perry Scrivens (2016) trace the growth of recent right-wing extremist groups in Canada. They find that groups lack centralization, which makes them appear unorganized, particularly because membership is hard to trace, and the goals are scattered and lacking in direction. For this reason, it’s easier to disregard them as powerless, especially since most exist and organize immaterially, online. This lack of concern, however, is misplaced, given that these online communities have very real, material impacts. The growth of groups like the Threepers, the Proud Boys, White Boys Posse, and the Canadian Heritage Alliance, parallels with the growth in popularity of news organizations like Rebel Media, InfoWars, and Storm Troopers. These media organizations are a breeding ground for hate, anti-government and anti-immigrant rhetoric. In fact, Alexandre Bissonnette, the young man responsible for the death of six Muslims after he shot up a mosque on January 29, 2017 exemplifies their paralleled growth and power. Bissonnette himself points to his media consumption as the motivating factor in his deadly decision (Perreux, 2018). Bissonnette states that the immigration policies of the liberal government are what led him to carry out the attacks, as he was worried the state was letting in Muslim terrorists, in its supposed haste to bring in more refugees

and migrants. It was revealed in his trial, however, that Bissonnette was getting this information from right wing extremist sources, like Rebel Media (Bruemmer, 2018).

The rhetoric shared on these websites, about the imminent threat of migrants who will not only steal your jobs but also reduce your freedoms, the carelessness of the liberal government, and the erasure of ‘white Canadian’ culture are not just narratives then. They serve as justification for racial violence, and embolden governmental belonging for white Canadians. These narratives are not unique, they mirror popularized right-wing extremism, and anti-immigrant narratives south of the border. In fact, these groups intertwine and work together, they share strategies, tips, and fears (Perry & Scrivens, 2016).

It appears that right-wing extremist ideas are gaining more mainstream attention. For example, in 2018, former cabinet member for Harper and the Conservative government, Maxime Bernier founded the People’s Party of Canada. Although the party’s platform is still being developed, it was established in response to what Bernier sees as an ‘extreme multiculturalism’ that has taken hold in Canada, which he believes threatens social cohesion. He argues too many people are being let into Canada, who are against Canadian values of “freedom, equality, tolerance and openness” and who don’t properly integrate (Tasker, 2018). Bernier justifies exclusion by claiming that *others* are exclusionary and close-minded. Bernier states that the liberal party and Trudeau have encouraged this extremity, and pushes for a ‘going back,’ to our cultural roots, by which he means a predominantly white society. Bernier, unlike many right-wing extremist groups, has received widespread mainstream media attention. While he does not garner the same level of support as other more moderate Conservative leaders, his ideas are not uncommon or even disgraced in Canada. Although Trudeau deems them, “un-Canadian,” others do not agree, and in fact, see Bernier as a ward of Canadian values. It appears then, that even if Trudeau is attempting to re-establish this multiculturalism, however shallow, he is met with racist resistance that initially gained strength in the second period of multiculturalism and is now fearless in speaking out and demanding attention.

The summer of 2018 saw the normalization and flood of anti-migrant narratives not only in right wing media and among right-wing extremists groups, but also mainstream Canadian media. It seemed that the media was pointing to a border ‘crisis,’ claiming that the nation was dealing with unprecedented numbers of ‘illegal’ immigrants rushing into Canada. Politicians like the Conservative Leader at the time, Andrew Scheer even called it a crisis, lending legitimacy to the idea that the state and authorities were not in control of their borders. Fear stoked through headlines like, “MALCOM: Evidence mounts that Canada is losing Control on immigration” (Toronto Sun 2018) and “With all eyes on the U.S. southern border, illegal crossings from Canada quietly increase” (CBC 2018), worked to legitimize suggestions of stricter immigration policies, a distancing from a politics of inclusion, and stricter screening process of immigrants, to ensure they possess “Canadian values.”

On January 28th, 2017, in the face of a travel ban that targeted Muslims and Middle Easterners, implemented by President Trump, Trudeau had tweeted, under his personal Twitter account: “To those fleeing persecution, terror & war, Canadians will welcome you, regardless of your faith. Diversity is our strength #WelcometoCanada.” It did not take long however, for the shiny veneer of Trudeau’s words to fade as it was met with the crushing reality of Canada’s immigration regulations and general attitudes towards racialized migrants. This is exemplary of this period of multiculturalism: where there are confusions and fractures between the governments’ promises, policies, and practices, and the public’s perceptions on the value of multiculturalism or even immigrants generally. In marking human beings as ‘illegal,’ Canadians confirm the fractures between Trudeau’s, albeit shallow and precarious attempts at rejuvenation and the dominant attitudes in society. Canada and the United States have signed onto the Safe-Third Country Agreement, which states that once a refugee has made their claim in either Canada or the United States, they cannot make that claim in the other country. Once they pursue a claim, they cannot do so in the other country, as it is assumed that both Canada and the United States are safe for refugees and asylum seekers. Arguably, however, with the election of Trump, his deportation of refugees and immigrants, and the racist, anti-Mexican, Muslim, and black

rhetoric that has rapidly gained legitimacy, the ‘safety’ of the United States for racialized immigrants, refugees and asylum seekers has become unstable. Because of this agreement, refugees have been entering Canada through unofficial ports, as this is the only way they can claim asylum and hope to be eventually processed as a refugee. If they were to enter from an official port, they would be sent back to the United States. Again, their entry through unofficial ports is not illegal, and that is in part due to the fact that Canada has signed the UN’s 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, which protects refugees and gives them the right to due process. So, while border crossings may have been irregular in the sense that they did not enter through official ports, they are not in violation of the law.

If anything, Canada is in violation of the human rights of migrants. In the constant coverage of border crossings in the summer of 2018, it was revealed that children were being separated from their parents at the border, and even in some cases were being detained (Shingler, 2018). In 2017, 151 minors were detained and another eleven detained and separated from their parents, who were being held in immigration centres, awaiting the filing of their refugee applications. Comparatively, the United States has done far worse in recent years, with the Trump administration having detained more than 2,000 children since April of 2018. Regardless, this practice of detaining and separating children is cruel and in no way a reflection of a state committed to equality and human rights.

It seems however, that in an attempt to ease public concerns, the Liberal government and liberal news organizations highlight the importance and value of migrants. They do this, however, not by projecting their humanity, disrupting the idea that they are somehow culturally homogenous and backward, and questioning our own moral superiority in the process, but instead, by commodifying immigrants. Immigrants are seen as important but only in terms of the economic value they bring. A headline in the National Observer (2018) reads, “If immigration was slashed, Canada’s economy would feel the pinch: report,” or a Globe and Mail (2018) headline asserts “Canada aims for immigration boosts to buttress economy as population ages.” These are only two of hundreds of headlines that are for the most part regarded as liberal and open-minded. I argue that outside of racial

designation and marginalization, a common positioning of immigrants, among both the left and the right, is assigning value to human beings based on their economic productivity. Who the immigrants coming into Canada should be, right-wing extremist groups often argue, depends on their nationality and race, or as they claim their ‘culture’ and religion, but also on whether or not they can produce economic value. Liberal Canadians also share these sentiments, however, they are simply expressed through a more palatable, democratic language, or in other words, through discourses of democratic racism. For example, in a poll conducted by Maclean’s it was found that 84 per cent of respondents felt that prospective immigrants should take a values test to see if they align with Canadian values (Glavin, 2017). Maclean’s argues that this is not in fact an indication of Canada’s lurch to the right, or arguably their sustained commitment to racial hierarchy, and instead, believes it’s a reflection of Canadians’s liberalness. They believe that the values they are testing for, progressiveness, openness, and a belief in democracy, for example, make the values test legitimate. How such values would be measured is not outlined, and the fact that maybe Canadian nationals would not hold these values is not considered. In asserting the need for a values test for ‘others,’ Canadians further exalt their nationality.

These fears and anxieties are extended not only onto Canada’s immigration system, but also in the state’s humanitarian efforts with migrants generally, as was exemplified in controversies regarding Canada’s signing of the UN’s migration pact. The migration pact is an attempt to deal with the global, mass migration of displaced peoples, that is “of a scale not seen since the Second World War” (Kalvapalle, 2018). 193 countries have signed The Global Compact for Safe, Orderly, and Regular Migration (2018), with the goal of establishing shared understandings, responsibilities and purpose between states in terms of migration. The pact seeks to create cooperation between nations, so that migrants and citizens alike are protected. While it has 23 objectives, nothing is legally binding. In other words, the UN and other nations cannot change Canadian immigration policy. The pact simply asks that nations do their best to work together through this global crisis and ensure that they are meeting the standards of human rights for not just their national citizens, but also for refugees,

immigrants, and asylum seekers. In no way is the pact a legally binding treaty. Many Canadians, however, are against the signing of the pact, believing it will fundamentally alter the demographics of Canada for the worst. Incorrectly, Conservative leader Andrew Scheer has framed this pact as a legally binding policy and used this perspective to further the legitimacy of anti-migrant rhetoric in Canada. Protests have spurred across the nation since Trudeau announced that Canada would be signing the treaty (“9 arrested during protests against UN migration pact...,” CBC 2018) The Trudeau government has continued to defend the pact, arguing that it’s not legally binding, and is in line with Canadian values of acceptance and multiculturalism. It’s clear however, that there are many tensions and concerns emerging among Canadians when it comes to issues of migration. Politicians, like Scheer, recognize these fears and capitalize them, and lend legitimacy to the idea that immigration is detrimental to Canadian society. It seems that maybe, the notion of ‘Canadian values’ needs to be revisited and redefined, or scraped all together, as there is very little consensus on what these values really are, and who holds them.

To claim multiculturalism in moments of calm and order is easy. The current period of multiculturalism reveals Canada’s unwillingness to maintain pledges to multiculturalism and put a self-proclaimed commitment to human rights and inclusion into practice, in moments that require them the most. A commitment to multiculturalism that crumbles at the suggestion of cooperation is a reflection of a commitment made on weak, unstable, precarious grounds. Canada’s hegemonic structuring of racial hierarchy, then, is further revealed in this period of multiculturalism, and the contradictions that defined Canada in the first period are further exaggerated.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Interview Data

Introduction

This section examines and analyses the narratives of 13 Canadian Middle Eastern women and fosters deeper understanding on their expressions and experiences of belonging and feeling Canadian, and their negotiations of Canadian contradictions, and how these two things inevitably intertwine. I draw connections between participant's experiences and expressions of belonging and identity to the three periods of multiculturalism outlined earlier. Sentiments and stories shared by participants often echo ideologies stemming from these periods, which works to show how multiculturalism as ideology is fluid and evolving. Additionally, I bring in Henry and Tator's (2006) discourses of democratic racism to enrich a discussion on the ways in which participants manage Canadian contradictions. The chapter is broken up into two parts, corresponding to each research question.

The first part looks at how processes of racialization as well as 'becoming' Canadian impacted their feelings of belonging, feeling Canadian, and their experiences of acceptance and inclusion. As first-generation immigrants who migrated when they were young, their experiences of belonging and being Canadian are influenced not only by processes of racialization, but also in their experiences with early education, with gaining citizenship, and in simply being a young person who is still maturing into themselves. Additionally, the political epoch these women were born into and grew up in is largely defined by 9/11 or War on Terror narratives that marginalize and homogenize Middle Eastern identity, making their experiences of belonging and being Canadian of particular interest. Their experiences are both raced and gendered, making their expressions of belonging and feeling Canadian of particular interest, especially when considering the widespread circulation of and allegiance to dominant discourses of multiculturalism in Canada.

The second section examines how these women resist, manage, and negotiate the contradictions that so deeply define Canadianness and nationhood. In the face of narratives painting them as passive, pitiful, and potential seeds of evil, despite promises of acceptance and inclusion, how do they negotiate and resist these narratives? Has belonging been impacted by Canadian contradictions, and if so how? And in

terms of identity, how do such contradictions impact their expressions of being and feeling Canadian? This section, like the previous, uses the interview data to answer these research questions.

In doing so, both sections bolster the narrative of these women, recognizing them as evidence that can be highlighted in order to provide a more robust yet specific understanding not only of the experiences of Canadian Middle Eastern women, but also of the overall racial climate of Canada today. I argue, if we so fervently hold on to a Canadian image of multiculturalism and inclusion, it's imperative to investigate how these pledges exist in the lives of those who rest on the margins of society.

Although not all the women in this study feel Canadian, they all challenge dominant Canadian ideologies in their expressions of Canadian identity and belonging. Some of the women have worked through Canadian contradictions and recognize the opposing existence of ideologies of multiculturalism and ongoing systemic racism. They are critical of Canada's history of colonialism and have highly politicized understandings of its current race relations. For these women, then, claiming a Canadian identity is complicated, and many feel uncomfortable doing so. Conversely, some women recognize the ongoing discrimination in Canada, but are less critical in their expressions of belonging and Canadian identity. These women see the ways in which Canadian citizenship and identity is positioned as white, and resist this ideology in their assertions of feeling and being Canadian. Often, however, the narratives women who claim a Canadian identity reflect Canadian contradictions. In other words, they have to some extent consented to certain parts of Canadian liberal multiculturalism. This means that sometimes they express contradictions in how they feel.

Before entering a discussion of these narratives, I feel it is important to note that only four women pointed to 9/11 as a watershed moment in terms of their racialization and inclusion in Canadian society. Interestingly, these participants were older than the rest, and likely have clearer memories of the events of 11 September 2001. In other words, while all participants recognize the sort of demonization and inferiorization that has been legitimized since 9/11 and the War on Terror, only a few point to 9/11 directly. Again, this is a reflection of the political epoch these women were born into. Although popularized narratives of the Muslim terrorist and the repressed Muslim woman still exist, they have increasingly lost

their direct link with the events of 9/11 and instead exist and are understood in a larger, globalized context of international terrorism and global crisis. Furthermore, a majority of the women (all but 4) expressed feeling uncomfortable, to some degree, in spaces where there are only white people. Because of this, most of them have chosen, consciously or otherwise, to surround themselves with other racialized people. This discomfort points to the racial hierarchy that is prevalent in Canadian society.

Mohrdar: Are there any situations where you feel, 'I don't connect with this, I feel out of place here'?

Saya: This sounds stupid but at certain establishments, for example, I went to a bar one time and it was literally all white people...and we were in Toronto, downtown Toronto, but I felt so uncomfortable and so out of place. I just kind of...feel people's gaze. And maybe I guess in certain situations...I have to... I'm sure you know about the burden of representation. And you know, if you're the only person there and people are coming to you directly, I don't know, it's a weird feeling to be singled out like that.... I tend not to participate in spaces like that...but I've definitely felt singled out because I'm not white.

Saya's experience also point to a lack of desire to be welcomed into white spaces. The same women who feel uncomfortable in all-white spaces, do not wish to be welcomed into them either. While they recall their younger-selves seeking acceptances from such spaces and communities, this has changed. For example, Shadi expresses a lack of desire to be involved in feminist groups on campus, despite being a champion for women's rights and equality. This is because she feels these are largely white spaces, and therefore don't reflect the truly multicultural, inclusive spaces she wishes to be a part of. This means that while initially, participants may have felt excluded from white spaces, they have found more suitable, fulfilling alternatives. These alternatives will be explored in the second section of this chapter.

Lastly, I feel inclined to make a note about the individual and collective strength of the women who participated in this study. All of the women, regardless of their experiences of belonging and being Canadian, have felt unsafe in Canada at some point or another. Many attribute these feelings to their position as women and others to their position as racialized women. Regardless, all of these women have experienced instability and unease, and most believe it is because they are women. Additionally, all have

expressed feelings of displacement, as first-generation immigrants, either due to strenuous, tiring or tedious processes to gain citizenship, or in their journey to Canada. For example, one woman has lived in a refugee camp in Syria; another had to deal with a racist immigration officer who made advances at her. I feel incredibly humbled to have been privy to their journeys and experiences, and I feel empowered and hopeful, as all of these women have overcome adversities in their journeys of belonging and being Canadian. I thank them again for being such open, caring, and diligent participants in this project.

Chapter 4.1: How Processes of Racialization, Immigration on Impact Expressions of Belonging and Being Canadian

Introduction

The section opens up with a discussion on how witnessing their parent's struggling with belonging and adjusting to Canadian life have impacted participants's feelings of belonging. These women have not only been witness to their parent's policing, they've also had to, at times, act as the first-line of defence. Witnessing this discrimination has led some women to self-police and adjust their own behaviour. Additionally, many women are aware their parents have removed themselves from their daily lives in the Middle East, and in some ways, sacrificed a level of comfort. This section also explores how this awareness impacts their feelings of belonging, with many expressing immense gratitude and feelings of privilege.

Next, I look at how reminders of Canadians exceptionalism from their peers and family in the Middle East have impacted their expressions of belonging in Canada. Many women cite their peers expressing envy and claiming that moving to Canada was 'cool.' They largely attribute this understanding of Canada to the saturation of Western media in the Middle East. While this made many women feel satisfied with decisions to move to Canada and become Canadian, others felt that this media saturation had negative impacts on them. Western beauty standards made many of the women feel they might not belong in Canada. Additionally, many are critical of this bolstering of Canadiannes in the Middle East, and feel it's misplaced.

Following this discussion, I look at the ambiguities of whiteness and how this impacts women, all of whom point to the privilege of having a light complexion. This section opens up with a discussion on how participants see Canadian citizenship as linked to whiteness. Next, I look at the ways in which some women sometimes pass as a white, which can in turn protect them from racism. This 'passing', however, is precarious, as it is dependent on how other people read your race. For some women, passing as white is celebrated and even aspired to. For some women, this led created embarrassment or resentment of their ethnicity, particularly when they were young. Others express dismay at the erasure of ethnic identity that

comes with passing. This section ends with a discussion on how a variety of identities are also imposed on these women.

Bullying and teasing are discussed at length, as both have worked to create discomfort among participant, in terms of feeling accepted in Canada. In this section I specifically discuss the bullying and teasing they faced soon after they immigrated, as children and youth. All of the women faced some sort of racial bullying growing up, leaving many feeling like they don't belong because of their accents, body hair, or inability to speak English. Many express having grown out of these anxieties, but others still carry them. These are complicated things for a child to feel, especially as they are adjusting to living in a new country.

The section closes with a discussion on popular representation of Middle Easterners and the Middle East generally. Many of the women believe the Middle East has been misrepresented, and that news and popular media play a role in perpetuating harmful stereotypes. I look at how women were impacted by post-9/11 dominant discourses that framed their cultural heritage as backward, savage, violent, and marked Islam as antithetical to Canada, Western democracy, and even gender equality. The women in this study cite feelings of distress and anxiety, stemming from a lack of critical, accurate representations of the Middle East and Middle Easterners in the media, as they do not wish to be associated with this albeit inaccurate, understanding of the Middle East.

Witnessing Parental Struggle with Belonging, Being Canadian, and Adjusting

All of the women cited their parents' struggling with belonging and being Canadian as a factor influencing their own experiences of belonging and being Canadian. Their position as first-generation immigrants meant that they went through processes of assimilation, racialization, socialization alongside their parents. For these women, this has often meant that they bear witness to the discrimination their parents face, and are witness to the policing of their parents. Additionally, the sacrifice their parents have made are obvious to these women, which complicate their expressions of being Canadian.

Bearing witness to their parent's discrimination has very real impacts for first-generation immigrant youth. For example, Tafida, a visibly Muslim 21-year-old who emigrated from Egypt, but having also lived

in Saudi Arabia, witnessed her mother's interactions with store clerks in Canada, who dismiss her because of her accent.

Tafida: She would be conscious of, say we're at a store, and she's speaking with the person... she has a question for that person, they'll hear her question and then they'll answer me. They won't even look at her, 'cause they assume she won't understand, because she has an accent, you know? She would always say that story, and it happens a lot, she would be like, 'Did you notice? Did you notice? What am I?' and I'd be like, 'yeah for sure,' I guess it made me more conscious that they're facing this.

This is a form of gatekeeping or policing, as discussed under the first period of multiculturalism, through the work of Thobani (2006), Jiwani (2006), and Naber (2013), who point to the ways in which racialized and immigrant communities learn about the behaviours and manners that are valued and accepted. This policing tactic, however, clearly extends into all three periods of multiculturalism as an effective way to other already marginal groups of people, in this case racialized immigrants. By making fun of someone's accent, you are policing their behaviour, informing them that the accent is not valued and instead, will be made fun, or ignored all together, as it is in Tafida's case. Nagra (2017) states that the policing of accent goes back to the "legacy of colonialism," as it is indicative of a society that values "American, British, or European accents," or accents from historically white nations (Nagra, 2017, p.52). Policing has had long-term impacts on Tafida, who frequently brings up how she shifted her accent over time to make it sound more 'Canadian.;' Although she asserts that she no longer cares if someone thinks she has an accent or not, it's clear that the policing her mother faced impacted her behaviour and pushed her to avoid similar interactions in the future.

Tafida: I came here at 11, my accent shifted and...up until recently, two years ago, if people said I had an accent it made me really upset, it made me be like, 'excuse me, I don't have an accent, what are you saying?!' But now I really couldn't care less.

By bearing witness to her mother's adjustment to Canada and Canadian culture and the discrimination she faced, Tafida learned what changes she had to make in order to be seen as Canadian. Until she was able to adjust her accent, Tafida was vulnerable to policing, which reminded her of the fact that she was not like white peers. In being marked as 'different,' a generally negative label to hold as a child, Tafida was left feeling excluded and othered.

Sometimes women were used as a proxy for racism targeted at their parents. For Calla, a 28-year-old from Syria, this became clear in her interactions with teachers in elementary school, who would mock her mother's inability to speak English.

Calla: I was literally sent to the office all the time, anything I did...she was like 'that's disrespectful, you're aggressive, you're rude, you're a bully.' She was always picking on me and it made it harder because it's not like I had a parent who could come and intervene. And then she called a social worker and I remember she was like, 'oh...is your mother able to understand what a social worker is because, you know I know your mother doesn't speak English.'

In Calla's case, she was not able to rely on her parents as a form of support, and instead, she had to act as their first line of a defence. This was common for the women in this study, who often acted as translators, and sometimes even as protectors for their parents. This is reflected in Masquelier & Soares (2016) research, that suggested that immigrant youth are teaching their parents while they are also learning. Several women cited feeling more on edge when they're out with their parents because they fear they will be discriminated against. To further complicate things, some worry that coming to the defence of their parents will also make them victims of discrimination and point to their 'otherness.' Despite this fear, however, all participants believe it's important to help and defend their parents, even if they risk being outed as 'other.'

In fact, many of the participants feel indebted to their parents. All of the women felt that their parents had migrated to Canada in hopes of establishing a better life for their children. For the women in this study, that meant an expectation to go to post-secondary school, as many of their parents expressed a belief in a superior education system in Canada. These expectations were addressed in Taylor & Krahn's (2013) research, discussed under the first period of multiculturalism, when they pointed to the pressures of racialized immigrant youth to attend post-secondary school. In their study, the participants saw their parents sacrifices and investments in their children, and in part, for these reasons, they felt an obligation to go to school. I argue that while my participants may have felt obliged, they do not express an obligation. Instead, all express gratitude for their parents sacrifice and state that they would have pursued post-secondary education regardless. Immigrants, and youth in particular, do not want to appear ungrateful, as they recognize the sacrifices of their parents (Taylor & Khran, 2013). Additionally, this common themes among participants draws on Jiwani's (2006) discussion on the promises made to racialized

women. Jiwani (2006) argues that young, racialized female migrants are usually promised better lives in the West, so long as they adjust enough to the culture and lifestyle. Failure to do so is their personal failure. Jiwani (2006) argues that young women can take on these logics themselves, and therefore express more gratitude and admiration for Canada and the West generally, as is exemplified in the proceeding quotations.

For Fatima, a 31-year-old from Bahrain, she was old enough when she immigrated to be aware that her parents had successful professional careers at home, with strong support systems and networks of loved ones, but decided to sacrifice this comfort for the betterment of their children's life

Fatima: I was old enough to be aware of the fact that my parents had given up very stable, very successful lives to move to a brand new country, with...no sense of what was going to happen and without much of a support network, because where we had grown up...my grandparents had been there, there was generations of friends and family that we had to count on, and when we got here it was just like, 'wow we literally know no one' so that was fascinating to me, 'wow you guys took this on for no other reason except that you wanted us to go to a good school,' so there is that sort of ongoing awareness....So I watched them struggle to get jobs where their professional credentials were recognized, and that didn't happen, that was really hard, for a long time, that was a good...four or five years, where at one point they were selling direct energy contracts, door to door, and I was like, 'this is ridiculous...they're professionals, with solid credentials, who have years of work experience and this is what you guys are reduced to?' That was really sad.

Fatima goes on to express immense gratitude not only for her parent's decision to immigrate, but to immigrate to Canada specifically. It's clear that all participants do not wish to appear ungrateful. They recognize their parents' ongoing sacrifice and struggle, as well as the privileges that come with living in Canada. This impacts their expressions of belonging and feeling Canadian, as they do not want to thwart the immense efforts and lengths their parents have gone through to give them a better life. I also argue, drawing from Jiwani's (2006) observations, that they also want to project the successes they've had in terms of adjusting to this promised, 'idyllic' and inclusive space. Some participants, however, comment on the pressures, self-imposed or otherwise, that come from an expectation to succeed and prosper in Canada.

Azar: My parents came here to give me a better life, and give me a chance to be successful and they struggled for that, we're working class... it's normal...my dad's not

the CEO of some company, so...you have this...I don't want to say pressure but this internal desire to have your parents [be] proud of you, and I think my parents will be proud of me regardless of what I did, they told me that, but there's this internal side of you that's like, 'well, my parents gave up so much to give me this life, I should be living up to that potential.'

Azar's comment do not necessarily project a sense of pressure to say she feels Canadian or that she feels she belongs. Presumably, however, expressing dissatisfactions with the nation her parents sacrificed so much to move to could be upsetting to them.

All of the women in this study express a level of gratefulness to be living in Canada after outlining the struggles of their parents. This gratefulness, however, is not to the point of blind patriotism. These contradictory experiences of both witnessing their parents struggle with policing and discrimination, and yet, recognizing that struggle as sacrifice for their own betterment and future are reflected in the women's expressions of belonging and being Canadian. They express gratitude in being Canadian, but they also express feelings of exclusion and in some cases needing to adjust to feel a sense of belonging. It's clear however, that the opinions and experiences of their parents and loved are important to their feelings of being Canadian and belonging.

Reminders of Canadian Exceptionalism from Peers and Family in Country of Origin

This section explores how the claims of superiority and praise of Canada coming from their peers and family in the Middle East contribute to their expressions of being Canadian and belonging. It appears that efforts addressed in the first period of multiculturalism, to position Canada internationally as an exceptional, inclusive, accepting, and opportunity-filled nation have in some ways, been successful, as they're repeated by many of the women's peers and loved ones. Canada's reputation as superior is echoed in the sentiments of participant's peers and family members in the Middle East, most of whom have never set foot in Canada. Participants often express gratitude and gratefulness because of these perceptions, however, some are more critical than others.

As first-generation immigrants, a majority of these women still hold strong ties and connections to their networks back home. With the exception of two, all of the women either go to the Middle East to visit somewhat frequently, or still keep in frequent contact with loved ones who live there. For example, Calla spent every summer back in Syria until mid-way through high school. Additionally, many of them have vivid memories of how their friends and family reacted when they told them they're moving to Canada. Reactions, they state were overwhelmingly positive and excited, as their peers and family saw Canada not only as a place of opportunity, but as 'cool.' The women who immigrated as younger children didn't care about job prospects, but were allured by the messages found in the Western media that saturated their television sets in the Middle East, which they claim impacted their peer and family's perceptions of Canada and the West generally. Zara, a Muslim 24-year-old from Egypt points to the excitement she was met with when she told her friends she would be moving to Canada.

Zara: in Egypt when you say, 'I'm traveling to Canada' it's like, 'oh my god! Holy shit, you're fucking cool!' You know? like, 'you live in Canada?!' People in Egypt, when I immigrated to Canada and came back in the summer or in the winter, they treat me very differently.

Zara attributes this praise to the influence of Western media in the Middle East, a point confirmed by other women as well, such as Tafida, who remembers having a love for Canada even before immigrating.

Tafida: Oh my god, I was obsessed with Canada when I first came, even before moving here...when I was told that we were going to move here, I was like, 'oh my god, love Canada!'

Western media consumption, however, came at a cost. Although it worked to make many of the women excited to move to Canada, it also degraded racialized cultures. This is unsurprising, as Western nations, like Canada, bolster colonial narratives of beauty, rooted in whiteness/Europeanness. Ideologies of whiteness are reproduced across all three period of multiculturalism, though particularly in the first and second period. A white, European standard of beauty becomes a measuring rod through which everyone is judged against. Jiwani's (2006) observations touched on these hegemonic beauty ideals among young racialized Canadian women, finding that many of them had

internalized the ideals of European, or white, beauty standards, to which they could never live up to. Lena discusses the valuation of European beauty standards in the Middle East, and how this caused her to feel quite a bit of shame about her body as a child.

Lena: Since I was a kid, I was super self-conscious about my body hair...I've always had a lot of it and when I was just hitting puberty, I was kind of noticing that my classmates didn't have that same thing going on. When I tan I go...a very olive colour...my skin is very weird when it comes to the sun, I could be out and just not have anything, but when it does happen, that's when people start treating me differently too, they'll be like 'why didn't you put on sunscreen, your skin's so white, why would you darken it?'

Lena's family members in the Middle East would comment on her skin tone anytime she looks a bit darker, reinforcing ideologies of whiteness and European beauty standards. The imposition of these beauty standards, then, tells racialized women that in order to be considered beautiful, they must move closer to whiteness. In Lena's case, this means avoiding the sun, or wearing more sunscreen in order to avoid darkening her skin further. They are taught that as it stands, their non-whiteness pushes them further away from mainstream conceptions of beauty. In their interactions with Western media as well as friends and family who are informed by the same media ecosystems, the young women learn about the value of whiteness before they even step foot in Canada. Since nearly every woman keeps close contact and connections with their loved ones and networks in the Middle East, praise continues even as they adjust to life in Canada and begin experiencing discrimination and exclusion.

Noor: For them [potential employers in Jordan] when I say that I studied in Canada, even though they don't know what I did or if I failed, they're like, 'oh Canada, okay, come work with us!' And I'm like, 'you don't know what I did' so for them the West is still this beautiful place.

Lena: I feel like I'm also seen a little bit differently there... they don't treat me as... my family and my extended family doesn't treat me how they would. My uncle will let his daughter, who is 3 years older than me and almost done med. school, go out as long as I'm there, because I'm Canadian and...it's really weird.

Being Canadian then, is something that has inherent value, and is even something to be aspired to. This seems to add a layer of appreciation for a few women, like Leilah, Azar, or Fatima, who expressing feelings of privilege when it comes to living in nation that is regarded so highly internationally. All three women express satisfaction with being Canada, partly because people outside of Canada value and exalt Canada and Canadianness. Others, however, do not feel the praise is deserved and question the unequivocal valuing of whiteness. For example, Tafida remembers a time when her father, who spends most of his time in Saudi Arabia but visits Canada periodically, encouraged her to 'identify as Canadian,' a desire she says stems from his disdain for the Middle East and uncritical praise of the West. She notes how this lead her to aspire to a whiteness she felt she could never achieve.

Tafida: He was always like, 'you know, Saudi Arabia, how long did you live there? 7 years? They never gave you citizenship. But Canada, you go there for three years, you'll be a citizen. See, this is how open they are...you get to be Canadian, you're going to be Canadian,' I was all like, 'yes! I'm going to be Canadian!' ...Even when I'd be upset about, if I had a really racist experience or something... once I came home crying just from how bad it was, and my mom was hugging me, trying to comfort me, and stuff. My dad was just like, 'why are you identifying as Muslim, why don't you just identify as Canadian? Why don't you also hate Muslims?' I think like my mom is a lot more conscious of like these things, it could be because she's visibly Muslim and she sees that in her own experiences... now I don't talk to my dad about race...honestly my dad could have been a big part of my aspirational whiteness.

Tafida's father, though perhaps unintentionally, was denying her experience of racism, devaluing her Muslimness, and encouraging her assimilation. His intentions were likely were to protect his daughter from future unpleasant interactions, however, his words point to the assumption of Canadian identity being linked to whiteness, or, more specifically, in opposition to Muslimness. To be more Canadian, to avoid racism, Tafida must relinquish her Muslimness and move closer to whiteness. Additionally, Tafida's father makes the assumption that because one can acquire citizenship more easily in Canada than in Saudi Arabia, that this would create a sense of security and happiness for his daughter that she could not acquire in the Middle East. Her experiences of racism, then, is framed as stemming from her unwillingness to be more Canadian, or in

this case, to relinquish her Muslimness. Tafida's father echoes sentiments popularized during the second period of multiculturalism, which frame Middle Eastern countries and Islam as oppositional to a superior Canadian identity and culture. Additionally, his comments employ the discourse of victim blaming, as outlined in Henry & Tator's discourse of democratic racism. By attributing her experiences of racism with her inability to 'be Canadian,' or in others, assimilate and move closer to whiteness, Tafida's father is telling her that it's her fault she had this experience, in large part because he believes Canada is accepting and welcoming. As Tafida notes, this impacted her feelings of belonging and being Canadian, as she developed an aspiration to be white. While Tafida does express gratitude for living in Canada, she realizes that perhaps the praising of whiteness and Canada generally are not an accurate representation of realities, especially given her own experiences of racism.

In the experiences of these women, we can see that Canada is regarded rather highly in the Middle East. Although some, like Tafida, see how this praise pushed them to aspire to whiteness, for others it gives them a sense of pride and satisfaction.

Whiteness as Canadianness: Experiences of 'passing' as white and the ongoing policing of identity

All of the women expressed, to some capacity, having had the experience of being recognized as 'white,' an experience commonly known as 'passing.' This section looks at how being able to 'pass' as white or being 'mistaken' as white has impacted participants' feelings of belonging and being Canadian. In part, this is because participants associate being Canadian with being white. For some, these moments of passing are celebrated, and help to foster feelings of being Canadian. For others passing makes them feel uncomfortable and uneasy, and sometimes even serves as a reminder of the racism that exists in Canada. This section also explores the ways in which the policing these women face re-assert a white Canadian identity and remind them that while they can sometimes pass as white, they are first and foremost other.

When asked who they thought a 'Canadian' is, all of them women, except for Nasrin, Azar, Noor and Morooj, said it was someone who is white. This points to an awareness of connotations between whiteness and Canadianness, as outlined earlier. It echoes sentiments emerging in the first period of multiculturalism, but carrying through to the second, which worked to centre whiteness in understandings of Canadianness,

and mark all other non-white Canadians as the ‘multi.’ Although participants believe a ‘Canadian’ is someone who is white, they also recognize the problems that come with such a definition. In fact, 28-year-old Saya points to the Indigenous population as ‘real’ Canadians.

Mohrdar: Who would you consider to be Canadian?

Saya: My first thought was white people. Even though, I know.... in my head, that’s not the real Canadian, the real Canadians are the Aboriginals of Canada. But when you asked that question, it went straight to white people... that’s really crazy. That’s so crazy!

It’s important to note that Saya doesn’t think that her comment connecting whiteness to Canadianness is ‘crazy’ because that connection is untrue. She feels it’s an incorrect correlation because it ignores the Indigenous population’s claims to Canada. In other words, her statements point to the ideological understanding of Canadian identity, but they also point to the problematic nature of such assumptions.

Understanding Canadianness as whiteness can create feelings of instability in terms of ‘feeling’ Canadian among racialized Canadians. For example, many participants, in fact, cite feeling that others might not think they’re Canadian, because they are not white. Further complicating this feeling is the fact that many of these women express sometimes being able to pass as white. The privilege that comes with having a fairer complexion is not lost upon them. In recognizing the privilege that comes with passing, Saya remembers a time when her light skin invited others to ask her to join in on their racism.

Saya: I think I’ve been pretty lucky in the sense that I’ve never feared for my life or anything, it’s just more comments or general feelings. There was this one time, I actually won’t ever forget this because I was so upset. I was at a club and I was in the bathroom, waiting in line, and there was a woman working the bathroom, she was giving out like towels and whatever else you needed, you know? She was...an older Asian woman, and this white girl who’s also waiting in line, she made a comment about her, really racist, something like ‘oh, these people...working these jobs,’ I don’t know, it was something so ridiculous and I was like ‘fuck that, you think that I’m on the same page as you, why?’ ‘Cause my skin is lighter?’

In this situation, Saya’s light skin also protected her from receiving similar racially charged comments. It’s no surprise then, that being mistaken as white has often been something to aspire to for some of the women,

particularly when they were young. Although Azar never explicitly states that she believes a Canadian to be someone who is white, the assumption is revealed when we get into a discussion on her experiences with ‘whitewashing,’ a process in which a racialized person starts behaving, dressing, and acting ‘white.’ For Azar, her desire to pass as white eventually worked to make her feel resentful of her Iranian heritage.

Azar: Generally, if you were not Canadian, like white, you wanted to be perceived as white-washed, quote unquote. And as I look back on it, I don’t know why that was a positive thing, because I actually think it’s so toxic. I think it was one of those things that made me resent it, and I look back on it...I really hope that doesn’t exist in schools today ‘cause it’s so negative.

N: It made you resent what, your Iranian [roots]?

Azar: Yeah! ‘Cause... I wanted to get away from it because I wanted to be white-washed, and I didn’t even know what it meant.

Azar’s comments highlight the pressures young racialized immigrant women can feel when they are adjusting to life in Canada, a nation that values whiteness. As a little kid, Azar recognized the value of looking and being white, and tried to move away from her Iranian heritage. Her comments, however, also point to the ambiguities of defining whiteness and how one moves closer to it. This ambiguity shows that any movement towards whiteness is precarious and temporary, subject to change from the majority population, the white population, who have the power to ‘recognizes.’ The desire to be recognized as white, or in this case, as a ‘true’ Canadian, or ‘equal’ Canadian, draws on a politics of recognition outlined in the first period of multiculturalism. As Bannerji (2000) notes however, being ‘recognized,’ or in this case successfully ‘passing,’ is based on an unequal distribution of power, where someone else, in this case white Canadians, have the power to determine the limits and bounds of your inclusion. Azar found that the more she was referred to as ‘whitewashed’ the more she wanted to move toward whiteness and relinquish visible connections to her Iranian heritage. Feeling Canadian for Azar, and for many of women in this study, is unstable and requires the recognition or more accurately, (mis)recognition of them as white.

Tafida’s memories of moving closer to whiteness also reflect this power relation and instability. Tafida’s joy when she discovered that ‘Arab’ was considered ‘Caucasian’ for a period of time, also highlights the constant

‘work’ that needs to happen for one to pass as white. Conversely, Saya’s comments show how passing as white can sometimes create an erasure of her Kurdish identity. The closer she moved to whiteness, for example, through the loss of her accent, the more she is told she is no longer Kurdish.

Tafida: I think it’s hilarious... when I think back to it, in my middle school, I found out that Arab is under the white category, or Caucasian category in the United States consensus, and then I went up to my Ukrainian friend and I’m like, ‘you’re not the true white, I’m the true white.’ She was like ‘what the hell,’ she was like ‘look in the mirror,’ she...was so upset when I told her, ‘you’re not white,’ she was so upset.

Saya: I’ve literally been told, ‘oh, you’re the good kind of brown’ or like, ‘you’re Canadian, you’re white’ just stuff like that where it kind of erases like, my actual ethnic background, but I recognize that people kind of see me in a different light just because I don’t have that accent.

In Tafida’s case, both Tafida and her friend were policing one another’s identity, and in doing so, not only recognizing the value that comes with being regarded as white, but adding to that value by wanting so badly to move closer to it. Such strong desires to move closer to whiteness, despite being Canadian citizens, show the stratification of citizenship previously discussed by Andreouli & Howarth (2012) as well as Nagra (2017), under the first period of multiculturalism. The fact that these women wanted to be more similar to the white population of Canada, coupled with the fact that they see Canadians as first and foremost, white people, reflects the ideological framing of citizenship. Of course, this stratification persists today. For Saya, however, she felt that her being able to pass as white worked to erase her Kurdish identity, which she expressed dismay over, later on. Saya sees passing as white as problematic and attributes it to the racism that exists in Canada. She does, however, state that she enjoyed receiving such comments when she was younger. It seems that some of the women have, at one point or another, felt that they needed to move closer to whiteness in order to be seen as Canadian, or that being mistaken as white has in some ways, made them feel less Middle Eastern.

Although desires to be regarded as ‘white’ was felt more strongly among the women when they were younger, they still deal with the policing of their identity as adults. Racialized citizens in Canada commonly have to deal with being asked the age-old question, ‘where are you from?’ This question assumes that because one is not

white, one must not be 'Canadian' (Thobani, 2007). Thobani (2007) argues that "seemingly innocent rites" such as asking someone where they came from, works to further the "symbolic association of citizenship with whiteness" (Thobani, 2007, p.100). The question is so charged in its assumptions that sometimes it prevents the women from claiming to be Canadian.

Kamela: 'Where you from?' God, here we go again, I'm, you know, Palestinian or whatever, 'oh really? I thought you were from here, oh you look like you're from here, you don't look like you're from there'...there's a lot of that, but I never claim to be Canadian, I feel like if I did claim to be Canadian a lot of people would give me a weird look because I don't...whatever that is I probably don't look like it.

For Kamela, claiming to be 'Canadian,' is not something she feels she can do without raising suspicion; perhaps someone asks her where she's *really* from, or questions the authenticity of her Canadianness. The women in this study know that if they make the assertion that they are Canadian, it risks being questioned, as they're aware that their skin tone, name, or accent will 'out' them as non-white and therefore not 'Canadian.' These instances remind women that while they may have a lighter-complexion, they are still not white, and therefore might not be recognized as Canadian. Out of fear that someone will question the legitimacy of her claims to Canadianness, Noor always asserts how many years she's been living in the country for.

Noor: When people say, 'where are you from?' And I say 'Jordan' I'm like, 'yeah but I've lived here for like 10 years and you know' I have to go into this thing of like 'yeah yeah but I've been here for a while and you have to know that I'm not someone who just came here, I know my shit.

Regardless of how one decides to answer this question, the women in this study displayed an awareness of what answers others are looking for when they ask such question.

The lighter, but still non-white, complexion of these women not only meant that they sometimes 'pass' as white, but also that other assumptions are made about their ethnic identities. Often, this takes the form of imposing other racial and religious identities onto them. Azar notes that people assume she's Italian or Spanish, assumptions she takes as a compliment, as she believes these ethnic identities are generally

regarded positively. In fact, people mistaking her for Italian or Spanish helps her feel better about herself. Earlier in the interview, Azar and I shared our concern in terms beauty and physical attributes, both sharing our anxieties around others not finding Iranian women to be physically attractive. While being mistaken for ethnicities which reflect a European beauty standard helps Azar feel more attractive, she feels very differently when people assume that she is Indian.

Azar: For some reason, in some weird way, it helped me elevate that concern because I was like, 'oh I just look like everyone else' and I feel shitty for saying that out loud and having that emotion, but it's true... I don't know why but I have this concern that people think Persian girls aren't pretty, you clearly have it too, and...when people guess that you're from another race...Spanish girls and Italian girls are generally viewed as being beautiful and nice and pretty or whatever, you're like, 'oh okay, like, they'll think I'm pretty' so I don't know why it's like helped with that a little bit, in this like weird psychological way...People, I don't know why, this sounds really weird, I get a little offended when people guess that I'm like, Indian. Or other very stereotypical Middle Eastern places...I think the reason for that is that...and I'm probably wrong, but I have this like chip on my shoulder where I'm like 'oh what you think all Middle Eastern countries are just the same? You don't know the difference between India, Iraq, and Iran?'.... I probably just look a little bit Indian, like, it's probably the reality, but... I just get angry about it. I don't know why.

Azar, as well as Lena, also state that people assume they're Muslim. Although Lena comes from a Christian household and maintains cultural traditions, she does not feel offended or bothered by such assumptions. In fact, she states that while some assume she's Muslim, others also assume that because she's Armenian, she holds a disdain for Muslims, due to the Armenian genocide. Lena works against such assumptions. Conversely, Azar feels bothered by these assumptions.

Lena: People assume that because it's situated within this nebulous area we call the Middle East, that it's a Muslim country or they'll be like, 'Muslims killed your people so you must hate them' and it's like, 'we have like several very beautiful mosques....'...it's really weird when people who have no knowledge of the circumstances, no knowledge of either culture, kind of interject and are like, 'doesn't that offend you?' Or 'don't you hate them?' kind of thing, 'cause...I don't want to join in on the Islamophobic narrative. That stands for everything I'm against and...it makes me super uncomfortable to have that sort of profiling going on.

Azar: People just assume I'm Muslim...people just assume, not everyone but most people probably do. And I'm just like 'no I just don't really believe in religion, personally, if you want to believe in it, that's fine.' I don't know why that bothers me a little bit, that people just assume that. 'Cause I'm like, if I didn't look like this then what would you assume? Do you walk around assuming every white person is Catholic? No, because they could be Jewish, they could be Orthodox, they could be, a slew of different things, so that's kind of always bothered me, not that I think there's anything wrong with being Muslim, it's just that I'm not.

Azar states more than once that her disdain for such assumptions stems from the homogenization of Middle Eastern identity. Her assumptions are not incorrect, as she picks up on the homogenization of the Middle East and the racialization of Islam, discussed in the second period of multiculturalism (Razack, 2007). It's possible, then, that in collapsing Muslim and Middle Eastern identity, internal conflicts and tensions are constructed and exaggerated between Muslim Middle Easterners and non-Muslim Middle Easterners and Muslims generally. Nagra's (2017) research also pointed to these tensions, when her participants expressed a distancing from Arab cultures and nationhood in order to project Muslimness as its own distinct identity trait, lifestyle, religion, culture, etc. It seems then, that the conflation and homogenization of identity here works to create an environment where one is always trying to project their difference from the other.

For Azar, however, I would add that she is also aware of the ways which racialized people, Muslims included, are devalued, given that she initially brings up this topic when discussing her appreciation for being mistaken as Spanish and Italian. She also explicitly states, that being mistaken as Spanish or Italian means she "like everyone else," which she attributes as a positive thing. Being homogenized into the white, dominant group is okay for Azar, however, falling into a homogenous, racialized group is undesirable for her. Again, this unsurprising, given Azar's awareness of the value of whiteness in Canada. Furthermore, she appears to be bothered by the ways in which Middle Eastern women fall in opposition to European beauty standards that are perpetuated in Canada, and Western society generally. Imposing these assumptions is problematic for Azar then because she feels it distances her from more valued identities and instead associates her with identities that are marginalized in Canadian society.

Beyond making assumptions about where they're from, people also make assumptions about the meaning ascribed to their ethnic heritage or religiosity. Noor is Muslim, however, because she doesn't wear a hijab and chooses to drink, many become confused about how she's performing her Muslim identity.

Noor: One time we were going out and it was a group of people from my master's program, and they were like, "we'll get the drinks menu but please don't feel like you have to," and I'm like, 'come on, I drink, right?' And then I realized that I drink probably more than most of them do...I've had so many people say 'oh my god, I can't believe you're Muslim and you drink' or 'I can't believe you're Muslim and you got a tattoo, I can't believe you're Muslim and you're wearing short sleeves' I've had that so many times.

These assumptions can lead to self-policing of identity. For example, Noor goes on to explain that she no longer brings up her religiosity or place of birth in professional settings, as she fearful of the assumptions people make.

Noor: I feel really terrible but sometimes I don't like to talk about it [being Muslim] especially around specific people.... When I volunteered in the art room...it was like, you know like a white Canadian teacher and she was like, 'oh where are you from, you seem exotic' and as soon as she said that I was like... 'ugh 'exotic,' don't say that...' ...I find that in certain instance I don't say I'm Muslim just because if the person in front of me is ignorant then they might put a label on me just because I said that and I don't want that especially if it's work related, which is unfortunate.

This instance has shown how the policing of her racial identity has led to her self-police. Noor later excuses the woman's racist remarks as ignorance, and instead adjusts her own behaviour, a move which she states complicates her ability to assert her identity in the way she so desires. This tactic reflects assertions made in the first period of multiculturalism, where racism was individualized, as opposed to positioned as systemic. Noor sees these interactions as the ignorance of a few, and so she adjusts her behaviour to them in order to avoid further misconceptions and misunderstandings. In some ways, she quiets down her Muslim identity at the expense of others comfort. She acts as a model minority then, as she displays her ethnic difference, but only to the extent that is comfortable for white audiences (Thobani, 2007). Fatima on the other hand, is critical of those who make assumptions about her racial identity and actively challenges their assumptions.

Mohrdar: Do you find that you're ever having to defend your Canadian identity?

Fatima: More explain than defend.

Mohrdar: Okay, could you give me a—

Fatima: When I'm traveling and people are like, 'oh you're Canadian,' I'm like, 'hmm, yeah' and they're like, 'so how many generations' and I'm like, 'well zero at this point, but still Canadian and that still counts'

Mohrdar: And how does that make you feel when you have to explain that?

Fatima: I'm always amused by it, 'cause I don't see the necessity of it. My former partner at point, his family goes back like, 12 generations or something, and at one point somebody gave me one of those Hudson's Bay Canada toques, and he was like, 'it's really funny that you're wearing that' and I was like, 'why? Why is it so funny that I'm wearing this?' And he was like, 'well you know,' and I was like, 'what because your family goes back X number of generations and I literally just got here in terms of time span?' And he was like, 'yeah that's kind of funny.'

Beyond pointing to the constructed and power-laden nature of racial categories, ambiguities of whiteness and ideological understandings of Canadians as white work to make some women, like Azar and Noor, feel that their ability to make claims of being Canadian are situational and never guaranteed. Others, like Tafida and Fatima, recognize its value, but are more critical of moving in and out of whiteness, as they see this as indicative of racialized inequalities that still exist in Canadian society, where citizenship does not guarantee inclusion. All women deal with the policing of their identities to a certain extent, whether they are forced to answer a line of questioning about where they're from, or if they are correcting assumptions made about their religiosity or ethnicity. Regardless, all of the women are aware of the fact that Canadians are perceived to be white, and therefore their abilities to claim a Canadian identity are unstable. However, many still do claim to be Canadian, even if they feel others do not perceive them as such, a point which will be further developed in the proceeding section. For all participants assumptions, degradations and dismissals from others based on their Middle Eastern heritage has instilled feelings of resentment, self-hate, and even embarrassment from a young age.

Bullying, Teasing, and Discomfort with Identity

As young migrants, experiences of being bullied and teased were extremely common for these women. This section looks at moments of racism or discrimination from participants' childhood that worked to make them feel resentful, hateful, or embarrassed of being Middle Eastern. Language barriers, and a lack of understanding of certain social norms are common hurdles for immigrants. For immigrant youth, however, these markers of difference make them more vulnerable to teasing and bullying from their peers. This section looks at the variety of ways women were policed as children. This created feelings of shame and resentment, which often developed into them distancing themselves from their heritage, in hopes of feeling more 'white.' For some, this led to feelings of loneliness. It's important to note that children and youth, regardless of race and gender, deal with similar difficulties in their journey to adulthood, however, racialized children are easier targets of bullying, as they are visibly 'different.' Additionally, if they have immigrated from a non-white country and do not speak English, this even furthers their visibility as targets for bullying. This section looks at how these experiences impact their feelings and expressions of belonging and being Canadian.

Most commonly, women cited being teased for the lunches they brought to school, their body hair, physical appearance generally, accents, and language barriers. In Kamela's case, she remembers having difficulty making friends because of the language barrier.

Kamela: Obviously I didn't speak any English when I came...I do remember that my mom would come and pick me up...and spend my lunch with me because I would be by myself, I wouldn't have friends and stuff like that, so she'd take the bus down and hang out with me and we'd have recess together...She would tell me about that all the time, 'you're just sitting there in the middle of the field with a stick, just digging in the ground by yourself.' So, she used to come and she'd hang out and then take the bus back after recess was done... I was in ESL [English as a Second Language], I was picked on a lot as a kid. I was bullied a lot... that was up until... grade 6, 7.

The lack of acceptance by her peers led to a lot of anger issues for Kamela, who recalls acting out and being sent to the principal's office rather frequently, stating that she sometimes would "get angry before there was anything to

get angry about.” Her exclusion led her to act out, which in turn made her feel isolated and as though she didn’t belong. For the most part, Kamela still feels she has a complicated relationship with belonging, but she does not attribute this solely to her experiences as a child. Azar also dealt with teasing as a child because of language barriers, and she recognizes how this led to her resentment of her Iranian heritage.

Azar: My mom tells me when I was a kid, I cried a lot. ‘Cause apparently I couldn’t speak English. She was like, ‘you’d come home every day and you’d be so sad, and you’re like, ‘I’m never going to be able to talk like them.’ When I was younger, I resented the Persian culture a lot more, ‘cause I felt like it was holding me back. I almost want to say that I was a little bit embarrassed of it too, because...when I was way younger, [I thought] that I didn’t fit in because I couldn’t speak English.

Although Azar says that she felt this shame when she was younger, she later goes on to say how, despite wanting to connect more with Iranian culture so that she can pass down cultural traditions and histories if she were to ever have children, the thought of strengthening connection makes her feel anxious.

Mohrdar: Do you feel you have the space in Canada to kind of create those connections with your Iranian culture?

Azar: I don’t know why, but like as I sit here telling you that... I don’t know, if I was part of like a talk-group or something, if I tell a friend or a guy that I’m dating...do they think that’s weird? Do they think that makes me less Canadian? I’m having that anxiety about it.

It seems, then, that the shame instilled in her from youth has carried on, though it likely has been exaggerated or influenced by additional factors. The policing from a young age, however, clearly worked to make Azar, and other women in this study, understand their Middle Eastern heritage as oppositional to being Canadian. Again, these sentiments echo ideas popularized in the second period of multiculturalism, that saw Middle Eastern culture as almost antagonistic to Western and Canadian culture and values (Maria, 2018; Nagra, 2017). Azar’s anxieties do not appear misplaced when one understands the marginalization of Middle Eastern culture, identity, and people generally in the second period of multiculturalism, in particular, Middle Eastern women. In fact, as previously outlined, Azar’s comments are not all too dissimilar from some of Nagra’s (2017) participants who distanced themselves from the Middle East following the events of 9/11.

Noor recalls other students in her teaching program growing frustrated with her lack of Western knowledge in things like children's nurseries, a fact that made her more conscious of what she says about her life and experiences in Jordan. In other words, the teasing has caused her to monitor what she says more intensely.

Noor: When I was doing my program they would talk about songs, they said, 'oh you know you can do like Mary had a little lamb or whatever,' and I just put up my hand, 'I actually don't know most of these songs, in my position what would I do?' And I remember someone saying, 'oh my god, here we go again, like she's Jordanian,' and I actually told her like, 'oh my god, I can totally hear you.' She felt awkward about it and she apologized and whatever... Sometimes when I talk about it [Jordan] people just think I'm saying it because I want to be different but that's actually where I'm from... Just saying the words 'back home' just repulses them because they're like, 'ugh back home, back home, back home, back home,' so sometimes I feel like I stop myself, definitely. Because I don't want to keep talking about the fact that I'm from a different place, and I do feel that more around white people for sure.

It's important to note, however, this policing was not always done by white people, but also by other racialized people, who are also not immune to the ideologies of racial hierarchy, as pointed to in my discussion of how narratives of racism become the common sense, everyday language we learn to speak through (Gramsci, 1971; Hall, 1986; Malhi & Boon, 2009). In the same way that narratives which are harmful to women can be used by women themselves, the narratives which work to oppress and marginalized, racialized people can in fact, be perpetuated by them (Malhi & Boon, 2009). In Leilah's case, this occurred with some of her second-generation Iranian friends, who would call her a 'F.O.B.,' a derogatory term that stands for 'Fresh off the Boat' and is meant to refer to newcomers who have not assimilated to the dominant culture.

Leilah: We knew this group of Persians that lived here their whole life, and they called us F.O.B.s like, joking.... That wasn't offending [sic]... They genuinely enjoyed our company, but they were just like, making jokes about it... So, I didn't think, I was viewed less just because like, I was F.O.B. in their eyes, you know what I'm saying? But they made some comments, they made it about my friend, they made it about me... Sometimes we were like, 'what if you like chilled with the *very* F.O.B. ones?'

Although she brushes it off, Leilah was clearly bothered by the comments her friends were making, and asked that they stop, especially when they continued long after she had initially immigrated. Calling someone a “F.O.B.” has very similar consequences to calling someone ‘whitewashed,’ in the sense that it alerts the person that their performance is being watched, regulated, and even mocked. In both instances, a racialized person’s identity is being policed. Some participants, like Zara and Tafida note that whitewashed can also be an insult, if it’s coming from Middle Easterners themselves. This becomes another layer of policing that tells racialized immigrants to maintain some of their racial ‘otherness,’ or else they will be teased. In an attempt to feel accepted, then, these women have to juggle often opposing judgements on how they should perform their racial identity. For some of the women, like Calla, this meant making physical changes to appear more white.

Calla: I think at that time I was very conscious about my body because I was much chubbier or rounder than the other girls, I remember always comparing myself and being like, ‘oh they’re like, so waify [sic] compared to me, why am I so different?’ I think it was about my body and the way it looked, and my hair and how do I straighten my hair, and my mom didn’t let me straighten my hair and...I remember being extremely angry...until I started high school I remember having a lot of anger... I felt like, compared to the other girls in my class... yeah, I don’t know, I felt different in every way.

In addition to realizing the societally constructed value of being physically smaller, Calla also recognized that women are expected to take up less space in more metaphysical ways, in terms of how they speak. Calla was told she was too ‘loud’ and that she ‘talked back’ too much, an experience shared by Saya, Leilah, Azar, Tafida, Fatima, Kamela, and Zara. Although such comments point to an attempt to silence these women, they continued to speak up and express their anger. In doing so, they worked against stereotypes that were popularized and legitimated during the second period of multiculturalism, that paint Middle Eastern women as passive victims. By speaking up and taking up space, these women work against stereotypes of the veiled Middle Eastern woman, or the victimized Middle Eastern woman, waiting to be saved by the West. It should be noted that Tafida is the only visibly Muslim participant in this study, and therefore it is no surprise that her experiences with racism have been much more overt. Since making the decision to wear a hijabi, she has not experienced being able to pass as white. This reflects the

racialization of Islam, as discussed in the second period of multiculturalism through the work of Razack (2007). Her hijab immediately marks her as racially different and therefore an easier target of racism.

The teasing and bullying, that these women faced as youth and young children created tensions and confusion, with many feeling resent and shame simply for being Middle Eastern. This led many to try and move away from anything that would mark them as 'other.' Several of the women state that they grew out of these feelings of shame, however, some like Azar still harbour anxieties when it comes to connecting with their heritage. For others, like Calla and Kamela, this teasing manifested anger, though this came with a new set of policing tactics, aiming to silence and quiet down their anger. Bullying and teasing, then, worked to create feelings of shame, resentment, and self-hate among these women. These policing tactics sent a very specific message about the limits to their belonging, mostly being that if they wanted to be valued like white citizens, they needed to move closer to whiteness. So much so that Azar felt anxious at the mere thought of connecting with her Iranian heritage more. Many of the women attribute these binary understandings of Canadian versus Middle Eastern, and the racism and discrimination that stems from such a limited understanding, to representations (or lack thereof) of the Middle East and Middle Eastern women specifically, in the media.

Impacts of News Media Representations Framing Middle Easterners as Dangerous Outsiders

When asked how they felt about popular and more news media representations of Middle Eastern women, not a single woman in this study felt they were accurately representations. In fact, many of them believe that much of the (mis)recognition they've dealt with, stems from these media representations. This section looks at the ways in which popularized perceptions of Middle Easterners, and women specifically, have made participants feel like outsiders, misunderstood, or threatened. Additionally, they point to how it has impacted their feelings of confidence and acceptance, and therefore has impacted their feelings of belonging, even if only momentarily. Sometimes, 9/11 is pointed to as the starting point for the intensification of such representations in their lifetime. Regardless, all of the women in this study experienced discrimination or mis-recognition that they believe stems from the popularization of these representations in the media.

This section, in some ways, looks at the impacts of the second period of multiculturalism, by examining how media representations of Middle Eastern women following 9/11 impacted participants. The media, of course, is a large part of what informs the ideas of a society, as outlined in my discussion of ideological state apparatuses. Althusser (2006) points to the media as one of the most powerful apparatuses, as it acts as a source of information and public sphere for a society. The women in this study attribute ignorance about the Middle East to the media's stereotypical representations of the region and Middle Eastern people generally. In many instances the women stated that in their experiences, many Canadians displayed a lack of awareness of the basic geography or history of the Middle East, and therefore often homogenize the region. Saya, who is Kurdish, and Fatima, who is from Bahrain, both cite an unawareness of their nationality from the general Canadian population.

Saya: People kind of tend to...they hear the Middle East and they just group everybody together, right? [They] completely generalize us, just like, 'oh, Asians,' right? What does that mean? ...I'll be like "Kurdistan" first all, nobody knows where that is. But then they'll go, oh it's like Kazakhstan, it's like all the other 'stans,' and I get that comment a lot and I'm like, 'no, dude, that's not right!'

Fatima: It's interesting telling people where I'm from 'cause they're like, 'we don't know where that is' and then when I'm like, 'oh it's off the coast of Saudi Arabia' they're like, 'oh so you're really repressed,' and I'm like, 'no actually, it's one of the most liberal Gulf states' and then I have to explain that...They ask like, 'how do you speak such good English?' And I'm like, 'maybe because it's my first language.'

As discussed, in the second period of multiculturalism, homogenized and static depiction of the Middle East, that project it as backwardness, repressiveness, and savage gained quite a bit of popularity following 9/11.

Discrimination against Middle Easterners in Canada was legitimized through policy and public opinion, which positioned Middle Eastern people as not only against Canadian values, but potential threats to democracy. These assertions are then perpetuated in the media, where conflicts between the West and East are decontextualized and reduced for simplicity sake. The simplistic reduction within these binaries of 'us' and 'them' and 'East' and 'West,' affirmed by news media highlights a lack of knowledge available on the complex histories and

cultures of the Middle East, as well as own Canada's history of racial and gender injustice. This is especially shown in Fatima's comment about people assuming she is repressed or expressing shock in her abilities to speak English. Additionally, the assumption that because Fatima is an oppressed, imperiled and powerless Middle Eastern woman, was also popularized in the second period of multiculturalism. Both comments projects a very one-dimensional and orientalist understanding of the Middle East. Saya and Fatima's comments, then, very much address lasting impacts from Canada's movement away from the tenets of multiculturalism.

Noor also experiences this unawareness and homogenization of her Jordanian heritage. She also points to the stereotypes that go hand in hand with such a homogenized understanding of a complex and diversified region. Noor brings in popular media representations, expressing that they may be in part, responsible for such understandings of the Middle East.

Noor: So many movies, even when we were younger, Aladdin was supposed to be set in Arabia but it's totally India. That's not how we dress, that's not how we look, and it's like, 'Arabian Nights,' you know? All that whimsical stuff ... So, I don't think it's people's faults when they think that way, and I do think that when I've met people here who are studying...political science or they're doing sociology, and they are aware, they know where Jordan is, they know about the conflict happening in Palestine. People are aware if they're in that field, but if they're not, it's just completely off.

It appears then, that these women feel that they are both misrepresented and underrepresented. Both Kamela and Zara recognize that the media has skewed the perceptions of the Middle East to mostly reflect conflict, violence, barbarism and terrorism. These media representations, they believe, are partly responsible for these uncomfortable and sometimes even painful interactions with others. When she was still living in Saudi Arabia, Tafida began to notice Western popular media coverage of the Middle East shifting, with more villainous characters in movies and TV shows speaking Arabic, clearly positioned as the 'bad guys' or enemy to the West. This inspired her to look into why the West had such a hate for the Middle East, and specifically Muslims.

Tafida: I had a Yahoo Answers thing and I even put a question like, ‘why do people hate Muslims, I don’t get it?’ And people were like, ‘yeah, well, you should ask why Muslims are killing people duh duh duh’ it was all answered like that, and I was so sad, I was like ‘why do they hate us?’

Later, Tafida mentions that she believes 9/11 intensified such framings of the Middle East. A few other participants also point to 9/11 as having impacted how Middle Easterners were being represented. In particular, older participants, such as Shadi, who says she’s had to recover from the demonization of the Middle East. Morooj was also deeply impacted by the coverage of 9/11, and had a difficult time making friends out of fear that she would be associated with terrorists. Her fears are not unfounded; as previously outlined, during this retreat from multiculturalism, Muslims and Middle Easterners alike were increasingly targets of hate crimes after 9/11. In fact, the events of 9/11 legitimized the marginalization and oppression of Middle Easterners living in Canada (Thobani, 2007). Being Middle Eastern in Canada after 9/11 came with social costs, most of which involved overt acts of discrimination, exclusion, and constant questioning. Both Shadi and Morooj’s experiences and feelings are a reflection of this.

Shadi: I grew up in a post-9/11 era where...this demonization of the Middle East has always been something very constant, and something I’ve always had to recover from... I’ve seen the like lack of concern for human life and you know, the political goal of just obtaining more power... I mean it obviously effected how I thought about the world. I knew people were going to start looking at me differently or, perceiving me differently, knowing that I was Iranian. My Middle Easternness and the fact that I was Iranian was really becoming...hyper defined in that moment in a really contentious and uncomfortable setting, I think that’s when I kind of realized, I was subject to this bothering that I think definitely affected me.

Morooj: I was very scared, feeling that... you don’t want to associate with the criminals who carried out 9/11, and I was 17 and I was new to Canada...I had a lot of difficulty making friends outside the Arab groups, I couldn’t really make friendships because I was not sure how, you know, we were perceived.

For Shadi, these news representations made her feel worried about how she would be perceived. Her use of the word ‘bother,’ and not ‘questioning’ or another more neutral term is interesting here, as it shows her annoyance when it comes to dealing with orientalist assumptions about her and her heritage. She feels that media coverage of Middle Eastern women specifically, paints them as passive and disengaged in political life, and believes that this contributes to the continued oppression of Middle Eastern women. Shadi was aware of the fact that her Middle Easternness would be become hyper visible, and Morooj echoes these sentiments when she expresses concern at being associated with the criminals who carried out 9/11. To extend the crimes of a few onto an entire ethnicity is not uncommon. Their comments point to common correlations between criminality and race in Western societies, where an entire ethnic group is blame for the violent, hateful, or criminal actions of one person who shares that ethnicity— a trend discussed at length by Choudhry (2001) and Perera & Razack (2014), as well as many other scholars of race. White citizens can be seen as individuals acting on their own, and racialized citizens must always act as representatives of their communities.

Azar, however, is less critical of the effects of news media. She feels that coverage that followed after 9/11 was fair and justified, even though it caused her to feel ostracized from Canadian society.

Azar: There was so much negative backlash against anyone of colour after 9/11, which for very fair reasons, I understand why people went there but, I think there’s so much negative media around that... how do you not internalize some of that? And feel like you’re going to be ostracized from that society?

Azar has suffered from these news representations and expresses even feeling ostracized by these narratives. She even later, goes on to say that she does not believe they are an accurate representation of the Middle East.

Azar: I know that there’s so many positive things coming out of those countries and that people in those countries actually condemn this radical, all-the-way-of-this-end-of-the-spectrum-of-interpreting that religion, and it’s like, I wish that more people knew that, that it’s the normal people living in these countries, they’re no different from you and I, they’re no different than the white Canadian guy over there.^[11]

Azar's statements are significant for a variety of reasons. In the beginning she suggests that a negative 'backlash' against Middle Easterners or people of colour in general, is understandable. She goes on later to say she feels ostracized from the perceptions this backlash has produced, and feels that it's unfair and inaccurate to extend these negative perceptions onto all Middle Easterners and Muslims. Initially, Azar projects 'model immigrants' tropes, outlined through the work of Maira (2018) and Nagra (2017), in previous discussions on the second period of multiculturalism. In projecting a level of understanding with how racialized people were demonized post-9/11, Azar presents herself as 'safe' or 'model' minority, as she can support that narratives that seek to other and marginalize her and other racialized people. She projects a loyalty to dominant Canadian discourses popularized at this time, again, asserting herself as a safe or model minority. Soon after, however, Azar points to how harmful these narratives have been, and also does not believe they are entirely factual. The contradictory nature of both statements are emblematic of the simultaneous demonization of the Middle East, and the more liberal projection, that works to frame the Middle East as in need of Western democracy and salvation. In using a 'white Canadian guy' as a measurement for normalcy, Azar bolsters the idea that empathy for Middle Eastern people can exist, so long as they appear similar to 'us.'

While none of the women feel they, or the Middle East generally, is accurately represented in the media, some are more critical of its impact than others. Regardless, all feel that popular and news media coverage has caused them to feel misunderstood, self-conscious, and sometimes even fearful. A contextualized and diversified understanding of their origin countries is wholly missing from Western news and popular media, and this lack of coverage, as well as the media's reliance on orientalist stereotypes have left most of the women feeling like they have to constantly work against these representations.

Chapter 4.2: Resisting, Managing and Negotiating Canadian Contradictions in Expressions of Belonging and Canadian Identity

Introduction

I begin this section with a discussion of how racism is experienced by participants. Many of the women see the existence of racism not as a systemic, but as an individual experience. Many of the women excuse instances of racism they've dealt with as ignorance or curiosity, and in doing so avoid being labelled as sensitive or ungrateful. They very much echo sentiments and ideologies of Canadian multiculturalism that were popularized in the first period of multiculturalism and use discourses of democratic racism to manage these contradictions. The section then goes into a discussion on how women who have dealt with discrimination but do not see these experiences as indicative of ongoing systemic racism, more freely and boldly express a Canadian identity. Conversely, those who recognize racism in Canada as systemic have a harder time claiming a Canadian identity.

The next section looks at how an awareness of Indigenous plight in Canada, ongoing systemic racism and colonialism impact expressions of Canadian identity. Although all the women in this study are highly educated, some have studied in the social science and humanities, and have greater exposure and access to critical histories and understandings of Canada. This section looks at the highly politicized ways some women express Canadian identity. I look at the ways in which they are critical of nationalism generally, and how they challenge assumptions of Canada's inherent benevolent nature. Specifically, I address the ways in which they believe multiculturalism has been unsuccessful. They manage Canadian contradictions, then, by pointing to their contradictory nature. The women who do not have a strong grasp of Indigenous history in Canada and colonialism more easily express feeling Canadian, while those who do have more difficulty expressing a Canadian identity.

Instead, those more freely express a Canadian identity manage Canadian contradictions through discourses of democratic racism, as outlined by Henry and Tator (2006). This section looks at how some women echo sentiments of multiculturalism that are found in all three periods. For example, many of the women speak of Middle Easternness and Canadianness as in opposition, or binary to one another. Most

importantly, this section looks at how accepting, or consenting to certain parts of multicultural ideology can create a sense of comfort and acceptance among these women.

Following this discussion, I look at how gender equality is an assumed inherent Canadian value for some women. This is despite the fact that all women in this study have reported feeling unsafe or uncomfortable because of their position as women in Canada. Women who managed Canadian contradictions through discourses of democratic racism often compared the state of Canadian gender equality with that of the Middle East. In doing so, they largely ignore the ways in which women in Canada deal with systemic sexism, discrimination and marginalization. Canadian women are positioned as more progressive and ambitious, by some women, thereby feeding into the idea that Middle Eastern women are powerless and even complacent. Some women, however, have been able to study and learn about more intersectional experiences of womanhood and feminism and are critical of Western feminism generally.

Next, I look at the ways in which many women began questioning their own assumptions about Canada and Canadian superiority during the interview. Some of the women, mostly those who have not studied in social sciences or the humanities and therefore do not have access to critical, anti-racist perspectives and texts, were speaking seriously about Canadian multiculturalism, identity and belonging for the first time. A few began disrupting some assumptions and questioning their beliefs. This, however, was mostly followed by the women taking parts of what they say back, or expressing immense gratitude to Canada. This shows that participants clearly are aware of contradictions, however, some have an easier time pointing to them, as they have the necessary knowledge and language to do so.

This section ends with a discussion on how finding solidarity and community outside of mainstream Canadian society can produce feelings of belonging. More specifically, I discuss, through the work of Maira (2018), the importance of finding spaces where one can discuss shared histories, and understand systems and structures of racism and sexism that impact varying groups in similar ways. For example, in drawing connections between colonialism and the systemic racism that impacts both Indigenous people and racialized people in Canada in varying but related ways. For many of these women, belonging was felt in the classroom, in a specific course they took in university, or different political and

activists groups they joined on campus. These women don't feel they belong in the larger context of mainstream Canada, nor do they necessarily express a desire to belong in that broader context.

Alternatively, the women who have an easier time expressing a Canadian identity also express belonging with more ease, though they do express some discomforts.

Positioning Racism as Individual versus Systemic

All of the women in this study have experienced racism. Not all of the women in this study, however, would label these experiences as 'racism.' In fact, five of the women in this study do not feel racism is a systemic issue in Canada, and instead attribute the discrimination to the ignorance of the individual behaving impolitely, or simply because they are uneducated. Leilah, Azar, Nasrin, Noor and Morooj all express a belief in the efficacy of multiculturalism and diversity, as an inherently held Canadian value or traits that reduce racism. Seven women, however, do not agree. Saya, Shadi, Tafida, Fatima, Zara, Calla, and Lena all readily label the discriminatory experiences they have as racist. Those who have experiences racism but see it as individual assert that their experiences with discrimination have not impacted their own feelings of Canadian identity. They point to these instances as indicative of the systemic racism that plagues Canadian society. Kamela, on the other hand, recognizes the existence of systemic racism in Canada, but does not label her experiences as 'racist.' These experiences with and understandings of racism complicate feeling Canadian for all of the women, regardless of how they see it existing in Canada.

Those who perceive racism to stem from ignorance and the impoliteness of an individual speak of racism as though it were a negative personality trait that only uneducated and unintelligent Canadians perpetuate. They do not deal with racism, but they do see other people *sometimes being* racist. They see racism not as part of the structure of the Canadian state and its institutions, but as an ethical shortcoming that is to be expected every now and again. These sentiments fall in line with Henry & Tator's (2006) ideology of democratic racism. They believe that Canada is committed to racial equality, pointing to our belief in liberal multiculturalism as creating an open-mindedness and culture of inclusion that makes racism unlikely. In seeing racism as individual, they reflect discourses popularized in the first period of multiculturalism, and which persists in discourses on race and racism in Canada. For example, Leilah

employs the discourse of liberal values, as outlined by Henry and Tator (2006) to suggest that Canada does not have a serious problem with racism. She claims that Canadians, for the most part, are tolerant of immigrants. She goes on to state that even if they have limits to their tolerance, these limits should be accepted. She is in line with discourses of liberal values in that she believes accepting too much difference or dissent “leads to...disorder in society” (Henry & Tator, 2006, p27). Furthermore, she uses the discourse of political correctness to suggest that some people ‘abuse’ the issue of racism, and are taking advantage of an allegedly inclusive society.

Leilah: People have different tolerances and those tolerances have to be respected...but there’s still some discrimination in terms of some identities, like black people, even us, we are discriminated sometimes, but I feel like victimizing yourself under that discrimination and blaming everything under that discrimination is wrong, and is abusing the concept of racism... I feel like some people are not educated on what is racist and what is not racist... because Canada is very open towards expressing yourself some people abuse these concepts.

[1]
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Leilah cites being discriminated against, and yet also feels that people perhaps ‘abuse’ speaking up against this discrimination. These contradictory statements reflect the confusions that emerges from a liberal and shallow multiculturalism, that claims an openness to racialized others but silences them when they speak up against inequalities.

Others do not see their experiences as ‘racist’ or ‘discriminatory’ and instead feel that people are simply curious to know more about their heritage and the Middle East generally. Noor, for example, believes that her classmates were simply curious to learn more about her life in Jordan. This may be true, however, it does not mean that their comments are not based in a racist understanding of Middle Eastern identity, one that is perpetuated in various institutions, which have structured and informed her peers understandings of Middle Eastern identity and inspired them to ask her such charged questions.

Noor: I remember people being like, ‘how do you go to school? Do you go on a flying carpet? Do you even have chairs? Do you sleep in a tent?’ And you know...when you’re...so innocent and so you’re asking with no inhibitions... and so I think I grew that thick skin at a younger age and realized it’s sometimes not because they want to be racist, it’s just that they don’t know any better.

It's important to note that Noor immigrated when she was 17, and the peers she refers to were around her age. Arguably, in this situation, questions of 'magic carpets' and suggestions that Jordan is so impoverished that they wouldn't even have basic furniture goes beyond 'curiosity' and instead, at best, reflects an entirely ignorant and uneducated understanding of the Middle East, and at worst reflects the legitimization of discourses which demonize and marginalize Middle Easterners, and in doing so strengthens the binaries that keep them marginalized and exalt Canadians.

Excusing racism as 'curiosity' or stemming for a lack of education was common among the five women who did not talk about racism as systemic. Arguably, it also echoes what Henry & Tator (2006) call 'discourses of political correctness' because it's based in the idea that someone who would read the experience as 'racist' would be being 'oversensitive' or reading too deeply into the situation. In other words, these women avoid being called 'oversensitive,' something many racialized immigrants who speak out against racism are labelled as (Henry & Tator, 2006). There are similarities between these negotiations of racism and the ways in which Jiwani (2006) and Nagra's (2017) participants framed their experiences of racism, following 9/11, as discussed in the section on the second period of multiculturalism. Participants in their study would thwart suggestions that they have been victims of racism, and instead excuse racist behaviour as one-off. Similarly, because they categorize their experiences as moments of curiosity or ignorance, some of the women in this study, like Kamela, do not believe they deal with any sort of racism, whether it's systemic or individual. Meaning, while some women, like Kamela believe racism exists (individually or systemically), some believe they have never dealt with racism. Kamela is the only woman to recognize racism as systemic but feel she is not impacted by it. Kamela is careful to say that she understands that other Middle Easterners experience racism in Canada, but it is simply not her experience. When I ask her if she believes she feels disadvantaged in any way in Canada because of her race, she says she does not believe she has.

Kamela: Just annoying questions like 'oh you look so exotic, where are you from?' 'where are you from.' Why is that the first question you ask someone you've never met before, that's so weird, you know? It's such a weird thing to do... in terms of like, a

disadvantage...has anyone been racist or something like that, not me personally, but I'm sure my parents have experienced it.

Initially, Kamela positions these prompts about her identity as a disadvantage of being Middle Eastern in Canada. Later, however, she states that no one has been racist to her. However, as Thobani would argue, questions like 'where are you from,' especially in this situation, where one is pointing to how Kamela physically looks different, works to other the person (Thobani, 2007, p.100). By asking where one is from, one is assuming that they are not first and foremost Canadian, and assuming that they must be 'from,' somewhere else (Thobani, 2007). This question is not asked only to immigrants, but to all racialized peoples, reflecting the whiteness of Canadian identity and pointing to the racism underpinning the question (Nagra 2017; Thobani, 2007). Kamela's statement also reflects the assumption that in order to be racist, one has to be overt, and rude. While this is one symptom of racism, it is not a reflection of the insidious ways in which racism exists in Canadian society today. As I discussed in all three periods of multiculturalism, racism always finds new ways to express itself, adjusting to the culture and political climate. In Canada today, racism is expressed in covert ways, which for the most part, maintain binary difference, but are harder to detect, as they are spoken through the language of 'culture.' Kamela quite clearly feels that questions about her ethnic origins are wrong, however, she does not readily claim them to be racist, thereby reflecting the very one-dimensional but dominant understanding of racism in Canadian society. The insidiousness of the racism that Kamela faces could be one reason she does not label it as 'racist.' I argue that it is also difficult to detect systemic racism, because one can't be sure why they weren't offered a job, or "denied housing" (Satzewich & Liodakis, 2011, p.206).

Closer to the end of her comment, Kamela almost gets defensive, and claims that she is just 'living her life,' as though being aware of discrimination is somehow compatible with living a fulfilling life. This is despite the fact that later, she says she feels uncomfortable in spaces where there are mostly white people.

Kamela: I think that's the primary thing...once you've realized that where you come from or the way you look has held you back, then you start to pay attention to those spaces...but because I don't feel like I have ever been held back by the way I look, or like been able to skip a few steps because of the way I look for example... I don't really pay attention to

spaces like, you know, white spaces or non-white spaces and stuff like I just live my life I guess, I don't know.

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Mohrdar: In which spaces do you feel the most uncomfortable, like you don't belong, or don't want to be in? It doesn't have to do with race, it can be in terms of gender or sexuality as well.

Kamela: This is going to sound really weird or like maybe like is this racist? Could this be racist, I don't know.

Mohrdar: Go for it, this is a safe space.

Kamela: Okay...if there's a lot of white people in a place, I feel like, 'uh, I don't really know if I want to be here'^[1]_[SEP]

It's important to note that Kamela, like the other women in this study, have typically been positioned in the West as passive, powerless women. Middle Eastern women, as I've discussed at length, are often framed as 'victims' of their culture (Jiwani, 2006; Maira, 2018; Nagra, 2017; Thobani, 2007). This understanding of their agency was legitimized and popularized in the second period of multiculturalism, very close to the time Kamela immigrated to Canada. By denying their experiences with racism, she avoids falling to victim narratives that position Middle Eastern women as lacking control over their destinies, lives, and interactions with the culture (Nagra, 2017, p.42). Denying the continued and systemic existence of racism, then, can be seen as a coping method for racialized women, who have rather demeaning labels imposed onto them. It can't be said for certain that this is what has motivated participants like Kamela, and others who uses discourses of denial to dismiss or diminish these interactions, to deny their experience of racism. It should, however, not be dismissed. Particularly when one considers the fact that when these six women do complain about instances of racism in Canada, though they do not label it as such, they are careful to also assert how grateful they are, or how much they appreciate Canada. Again, this helps thwart the perception and stereotypes that label immigrants as sensitive or ungrateful.

Because a large portion of the women felt that they did not deal with racism and discrimination, despite citing several instances where they were discriminated against, I inquired if those instances ever impacted them feeling Canadian. All six of women stated that it did not, however, some went on to state that it made them worry that others see them as less Canadian.

Azar: Sometimes I'm worried about people's perception, you know what I mean? ... Whether other people might discredit me as Canadian because I'm Persian and I have some Persian values and whatever, you know what I mean? Bad example... I've gone on dates and further into it guys will be like, 'well... do you want your kids to be able to speak Persian?' And I feel like it's not coming from a negative place but for some reason I'm like, '...are you judging the fact that I probably want my kids to be able to speak it?'... I'm maybe a little bit insecure about whether people think I'm less Canadian because I'm also Persian and I have some Persian values. I don't feel like I am any less Canadian, personally, but I feel like maybe other people might feel that way.

Moroog made similar comments, after citing an instance where a classmate asked her how her parents have managed to put her through university, a question she felt was unfounded as her parents were both successful engineers, and besides, she had achieved financial autonomy.

Mohrdar: So, I guess when people say these things to you, does it make you feel less Canadian?

Moroog: No, but it makes me realize that some may not see me as Canadian as I feel myself.

Mohrdar: Okay, is that concerning for you, that others may not see you as Canadian?

Moroog: It is a long term concern that, you know, in a few hundred years I don't want us to be in a civil war like the Balkans had, I don't want those boundaries and silos [sic] to continue to exist, that some are more Canadian than others. I just worry about like civil violence. Not now but many years later.

Acceptance is conditional; one has to be accepted by others in order to feel accepted. In worrying that other Canadians might question their claims to citizenship, Azar and Moroog point to the fragility of their inclusion in Canadian society. Both feel concerned that they're Middle Eastern heritage would prevent

others from seeing them as 'Canadian.' This builds on Thobani (2007), Agnew (2007) and Glenn's (2002) discussions on the limits of citizenship, outlined in the section on the first period of multiculturalism.

Morooj and Azar's remarks echo their findings that while legal citizenship can guarantee citizens certain rights and privileges, it does not guarantee how one will be treated. However, Morooj and Azar both defend the efficacy of multiculturalism, and in fact, both feel that they are Canadian. In the face of exclusion, both Azar and Morooj still claim a Canadian identity, and therefore disrupt the perception that being Middle Eastern and being Canadian are oppositional. Their expressions of acceptance, however, show their feelings of inclusion in Canadian citizenry is limited. They are clearly concerned about how they will be perceived by others. This concern also reflects earlier discussions on recognition, in that recognition from others impacts and informs our understanding of self. In discussing the identity and consciousness in relation to Black men, W.E.B. Du Bois coined the phrase 'double consciousness.' Double consciousness refers to looking at yourself through the perspective of others, of understanding your being through their perspective. Azar and Morooj's experiences both point to this.

Other women, however, categorize moments of discrimination they face as racist and also as indicative of a racist society. In other words, they recognize racism existing in Canada not only as expressed through individual interactions, and they do not excuse the racism as curiosity or ignorance, but also recognize it as part of a larger systemic racism that has structured Canadian society. For example, Calla remembers an incident shortly after 9/11, when her mother and sister, were being harassed in the elevator of their apartment building. She quickly labels it as racism.

Calla: All the neighbours would start a conversation being like, 'what is that you wear on your head' or 'why do you do that?' You know just weird Canadian curiosity quote unquote, I guess I'm like, 'oh this is before you could Google things' so I don't know, I have no idea, I'm just like... it's like, pretending to not be racist, but you're actually racist.

Lena's Armenian heritage has made her the target of many jokes about the Armenian genocide, jokes which she labels as racist.

Lena: I still kind of get comments like that's like, 'well, Armenians clearly aren't starving anymore,' and I'm like ugh I want to punch you, but I can't haha.

Mohrdar: why do you think people feel comfortable saying something like that?

Lena: Why do people feel comfortable with not addressing the fact that the vast majority of law enforcement victims are Indigenous, you know? Obviously they're not thinking it's racist, they're thinking, 'I'm making a joke' or 'I'm trying to lighten the situation' or like, you know like, 'she's going to like that I'm remembering which ethnicity she's apart of' kind of a thing and 'that's what I know about that, I'll say that.'

Lena connects the hateful and racially-charged comments she receives to the racism which has structured and continues to structure Canadian society. In her understanding of her experience, she addresses themes I discussed earlier, where racist foundations that have been addressed only by shallow attempts at inclusion (e.g. Multiculturalism Act), continue to shape the Canadian state and institutions, such as the justice system, as Lena highlights here (Henry & Tator, 2006; Thobani, 2007). In other words, Lena recognizes the contradictions that define the first period of multiculturalism and that still exist today. Because of this, she does not feel confused or alarmed that people feel comfortable making racist comments towards her. Therefore, she is still inclined to label her experience as racism, while still recognizing that the comment may not be intended to be hateful. She manages contradictions, in some ways, by expecting them, by understanding them as part of a larger Canadian hegemony.

While it appears that the women in this study are divided on the existence of racism in Canada, all have had unpleasant interactions that were shaped by their position as racialized women. These experiences with racism have created unstable feelings in terms of inclusion and acceptance, however, many women still express that they feel Canadian. Interestingly, those who label their experiences racist encounters and see racism existing systemically do not express a strong connection to Canadian citizenship. These women have a very politicized understanding of Canadian contradictions that manifest between liberal multiculturalism and structural racism. In other words, they are critical of the efficacy of multiculturalism, and in turn, other values and traits that are assumed to be held across the nation, such as gender equality, justice, and freedom. I attribute this critical understanding to their awareness of Canada's history of colonialism and the ongoing inequalities that plague Indigenous people. While it may seem that the women

in this study can be neatly divided into 1) those who do not feel they experience racism or do not point to existence of systemic racism and express feeling Canadian, and 2) those who readily label experiences as racist and believe that Canadian society is structured through racist ideologies, and therefore have a more difficult time in expressing Canadian identity, this is not the case. In numerous instances, the women move in and out of being critical of the dominant ideologies and contradictions which structure Canadian society, be they gendered or racialized. The ways in which they manage and resist Canadian contradictions, however, do have commonalities, which in turn impact their expressions of feeling Canadian. It's important to note that feeling Canadian can mean different things for different women. Both claiming a Canadian identity and challenging notions liberal multiculturalism work to produce anti-racist understandings of Canada and disrupt ideologies of whiteness. Some of the women, however, express a counter-hegemonic understanding of Canada, and therefore manage contradictions in ways that are more removed from ideology. I do not wish to divide and homogenize the women in this study, as they all have gone through unique experiences and have their own understanding of their position in Canadian society. However, I do wish to point to some common patterns in not only their expressions of belonging and Canadian identity, but also how they negotiate and manage contradictions.

Awareness of Canadian Colonialism as Producing Instability in Claims of Being and Feeling Canadian

The women's proximity to an awareness of Canada's history of colonialism worked to impact their expressions of being and feeling Canadian and belonging generally. This section looks at how knowledge of Canada's history of race relations, and how it has shaped and continues to shape its institutions makes participants more critical and in nearly all cases, less inclined to identify as Canadian. Leilah is the only exception to this pattern, as she expresses that she does not feel Canadian, but also states that she does not have much awareness on colonialism in Canada. This section looks at how these women express criticisms of multiculturalism, as they see it as a way to mask ongoing systems of racism. Women who have access to this knowledge do not de-historicize or de-politicize Indigenous plight, and instead, all express counter-hegemonic expressions of cultural identity and belonging generally.

Saya, Shadi, Tafida, Kamela, Zara, Calla, and Lena all express that they don't feel Canadian. It should be noted that in explaining why they having difficulty claiming a Canadian identity, these women use highly politicized language. This is attributed to the fact that nearly all of these women have studied or are currently studying in the humanities and social sciences at a post-secondary institution. This means they have access to highly political, and critical discourses on Canadian history, the state, and society generally. They frequently refer to various classes they have taken through their bachelor's, and sometimes master's degree. In fact, all of the women who express a thorough understanding of Canadian colonialism and the persistence of ideologies of whiteness had been exposed to critical narratives, either through their post-secondary schooling, or through various political organizations they had joined at their post-secondary schools. This counter-hegemonic understanding of Canada, one which questions the value, efficacy, and utility of liberal multiculturalism, impacts their expressions of Canadian identity. It also provides these women with the tools necessary to critique Canadian contradictions. This is exemplified in the answers below, when women were asked if they feel Canadian.

Tafida: I don't identify as Canadian... I do get the privileges of the citizenship, but I feel like I don't want to buy into that anymore because of the settler colonialism implications of that.

Kamela: Um...no, I don't think so cause I don't know what that is, I don't know what that's supposed to feel like.

Shadi: It's hard to answer that question because I'm so critical of nationalism in general.

Although all three women express not feeling Canadian, they do so for different but interconnected reasons. These barriers to feeling Canadian are repeated throughout the interviews of all seven women who do not feel Canadian, as they all express criticisms of Canada's history of race relations. As outlined in the literature review through the work of Agnew (2007), these women do not possess the factors necessary for belonging or group identification. They do not agree with the set of stereotypes associated with being Canadian, they do not feel as though they can take on the label 'Canadian', and they do not participate in behaviours that are considered nationalistic and patristic but are largely noted in sexism and racism. They

all express a thorough awareness of Canada's history of colonialism and are critical of the ways in which it still structures Indigenous life, as well as the lives of other racialized communities. In other words, they counter the hegemony that structures and defines Canadian nationhood, Canadian citizenship, and Canadian society generally.

All of the women who do not claim to be Canadian, at some point or another had access to counter-hegemonic narratives which engage in issues of racism, sexism, discrimination and inequality. This means that beyond negotiating specific Canadian contradictions, these women are also critical of more general concepts of cultural homogeneity, orientalism, and whiteness. I argue that their access to such narratives has allowed them to develop a fuller, historically-situated and politically aware understanding of Canada, Canadian citizenship, and Canadian culture. In turn, this has impacted how they choose to express their Canadian identity, in this case, by not expressing it at all and instead, by being critical of all its nuances and contradictions.

Tafida's choice to not identify as Canadian is connected to her understanding of colonialism, as is exemplified in her statement above. The discomfort that manifests in terms of 'feeling Canadian' have been, it seems, connected to an increased understanding of colonialism, and sometimes even a critical understanding of one's role as a settler. This in turn impacts feelings of belonging, as is exemplified below, when I asked Tafida and Saya if they feel they belong in Canada.

Tafida: I don't know...I try not to claim Canada, to remain like conscious of my positionally as a settler here.

Saya: As an immigrant, I'm here on Indigenous land, and so I almost feel a guilt about it. I feel like I have more rights, and opportunities and privileges than the Aboriginal people here and that's so wrong to me, so especially as an immigrant...I feel like it's my obligation...to understand those histories and to try to connect.^[1]

Both Tafida and Saya recognizes the ways in which immigration contributes to settler colonialism, a concept touched upon in the first chapter of this thesis. Throughout the entire interview, Tafida and Saya express critical understandings of Canada's history and ongoing issue with Indigenous peoples as well as

the racial hierarchies which still structure society. In fact, Saya goes on to argue that multiculturalism works to erase the unique ways in which Indigenous people have been impacted by processes of colonialism and systemic racism. The women do not historicize the plight of Indigenous people, and see its existence and effects as ongoing.

Shadi: When it comes to Indigenous peoples, they don't have access to healthcare the way that we do in big cities, and even like, Indigenous peoples who live in big cities also still have a hard time accessing good health services.

Fatima: I would like to say we care about human rights but the lack of drinking water in Indigenous communities makes me think we don't.

These women clearly possess a politicized, critical understanding of Canadian race relations. In Maira's (2018) research, outlined under the second period of multiculturalism, her participants expressed quite a bit of criticism and critical understanding of race relations in America and the American state. These participants were all politically engaged and involved in various student organizations and groups that gave them access to language and ideas that was outside of hegemony. Similarly, the women in this study who have had access to this critical, counter-hegemonic understanding of Canadian history and society are very critical of it, and feel disconnected from claims of being Canadian. Again, this points to the significance, influence, and importance of access to such narratives.

Shadi: I remember when I got to 12th grade, I took a world issues class and we got to pick any topic we wanted, and write an essay and do a presentation on it, and I decided to focus specifically on the experience of Indigenous peoples in Canada, 'cause I frankly didn't learn anything about it in high school...I did my extra research and I managed to learn a little bit more... When I pursued my undergrad I made a point to take several Indigenous studies classes just because I didn't think it was fair that I didn't learn anything about it, and frankly you can't understand the issue of race and inequity if you don't understand the experience of Indigenous peoples here.

Shadi's recognition of the plight of Indigenous peoples, like Tafida, has impacted her feelings of belonging. She also points to the lack of availability of these discourses in the education system in Canada. Shadi made

it a point to research Indigenous history and gain more critical take on Canadian history. In other words, this understanding of Canadian colonialism is not readily available for the average Canadian, as it arguably should be. Because of her access to antiracist narratives through her academic studies, she recognizes her privilege, while also not discounting the existence of racism and how it works to exclude and marginalize others from belonging in Canada, including others similar to herself. It's important to note that the women who do not feel Canadian still recognize the immense privileges of being Canadian and holding a Canadian passport. An understanding of the privilege that comes with being Canadian, being heterosexual, and having a lighter-complexion, however, does not mean that one cannot address the disadvantages, inequalities and faults of Canada. In other words, having privilege does not mean one cannot point to systemic racism, or that in pointing to it they are somehow being ungrateful or unpatriotic. In fact, pointing to the ways in which Canada could do better as a nation that touts multiculturalism is, arguably, patriotic in its pleas for change, it assumes that Canada and Canadians have the capacity to produce such change.

Mohrdar: Do you feel that you belong in Canada?

Shadi: Yeah I do, I can't say that I feel like I don't belong here, this is a country that I grew up in but then again like I'm cisgender, I'm heterosexual, I do have this white skin privilege so there's been a lot of privileges that I have and continue to have that haven't made me subject to certain exclusions...in a broad sense, yes I do feel like I'm included here, or I belong here, but...I know that not everyone feels that way, so I don't want to say that, 'yes, Canada's an inclusive society or [a] society where everyone can belong.' [1] [SEP]

The women who project a thorough understanding of Canadian colonialism and systemic racism, recognize both their studies and the subjects they were able to study as a privilege. Zara for example, did not study in the humanities and attributes this to pressures coming from her parents, who felt she would find more financial stability in the hard sciences.

Zara: They're both doctors [her parents], so they always talked about how amazing the medical field is... people showed them respect all over the world—when they need help in the plane people are like, 'doctor, doctor' so it's an amazing job, it's a badass job, you know? My older sister's going to med school... for me, I went to

Kinesiology... I'm not doing well at all. I try so hard, no matter how hard I try, my grades are not good. And when I took some electives, just social science courses, modes of reasoning, anything other than kinesiology, I did so well, I aced all of them: essays and assignments and stuff.... lately I told my parents I'm going to change my major, and I felt the pressure a little bit.

Zara studies in the hard sciences, meaning her access to anti-racist, critical narratives is not equal to those who study in the humanities and social sciences. However, Zara looks back fondly on a humanities class she was able to take early on in her studies that opened up her eyes to the histories of colonialism that have shaped Canada. Zara admired her T.A., as he was able to present theories of whiteness and white supremacy, and explain the privileges of being white in calm ways. Zara, as previously mentioned, was one of the women who was told she was too loud and outspoken, so it makes sense that she would appreciate his approach to explaining such charged subjects.

Zara: He was saying for example, he was saying how white people are very privileged and they're looking at themselves like they're the best, and there was a white man in the class and then he got so angry, he was like 'I'm so frustrated over here, don't say that.' He was so angry, I swear. And the T.A.... his answer would be like, 'it's okay to be angry, it's phase to admit [to your privilege]' and he would just speak very calmly and slowly and I loved it so much, I was like, 'oh my god, I want to be like him!'^[11]

Zara's access to critical, anti-racist narratives were not limited to this class alone, however. Before immigrating to Canada, Zara participated in the Arab Spring in Egypt, alongside her parents, who would encourage her to be critical of the state and partake in the political movement gaining momentum in Egypt at the time. Growing up in this environment has kept her critical of the state she now resides in. Shadi's parents also increased her proximity to critical, antiracist, counter-hegemonic narratives.

Shadi, as well as Kamela's comments—presented at the beginning of this section—on not feeling Canadian point to the ideological construction of Canadian citizenship and nationality. Shadi states that she does not feel Canadian because she is critical of nationalism and Kamela does not feel Canadian because she's not sure what feeling Canadian is even supposed to feel like. Both women point to the problems that come with attributing certain characteristics, traits, and ways of being to a nationality and then claiming

that they are homogeneously held. Shadi's criticisms of nationalism, like Kamela, come from her discomfort in defining what Canada is and what it means to be Canadian. Shadi believes nationalism leads to feelings of superiority in that it often involves attributing traits to an entire nation, which might not always reflect the overall nature of the state or its citizens. For example, Canadian nationalism often prides itself in its alleged adherence to multiculturalism, and suggests that tolerance and inclusivity are nationally held traits, or in other words, 'Canadian values.' Kamela, like the other women who do not feel Canadian, states that she began questioning the traits that are so commonly attributed to Canadian identity once she became more aware of the histories of colonialism which define the nation.

Kamela: The humanities courses [I took], I learned that the history that we had been taught is like totally, totally incorrect and you know almost fabricated to a degree, you know so, learning about Indigenous people and the struggles that they faced and the history and like the brutality that they went through...that changed my understanding of, 'oh Canada's such an inclusive, multicultural place' you know?^[L1]_[SEP]

These women, then, negotiate Canadian contradictions between claims and the reality of current race and in counter-hegemonic ways. They do not believe that multiculturalism on its own reduces racism, because they understand racism as systemic.

Mohrdar: What does multiculturalism do? What does it mean?

Saya: I guess living together in harmony, but when you think deeper, that term I guess is really created by white people. And it's white people looking in, and it still 'others.' I don't know if I'm wording this properly but, it means you're from a background different from Canadian.

Kamela: It just feels like you're sort of tolerating someone, you know? It doesn't feel like you're accepting them, it feels like you're just like, 'oh fine,' you know? I feel like we have this weird thing in Canada where we think that...if we put out enough festivals, and if we have enough Chinese food places in the city...we can tell everyone that we're multicultural.

Lena: It's still the product of genocide, and one that we're still dealing with today, so that's all important things to keep in mind and something that doesn't really translate to a strong

foundation of multiculturalism, especially when you're trying to suppress all of that, and bring it out in this really weird narrative that I think is very false. [1] [SEP]

Their understanding and criticisms of multiculturalism reflect insights of the anti-racist feminist criticisms I outlined earlier in this text, mostly through the work of Bannerji (2000), Thobani (2007), and Jiwani (2006). This means they manage and negotiate these contradictions by understanding them beyond their shiny veneer of benevolence. They recognize that it's a discourse and policy which stems from a white gaze, that it reduces ethnicities to folkloric representations; that it treats equality as cultural tolerance and not systemic equality; that there are limits to even this shallow tolerance, and that it ignores a history of colonial violence that still exists today. They question the effectiveness of multiculturalism not only as a policy, but as an ideology. Zara, while appreciating the values of Canadian citizenship, also discusses how she feels multiculturalism tokenizes her.

Zara: I'm being used more than being included, you know? I mean we're using the Canadian citizenship for a lot of things, but they're using us as well, by the way. I mean we're a part of the picture that they're selling, diversity, multiculturalism... I'm the picture, basically, I'm not part of the bigger picture, but I'm the picture. [1] [SEP]

Zara feels she is pointed to as proof that Canada is multicultural, but she is not included in Canadian society in the same way white Canadians are. These women recognize that if Canadian multiculturalism is to exist in any productive way, it needs to move beyond narratives of tolerance and shallow appeals to diversity. The notion of tolerance involves power relations, in the sense that it assumes there are groups that need a certain level of tolerance from another group, because they are so wildly 'different.' Their 'difference' or 'diversity' is conceived as difference from whiteness, as multiculturalism as a political ideology in Canada was only introduced when the number of immigrants from non-white nations began to increase (Bannerji, 2000). Tafida points to the need for more anti-racist feminist understandings of Canadian society and its institutions in order for multiculturalism to be effective.

Tafida: Going beyond representation and representation politics and recognizing the state and institutions by definition, like this is what they are, and this is what they do. Having

more brown and black people, seeing them...included in a tokenized way isn't going to change the definition of what the institution is.

^L_{SEP}In fact, Zara doesn't believe that Canadians actually value multiculturalism, and she sees people's politeness as 'fake.'

Zara: Canadians are known to be very, very nice but they're actually not, they wouldn't help when for example I was in the storm, me and my friend were driving and then something got stuck under the car, and I came out of the car and I was basically flying all over and I went under the car to pull something up, was like for a good...30 minutes, okay? In that wind. Lots of people passed by, nobody stopped. So, I mean, people are like that, basically, so they're fake-ly nice. When it comes to the words...everyone can say stuff, everyone can say they're multicultural.

Zara's point about fake politeness is also shared by other women who think that racism has found new ways to express itself, sometimes even in ways that give the appearance of kindness. In other words, these women recognize the existence of culturalism and insidious racism, as outlined in previous sections (Agnew, 2007; Jiwani, 2006; Satzewich & Liodaksi, 2010; Thobani, 2007).

Lena: I think it's a very covert kind of racism and I think that happens a lot more, if anything at times I think it's a lot more deadly than the kind of racism you see in America, where people are like 'I'm racist and I'm proud of it' kind of thing. It's sold as this multicultural haven and then when you get here it's like, oh, people are just racist in a really different way.

Tafida: It's so scary how blatantly racist people are in like the suburbs and all that' but like it doesn't mean that here [Toronto] it's all well and good either.

Lena and Tafida's comments point to the insidious nature of racism today. Subtle and insidious expressions of racism in day-to-day interactions makes it more difficult to identify, and makes those who do point to them seem overly sensitive or ungrateful (Malhi & Boon, 2009).

The women are not critical just of nationalism in Canada, but also in nationalism stemming from their country of origin. Tafida comments on the dangers of Egyptian nationalism, but also points to the need

to create a balance between criticizing and accepting, so as to thwart sentiments of self-hate that were mentioned previously.

Tafida: I was like, 'ugh, I don't want to be Egyptian, Egyptians are the worst, I don't want to be identified as Egyptian' and all that, and my uncle was like, 'you are going to Canada, you need to know your roots! If you don't have roots you can't build a tree!' And all of this symbolism and all of that, he was like, 'you have to be proud!'...But also it's weird because Egyptian nationalism is also extremely harmful because it's basically the military...so it's weird to like navigate, yeah we shouldn't be so self-hating but it's also like you don't want to buy into like Egyptian nationalism.

Tafida, like the other women who are knowledgeable on Canadian history, are critical both of Canada and of the Middle East, and understand that both have many issues when it comes to race and gender equality.

Interestingly, the women who do not see racisms as systemic and have an easier time claiming a Canadian identity, do not have a strong understanding of colonialism in Canada and the ongoing inequalities facing Indigenous peoples. They consent to certain parts of multiculturalism, and believe that it is an effective way of reducing racism. I attribute this to the aforementioned lack of accessibility of these narratives in mainstream Canadian civil society. All of the women who lack this knowledge did not study in the social sciences or humanities. They have not been motivated or encouraged to be more critical of Canadian multiculturalism. I argue, however, that without the initial knowledge of systemic inequalities based in historical underpinnings of Canadian nationhood, the motivation to set out and look for these organizations and counter-hegemonic spaces is most probably not as likely.

Azar's comments point to the confusion that emerges when trying to understand and manage contradictions between an alleged multiculturalism and the continued existence of systemic racism, without a critical understanding of ongoing systems of racism and colonialism.

Azar: I think that as open as we [Canadians] are as a culture, there's still some level of closed-off-ness and I won't say that I've looked into it or investigated as to why that is, and so I'm not speaking from an entirely educated place, but I do think that there are some negatives that can still be looked at. And unrelated to this but I do think that one of the negative things about Canada that I've also heard is this whole like Aboriginal thing, and how...some of these policies that exist and how...some of the ways that they're treated them

in the past. That's something that I think also negatively shaped my perception of Canada as like a nation, but again it's not something that I know a lot about, it's just like, hearsay.

It's clear that Azar is aware of the contradictions between Canada's supposed unparalleled commitment to inclusion and diversity, as she says she feels a 'level of closed-offness.' She states, however, that she's not really sure why that is. Without an understanding of Canada's history of colonialism, her ability to manage these contradictions is in ways, limited, and instead, Azar ends up repeating the very narratives that work against Indigenous resurgence and remembering. Her comments first and foremost point to the erasure of Indigenous plight and resistance in the Canadian education system, as touched on in the first chapter (Simpson, 2016). Azar believes that the "Aboriginal thing," by which she means colonialism, is "in the past." Furthermore, she believes that it is 'unrelated' to Canada's limits of acceptance, thereby ignoring the impacts this colonialism has had on the structuring of society, and specifically, on our openness and acceptance of others as a nation. Lastly, she states that she's unsure if what she knows about Indigenous history is true or not, making it abundantly clear that her understanding of Canadian history and politics is very much shaped by modern day rhetoric that ignore the racial and gendered violence Canada was built on.

All of the women of expressed a limited knowledge on Indigenous issues also expressed dismay, shock, and discomfort at what they do know about colonialism in Canada. They do not, however, connect Canada's history of colonialism to the present treatment of Indigenous peoples or racialized people generally.

Nasrin: I'm not sure why...there seems to be this negativity around that particular group [Indigenous people], I mean, I know that they try, but it's not as... they don't, they don't shine a positive light on that group, often times when you hear about it in the news or when you hear about it, in the papers it's not often in a positive way, it's more negative, and I think that's the problem too, we're not really, like we've got all these great festivals and cultural events, but not a lot of them have anything to do with Aboriginals and I don't really see that being promoted or being encouraged.

Beyond connecting colonialism to the racial violence that currently structures Canadian society, the women who had a strong understanding of Canadian colonialism also connected this history to histories of

colonialism and imperialism in the Middle East. Kamela's knowledge of Indigenous treatment in Canada, which she attributes to humanities classes she took in university, allowed her to have a more historicized and politicized understanding of colonialism in Canada and its existence abroad.

Kamela: I felt a sort of bond almost with that history [Canadian] that I learned because it very much recalled the history of Palestinians and what they went through... you know colonialism and ethnic cleansing and stuff like that, that was all stuff that was very close to my heart and stuff that I learned about with my own people and stuff, so it felt like kin with sort of Indigenous people after I learned about that. I had a different take on how great Canada was, and you know we have a Prime Minister that talks about inclusivity and stuff all the time but then can't... you know?

It's clear then, that a critical understanding of colonialism in Canada impacts these women's expressions of being Canadian, and also impact how they negotiate Canadian contradictions. Those who do not possess this knowledge are still critical of Canada, however, their criticisms often reflect a more contradictory understanding of Canada. In other words, sometimes rely on discourses of democratic racism in their attempt to understand and manage their experiences as racialized women, and therefore also their experiences of racism and discrimination.

Negotiating and Managing Contradictions through Discourses of Democratic Racism

This section looks at the ways in which some women use discourses of democratic racism when managing contradictions between Canadian multiculturalism and the ongoing existence of racism. In doing so, they sometimes provide legitimacy to narratives that marginalize them and other racialized women. It's clear, however, that the women understand that although Canada pledges benevolence, inclusion and acceptance, this does not always translate into a lived reality. However, they have a difficult time addressing why that is, and therefore rely on discourses of democratic racism to explain these discrepancies.

Discourses of democratic racism, as outlined by Henry and Tator (2006), were popularized in the first period of multiculturalism, though they lost some of their legitimacy doing the second, as this was

marked as a retreat from multiculturalism, even in its shallowest form. I argue, however, these discourses have re-gained legitimacy in the current period as strategies to manage the existence of racism and Canada's alleged multiculturalism. The narratives of some women in this study exemplify their popularity among those who have potentially conflicting experiences between an assumed inclusive Canada and their experiences of exclusion.

For example, both Nasrin and Noor talk about their Canadian and Middle Eastern identities as different from one another. For them, being Canadian and being Iranian or Jordanian are different, as there are Canadian qualities, traits, and values, and Iranian and Jordanian qualities, traits, and values.

Nasrin: I think I would consider myself more Canadian than Iranian, I'm more, like I...I guess I'm more accustomed to the Canadian lifestyle and the Canadian culture versus the Iranian.

Noor: I don't know if I feel Jordanian anymore.

Here, Nasrin and Noor use the discourse of binary polarization, as outlined by Henry and Tator's (2006), when negotiating their Canadian identity. In their understanding of Canadian ways of being, they believe there are certain things that now make them Canadian. When asked what it means to be Canadian, Nasrin and Noor produce different answers, pointing to the constructed nature of what it means to be 'Canadian,' and national identity in general. Both, however, used the word 'freedom' when discussing what it means to be Canadian, a term that came up several times among participants who experienced feeling Canadian. In doing so, participants use discourses of liberal values in negotiating these contradictions (Henry & Tator 2006).

Morooj: I found that Canada is very much aligned with my value system, ever since I was a child, and that I am free to express that value system. Whereas in the Middle East I have to go through the distortions of whatever the powers that be of the day want you to talk about, or act, and I feel free in Canada, free to worship, free to express myself, and as a woman, free to aspire for career progress.

This reflects my discussion on Canada's push to establish itself nationally and internationally as a humanitarian, benevolent nation, in the first period of multiculturalism, and now again in the third. This does not mean that Morooj is incorrect in asserting that she is free to worship and aspire for career progress. Instead, I argue that racialized Canadians, and women specifically, have certain limitations and exclusions from freedoms enjoyed by white Canadians, and in particular, white, male Canadians that goes unaddressed her exaltation of an assumed Canadian value system. It also is part of Henry and Tators's (2006) discourse of binary polarization, in that it is based on the idea that cultures are homogenous and can be defined through binary, with nations inherently possessing certain traits that all of the citizens also somehow possess and value (Bannerji, 2000). While of course, Morooj is correct to say that Canadian laws and rights in terms of freedom of speech and gender equality are generally more moral than that of some Middle Eastern countries, the lack of perspective and context makes Canadian values of 'freedom' appear limitless. In fact, there are limits to the 'freedom's bestowed on Canadians, even in Morooj's own experiences. For example, when I asked her which spaces she feels valued, she says her work. Shortly after, however, she describes a certain discomfort in terms of her experience of expressing her identity at work.

Morooj: The only discomfort I have is when I'm asked, 'where are you from.' I'm Palestinian and saying that is a political statement, and a lot of my co-workers, a lot of my superiors are Jewish and I have nothing against that but some of them post on Facebook Zionist posts and as a Palestinian, you know, Zionism kind of doesn't recognize my existence as a Palestinian. It's difficult that way, so I kind of hesitate to say where I'm from and I'd rather say I grew up in the United Arab Emirates...I guess it's a fundamental thing, I cannot in Canada go out and present my identity completely and speak to my identity as a Palestinian without it being a political statement.

Morooj's comments point to inequalities in terms of self-expression that exist in Canadian society. Tolerance is limited, and Morooj is aware of that, as her other co-workers are free to express their identity in whichever way they choose, though she feels uncomfortable doing so. Clearly, then, these unparalleled commitments to freedom, inclusion, and multiculturalism, which these women believe define Canadian society are not homogeneously held. Indeed, no cultural trait or value is. As previously discussed under the first period of multiculturalism, this homogenization and binary understanding of culture have remained to

occupy a central place in the discourses of multiculturalism (Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007). Morooj's comments reflect these sentiments. These discourses assumes that there are some who are 'Canadian' and some who are the 'diversity' which add to the 'multi' of cultures. This assertion is premised on the assumption that there is an inherent Canadian identity, which means that there are some who are more Canadian than others.

In speaking about acceptance, many of the women who negotiate through discourses of democratic racism, point to shallow forms of acceptance. In fact, they point to the folkloric and festive forms of acceptance as proof that Canadian multiculturalism has worked and that others are accepting of differing cultures. These sentiments echo popularized perceptions on cultural inclusion and acceptance, established under the first period of multiculturalism. It also very much echoes how Trudeau expresses inclusion and multiculturalism in this current, third period. Nasrin specifically points to Trudeau's appointing of female cabinet members as a sign of acceptance and inclusion in Canadian society, and Azar to his public celebrations of ethnic holidays online.

Nasrin: I think what they're currently doing...in terms of being a part of different cultural celebrations, being a part of different cultural events, and also bringing on...a more diverse group of politicians onto their team, I've definitely seen a huge change in that, in the sense that the different political parties are more diverse in their teams.

Azar: I feel like there's an effort made to post and celebrate every holiday that happens...I see Trudeau on my timeline, every day celebrating a new holiday. And I think again, they're sending a clear message, right? And that message is your government acknowledges every single holiday, of every single religion that could exist. I think that that's really positive.

Nasrin and Azar's comments point to the shallow ways in which multiculturalism is expressed in Canada. Diversity in this context rarely means a diversity of ideas and perspectives. As several anti-racist critics of multiculturalism (like Bannerji, 2000; Thobani, 2007) have pointed out, white Canadians may accept and celebrate food and folkloric expressions of cultural difference, but this does not point to some form of radical acceptance or social and economic inclusion.

The fact that some of the women in this study repeat these statements, echoes similar findings stemming from the research of Jiwani (2006) and Malhi & Boon (2009) on discourses of denial among racialized women. These authors found that the racialized women in their studies would often repeat the very narratives which marginalize them and deny the existence of racism. Identifying as ‘Canadian,’ and understanding these feelings through an acceptance of the popularized narratives, or in other words, ideologies Canada repeats about itself can also be a form of survival, or coping, as they now feel they are part of the dominant group in society, even if others may not see them as such. Given that the women described anxieties in terms of others viewing them as Canadian, it’s no surprise that showing allegiance and loyalty to Canadian identity would be a strategy to reduce or thwart such anxieties. For example, Noor expresses her partner’s happiness with her expressions of feeling Canadian, as she’s let go of her desires to move back to Jordan.

Noor: He was always frustrated with the fact that I’m here but I’m not happy to be here...like, ‘well then why are you here, just go, I hate the fact that you’re here but you’re not happy to be here’...now that I’m genuinely feeling like this is home in a way... I feel more comfortable on the inside.

Additionally, by repeating dominant Canadian narratives, these women work to gain national capital, by “presenting themselves as safe citizens” who champion the superiority of Canadian identity to Middle Eastern identity (Nagra 2017, p. 33). For example, Noor sees the holding on to of Arab traditions as ‘going backward,’ not only using language that has historically been used to oppress Middle Easterners and other racialized people, but also pointing to an orientalist understanding of Middle Eastern culture as unprogressive and Western culture as modern. In doing so, Noor draws on orientalist stereotypes and framings popularized in the second period of multiculturalism. Her statements play into fears that immigrants do not ‘integrate’ into Canadian society. These fears have been popularized in the third period of multiculturalism.

Noor: I’ve met people that are Arab here and I’m like ‘uh, no,’ because the way that they want to hold onto certain things and not let go... this is not who I want to mesh with here because I feel like I’m just going backwards, it’s like stepping back, and so I kind of even

avoid certain populations in that sense... I felt like some people came and they wanted to keep their identity in the fullest even, with some negative things...and I don't want that...in a way too, I don't know if it's good or bad, maybe I was being judgmental but I felt ashamed because it's like, they're representing me as well.

In pointing to the behaviour of other Middle Eastern people and distancing herself from their actions, actions which she claims are tied to their ethnic roots, she works to further narratives which homogenize and inferiorize Middle Eastern culture. Noor does however, expresses feeling judgmental, and recognizes the burden representation that she, as a racialized woman, has to deal with. Her fear that the actions of some Middle Eastern people would be representational of all Middle Eastern people is based in an awareness that the negative actions of racialized individuals are extended onto the entire race, as previously discussed. Noor fails to recognize how she also reproduces these narratives, however.

It should be noted, that these women grew up in a society saturated with narratives that have demonize and otherize them, and where these narratives of demonization and othering are justified and legitimized by liberals and conservatives alike. That they have now learned to use the same language that has so fervently been used to describe them, particularly in the second period of multiculturalism, the period in which many of them grew up in, should not come as a surprise (Thobani, 2007). For those who possess a thorough and highly critical awareness of Canadian history and recognize racism as ongoing and system, discourses of democratic racism are far and few between. This group works outside of ideology in order to make sense of Canadian contradictions.

Seeing Gender Equality in Canada as Inherent versus as an Ongoing Goal

The women in this study who had critical, counter-hegemonic perspectives largely dismiss the idea that gender equality is an inherent Canadian value. Conversely, Canada's commitment to women's rights is pointed to by many women, who believe that feminism is a highly valued national characteristic. This perception is not uncommon, particularly since the election of Trudeau in the third period of multiculturalism. Regardless of how they perceive gender equality in Canada, all of the women express having felt unsafe in Canada because of their position as women. This section looks at the ways in which

these women negotiate and manage the contradictions that emerge between their experiences and the existence of gender equality in Canada.

While their assessments of Canada comparatively being better than their country of origin in terms of human rights issues, like racial and gender equality, may be correct, it largely ignores history and context, and instead works to reproduce narratives that Orientalize and marginalize Middle Easterners. In turn, narratives that exalt Canada are perpetuated. They point to gender equality as something Canada has done better in, while also questioning the existence of gender equality— one of the only aspects of Canadian society that all women are unapologetically critical of. Women who use discourses of democratic racism see both sexism and racism, as ‘un-Canadian,’ thereby excusing the power relations and the political contexts that has fostered systemic sexism and racism in Canada. Women who negotiate contradictions in counter-hegemonic ways, on the other hand, see racism and sexism as existing both in the Middle East and in Canada and understand them in their social and historical context.

When asked what Canadian values are, nearly all of the women who manage contradictions through discourses of democratic racism point to gender equality and the freedoms women enjoy in Canada. When pointing to the value of gender equality, the women for the most part, compare it to the treatment of women in the Middle East. Noor compares the level of respect she receives here with the level of respect she had in Jordan, pointing to the everyday ways in which gender is read in different cultures.

Noor: Being a woman, I’m so respected here, and it’s innate...I’m no longer happy...I’m no longer happy about someone respecting me, that shouldn’t be the case it should be normal, but in the beginning it’s like, ‘oh they talk to me like I know what I’m saying...’ and [when] I’m not respected I feel I’m stronger now to be like, ‘excuse me, this is no way to be talking to someone’ and I’ve never had that.

Nasrin: I wore a tank top at a party [in Iran] and there were boys there and my aunt was like, ‘you shouldn’t be wearing a tank top, it’s not appropriate’ and I just can’t, sometimes understand that perspective: it’s not appropriate to dress a certain way in front of men.

Both Noor and Nasrin use Henry & Tator’s discourses of liberal values here, in order to manage their treatment in Canada versus in the Middle East. Canada is positioned as superior, not because of something

tangible the nation has done to foster equality, but because it is comparatively better than the Middle East. Noor and Nasrin's comments are valid, as the treatment of women in some Middle Eastern countries is problematic for a variety of reasons. This is not to say, however, that women are not devalued, discriminated against, and policed in Canada as well, though in differing ways. Racialized women in particular are bigger targets of racial and gender violence in Canada (Bannerji, 2000; Jiwani, 2006; Perera & Razack, 2014; Thobani, 2007;). These facts, however, do not prevent the women from comparing the places, and in doing so, depoliticizing, de-contextualizing, and therefore repeating narratives that marginalize them.

Azar: I think women in Canada are a lot more progressive in terms of... progression in their careers and professional development and wanting to achieve really, really valuable things in their career, whatever that is. It could be [a] traditional path, like business or law or doctor or whatever, or it could be academics, or it could be I don't know... social work... whatever it is I think that Canadian women are a lot more ambitious.

Mohrdar: More ambitious than who?

Azar: I think just other parts of the world, I think that there's other parts of the world where you know, they just want to grow up and they just want to be a housewife...there's people here who want to do that, and that's fine but, I think that there's a lot more just gender equality focus here. People are raised with different values necessarily than other places...they don't want to grow up, and just have kids and sit at home.

Azar's comments not only assume that Canadian women are more ambitious, it also assumes that there is equality in society that allows them to advance in the ways they want. Alternatively, women in "other parts of the world," Azar argues, are not only held back because of gender equality but because of their own complacency, that they only want to "have kids and sit at home." Interestingly, being a housewife in Canada is "fine," likely because she is assuming that they have a choice to do so, and that their decision to do so is informed by "different values." Whereas women from "other parts of the world," through a lack of ambition and gender inequality, are pushed into housewifery. Azar's comments very much echo sentiments that gained legitimacy in the second period of multiculturalism and which worked to frame Middle Eastern

women, or women “out there” as passive victims to their culture, and whose ambitions and goals do not stretch past their subservience to their husbands and home. In speaking through these narratives, Azar works within a hegemonic understanding of womanhood, in particular a raced womanhood and lends legitimacy to these stereotypes. Additionally, it progresses narratives that uncritically exalt Canada. Azar positions Canadian women as inherently ambitious because of their desire to progress in their professional careers, and while this may be true, it ignores the economic and social pressures that both women and men face in hyper-capitalist societies like Canada, that values individuals largely and arguably solely for their economic success. In making assumptions about the pressures women in ‘other parts of the world’ face, she ignores the pressures that women at home may face, and instead, points to their commitment to career as evidence of gender equality and ambition. In conflating equality with equality in the labour market alone, this perspective is limited and distorted.

It’s also important to put things into perspective, in the sense that, while gender inequality is fraught and even legitimized in some Middle Eastern countries, these nations for the most part, are not making international claims to gender equality in the ways Canada, and more specifically, Trudeau, does. To suggest that gender equality exists, when Indigenous women are going missing and being murdered at alarming rates is irresponsible, and ignorant to an intersectional understanding of women’s rights. Canada is seen internationally as a leader in human rights, and through such recognition as a nation, they harness quite a bit of power and economic and political influence. Trudeau’s rejuvenation of the image of a benevolent, liberal Canada, as discussed under the third period of multiculturalism, has exaggerated this tendency. In fact, the women in this study who negotiated Canadian contradictions through discourses of democratic racism point to the election of Trudeau as a sign of hope in terms of gender equality, as well as racial inclusion and acceptance. I argue, however, that if such narratives are to be perpetuated in Canada, it is vital that such claims to equality are interrogated. This research has shown that Canada still deals with sexism. This is exemplified through colonialism and the continued devaluing of Indigenous women (Simpson, 2016); the overrepresentation of Muslim women who reported hate crimes after 9/11 (Jiwani, 2006); the gap in wages and overrepresentation of men in managerial positions, and women in precarious

positions in the labour market and even in the experiences of the women in this study regarding issues of personal safety.

Azar: I've definitely felt unsafe, I feel every female, walking home late at night, alone, like, university, Toronto, anywhere. I've had guys follow me in the street and be like, 'what's your number?' late at night and I'm alone, I'm in heels, I can't run if I tired, I'm drunk, this is terrifying.

Shadi: As a woman I've experienced, you know, sexual harassment before, so in that sense I've felt unsafe.

Fatima: Yeah, multiple moments. Mostly gender related. Where I've been like, 'oh, not only are you bigger than me, now you're between me and the door, that's fun.'

Lena: I got kind of knocked away from my friends and it was kind of revealed to be kind of a premeditated thing by two guys who were trying to usher me away, and one of them after he knocked me over...[he] followed me to the corner and had my wrists pinned up against the wall and...he was all up in my space and like, 'why aren't you wearing a ring' because I was trying to tell him...I was pretty young, I think I was 18 when this happened.

Azar, Shadi, Fatima, and Lena's experiences are not uncommon, similar stories are scattered throughout nearly all the interviews. In these instances, however, women who negotiate Canadian contradictions through discourses of democratic racism, attempt to excuse the gendered violence they faced by again, comparing it with the gendered violence that they have experienced in the Middle East. In other words, they use strategies popularized in the second period of multiculturalism, where Canadian and Middle Eastern 'values' are compared and Canadian imperialism, or stricter immigration policies are justified. These comparisons, however, are rooted in orientalist, stereotypical understandings of the Middle East and the values of the people who live in that region. While it is true that these women are speaking about their own experiences, both with Canadian and Middle Eastern men, they seem more forgiving of the gendered discrimination and harassment they face here, than in the Middle East. For example, Azar follows up her recount of an uncomfortable experience on the subway with a similar incident that

occurred in Iran. The language she uses to describe the two experiences is interesting and important. Her interaction in Canada was described as uncomfortable but excusable, the one in Iran, however, is disgusting.

Azar: There's guys being like, 'take out your headphones' ...and you're like, 'oh my god, leave me alone!' I've been on the subway at 8 p.m. and it's a confined closed area and this guy won't stop talking to you...he's like, 'you have a boyfriend?' And I'm like, 'yeah I have a boyfriend' and like they're like 'well, duh duh duh duh.' Although I won't lie to you when I was in Iran...the guys in Iran are disgusting. I would be walking down the street, with my mom, and they would walk behind you and follow...and harass you: 'What's your number I want to take you out tonight, what are you doing, you look so hot, what's your number give me your number' and my mom would be like, 'shut up' and they wouldn't stop.

Whether she intends to or not, Azar downplays the importance of violence she has faced in Canada by contrasting it against an experience she had in the Middle East. Although the instances were very similar, she uses very different language for each situation.

Later, Azar goes on to state that in terms of the treatment of women, we are "better off" here. The language of being "better off," or doing the "best we can" is used time and time again by women who negotiate through discourses of democratic racism. I do not wish to contest the truth or falsity of this statement, but stress the complacency that comes with it. To dismiss the issue of gendered violence and gender inequality in terms of assumed civilization differences do not help advance progress towards gender equality and democracy. Citizens should be able to point out flaws or dissatisfactions with Canadian society, and have such criticisms not be seen as a sign of their lack of loyalty, but instead, as an opportunity for national change, growth, and progress. Additionally, criticism that comes from simplistic Orientalist depictions of the Middle East are problematic. By consistently framing women in the Middle East as powerless, they perpetuate the idea that women from the Middle East are victims of their own culture, and in doing so, maintain the stereotypes that induces shame, guilt, or instability in one's identity (Jiwani, 2006).

These ideas which are already so commonly perpetuated, not only by the state in their policies and actions, but also by popular and news media have certainly influenced these women's understandings of Middle Eastern women (Hennebry & Momani, 2013, Kowalski, 2013). For example, both Azar and Nasrin question if there are feminists' movements and resistance in Iran and assume that there most probably aren't. Shadi, however, wrote her

Master's thesis on the resistance of Iranian women through fashion, and points to the falsity of such assumptions. It's important to note, however, that one has to actively seek out these counter-hegemonic narratives and stories that show the agency, power and progressiveness of Middle Eastern women. Like narratives that are critical of Canadian colonialism and which point to the contradictory nature of Canada's pledges to multiculturalism, narratives that humanize Middle Eastern women are extremely rare. Shadi's access to such an alternative conception only occurred because she was able to visit Iran and investigate on her own. Because of this experience, Shadi sees popularized feminism in Canada as shallow and biased and does not connect with it. The other women who negotiate contradictions in counter-hegemonic ways are also critical of the suggestion that gender equality has been achieved in Canada. Shadi's observation in particular, however, also confirms how studying in the social sciences and humanities generally opens the door for the continued search for critical narratives and spaces on their own after their studies.

Shadi: I think Western feminism is just really problematic just because they fail to look beyond themselves and to really acknowledge the fact that race is an issue, along with other intersections of social identity...I traveled to Iran, and I was just so interested about...and this was after I completed my degree in anthropology, so I was like already looking at everything through a very critical, anthropological lens, so when I went to Iran I saw women in like alternative modes of fashion and how they were challenging dress codes and that was something that was really interesting to me.

A critical perspective, then, is important if one wishes to critically engage with Canadian claims to multiculturalism, feminism, and humanitarianism. Although it appears only some of the women were able to project this counter-hegemonic, critical understanding of Canada, all of them women, to varying degrees, began questioning Canadian multiculturalism, and general claims to Canadian superiority throughout the interview.

Questioning Assumptions about Canadian Benevolence Through Dialogue

Throughout the interviews, many of the women who resist dominant ideologies of a white Canada by confidently expressing their Canadian identity, began questioning their own assumptions about the

allegedly multicultural state Canada presents itself as. In other words, they began moving out of the discourses of democratic racism, and into more counter-hegemonic ones during the interview. I argue that the interview environment created a space that emulated political engagement and critical awareness similar to the counter-hegemonic spaces that other women in this study were a part of. This section looked at moments where women expression confusion or doubt about Canada's assumed benevolence and commitment to equality.

This meant that sometimes participants would begin negotiating contradictions in different ways throughout the interview. For example, by the end of the interview, Azar—who initially claimed that multiculturalism worked to reduce racism in Canada, began questioning its efficacy.

Azar: I would be interested to find out if, like I said, because these people [immigrants] are coming from different countries... is there more hidden bias that isn't as blatant as the U.S.? ...Because while we're multicultural and while there's you know, forced openness in a way to accept other people...is there more hidden back pocketed, just thoughts that people have that aren't necessarily as vocalized because there's no need to create this public enemy, and there's no access to guns and whatever...would the state of nation be very different if our access to guns and our leadership were different? Maybe. Could someone like tap in to that? I don't know, maybe.

Azar begins to question Canada's immunity to racism and starts disrupting the idea that Canadians are inherently tolerant and inclusive, when she expresses Canadian openness as 'forced.' Here, Azar is beginning to question the actual impacts of multiculturalism and starts wondering if there are more insidious ways that racism, which she refers to as 'bias,' that could, 'maybe' become more overt and threatening. As she begins questioning the ability for divisive, racist narratives to gain popularity in Canada, I ask her again about multiculturalism, this time asking not about its efficacy generally, but if she believes multiculturalism has allowed for acceptance and inclusion among varying cultures.

Azar: I think that there's efforts being made [among] youth to integrate cultures a little bit more which I think is good. I think at an adult level... I feel like because we both had that conversation about... [how] we feel like people think of us as less Canadian 'cause we're Persian, I don't know if it's where it should be, right? 'Cause if multiculturalism truly was where it was, we probably wouldn't feel that way.

Azar is referring to an earlier discussion we had on the feelings of exclusion and shame we faced as children. I expressed to Azar that I felt it carried into my adulthood in some aspects, and up until recently would lead me to try to move away from my heritage, sometimes by ignoring my mother in public and pretending I don't speak Farsi, or avoiding the sunlight in the summer time so my skin would not grow darker. I shared these experiences with Azar, in a bit of a back and forth, where she also shared how her childhood shame has carried into adulthood, which manifests in her ongoing anxieties of whether or not others will read her as Canadian. Azar and I had different experiences and have different anxieties, though they both stem from policing of our ethno-Canadian identities and expressions of self, lack of representation and abundant misrepresentations, and an understanding of the whiteness that underpins Canadian identity and citizenship.

Azar never states dissatisfactions with her experiences. I argue that she avoids this for the same reasons she also hesitates to state that she has dealt with racism: she does not wish to see herself or appear as a victim, and she also does not wish to appear ungrateful. In every utterance of criticism, Azar makes sure to compensate and either state that perhaps what she's saying isn't based in any truth, that she is just guessing, or that she is still thankful and happy to be a Canadian. Additionally, she might not have the language or understanding to discuss how racism functions in more insidious ways. Without readily available information on the ways in which racialized people are oppressed and marginalized, it's difficult to work against statements that boldly assert a commitment to multiculturalism.

Trying to compensate for criticisms, however, is common among all the women who negotiate Canadian contradictions through discourses of democratic racism and confidently claim Canadian citizenship. The contradiction in their statements reflects the contradictions of multiculturalism itself. For example, in a discussion on Canada's international reputation, in every instance Nasrin is about to express some level of criticism targeted at Canada, she quickly backtracks and assures me that she feels Canada is the great country everyone says it is.

Nasrin: Well it's like, going back home and they're like, 'oh Canada it's this perfect country, and freedom' and yeah I mean it is, I mean they see it a certain way but I think outside of

Canada they perceive us to be this rich country...they see us as being you know...open minded, which we are... but they also think that if they come here they can get a job right away that we have doors open to everybody, which we do in some ways, and in some ways you have to kind of work for it, the opportunities are there, but they're not just handed to you... they sometimes will say, 'oh Canada must be so great to live there,' and it is in some ways and in some ways it could be better. [1] [SEP]

When I asked Nasrin what she thinks Canada could improve on, she states that she is not a “political person,” but feels that sometimes what politicians say during election periods and then what they do when elected does not line up. When I asked her to elaborate, she repeated that she is not a “political person.” It seems then, that these women sometimes begin to question hegemonic narratives about Canada, but tend to retract from such questioning. I suggest that this points to an understanding, consciously or otherwise, that loyalty is an expected trait for all Canadian citizens, immigrant or otherwise, but especially for racialized immigrants, who have to constantly prove that they are worthy of living in Canada, even long after they've immigrated (Thobani, 2007, p.171). Thobani (2007) argues that a racialized person, or immigrant in particular has to let go of loyalties and cultural practices of their country of origin, and “prove his/her divestment” (2007, p.171). Racialized citizens, then, are “under constant white surveillance” and have to make it a point to perform their ethnic identity in the way that is expected of them, with a relinquishing of political loyalties being one of particular importance for Middle Easterners living in North America post-9/11. As outlined under the second period of multiculturalism, their connections and commitments to culture or politics in the Middle East is seen as highly suspicious (Hennebry & Momani, 2013).

I argue then, that in order to gain a critical perspective and feel confident in critiquing contradictions of Canadian multiculturalism, one needs to be equipped with politicized understanding and language and have a safe space to express their dissatisfactions.

Finding Solidarity on the Fringes and Building Community Outside the Mainstream as Fostering Belonging

This section looks at the spaces and places where participants feel a sense of belonging. I look at the ways in which the women in this study find solidarity and feelings of acceptance and empowerment.

For many of the women, these spaces were at the university. Tafida attributes her understanding of colonialism, imperialism and overall ability to be critical of dominant ideologies that structure Canada, to her studies as well as her membership in political groups on campus. She also expresses a sense of belonging through the friendships she has forged in these sorts of spaces.

Tafida: I feel I belong with people whose politics really push me forward to think more, and there are spaces here where there is a lot of activism, there is a lot of people that are challenging all of these things. I guess I feel belonging with these little pockets within that are existing inside of the state. Would I say that [I belong] in the larger Canadian society? I think they can only include me if I whitewash myself, and I'm not interested in doing that anymore.

Tafida, like the some of the other women who express and negotiate their Canadian identity in counter-hegemonic ways, expresses belonging through her inclusion in political groups that challenge the hegemonic and ideological notions not only of Canada, but of race, gender, religion, and culture generally. She questions her belonging in 'Canada' but, feels she belongs in these communities and spaces that challenge the limits of belonging in Canada. It was previously noted that immigrants, and marginalized groups, can find solidarity and acceptance among those who have dealt with similar processes of radicalization, sexism, and colonial violence (Maira, 2018; Thobani, 2007). In Maira's research, she noted that while a lot of powerful solidarity manifest in the lives of her participants, she argued that resistance can be even more powerful when groups come together to understand their shared histories, and the similar processes of oppression that impact them. In moving beyond shallow appeals to racial or gender identity, and finding commonalities in histories and on systems of oppression and structures of exclusion, the hegemonic existence of these systems can become clearer.

For the women in this study who are critical of the state, then, belonging is negotiated as outside of capital C Canada, and instead is expressed as community belonging, or in spaces where they find their own comfort. Tafida feels that the only way to feel belonging in the larger Canadian context would be to 'whitewash' oneself or further assimilate and relinquish any overt expressions of Middle Easternness. To be seen as 'Canadian,' one has to express a commitment and unconditional loyalty to the Canadian state. As

mentioned previously, this is especially important for Middle Easterners, who are first and foremost assumed to come from cultures that are opposed to Western values and hold suspicious morals and ethics. This is not to say, however, that these women wish to feel belonging to a wider, mainstream Canadian society. They feel happy to have a sense of belonging in the spaces that allow them to express themselves and their identities freely. In some ways, then, it could be argued that the larger, mainstream Canadian society does not provide those feelings, and so they are seeking them out in more alternative spaces.

Mohrdar: Do you feel you belong in Canada?

Lena: Yes and no...I was lucky enough to participate in a lot of safe zones in school that really helped to educate me and if I hadn't experienced, this kind of like, 'it's okay to be yourself' safe zone I wouldn't have known that, really I don't think.

Calla: I guess I think of it as like, I live in Toronto and I live on, [street name] and [street name], and that's kind of where I belong in a way, because that's where my home is, where my familiar things are, that's where I belong to.

Shadi: The fact that I went through you know university studying anthropology and sociology and just learning a lot more about issues of identity and belonging and exclusion and racism and inequity, I think these were all factors that shaped me. Then I met a lot more people in a university context that were not white, and I felt like a lot more comfortable to claim my Iranian background a lot more...and now it's just something I'm really proud of and I learned about Iran more as I got older.

It is important to note again, that the women were able to access these communities largely through different organizations on campus or networks of friends made in classrooms. This again points to a privileged aspect of their experiences, but also to the importance of fostering spaces where racialized women can engage with critical texts and better understand their position in Canadian society. For the women who expressed feeling Canadian, expressions of belonging were made rather quickly and briefly.

Mohrdar: Do you feel you belong in Canada?

Fatima: I feel like I belong, yeah, I feel like I fit.

Nasrin: Mhm, absolutely. [SEP]

For Azar, however, her expression of belonging comes with a few caveats.

Mohrdar: Do you feel like you belong in Canada?

Azar: I think so! Yeah. I think generally yeah... maybe there's random moments where you're like, 'ah!' but I think overall yeah, I do. I think that I belong but I also think that I embody a lot of the important values that multicultural Canadian people need to have, and I think that the more people that do that, the more we'll continue to make sure more people feel like they belong. And I think I've been really lucky, and I haven't experienced a huge challenge growing up, feeling like I didn't belong, or feel like I was left out. There were certain cultural things that clashed and whatever, but generally speaking I have had it pretty easy relative to a lot of people that are from different cultures, and so I think that has been... I'm super thankful for that.

For the most part, Azar feels she belongs. However, she also feels that more people need to “embody” the values of multicultural “Canadian people.” Clearly, Azar doesn't feel that the multiculturalism Canada pledges to is practiced consistently, despite her praise of it earlier. Furthermore, she feels the need to bring up how grateful and thankful she is for her experiences in Canada, in spite of “cultural clashes.” Beyond reproducing narratives that paint Middle Eastern and Canadian culture as opposing and homogenous, she also tries to express her utmost gratitude to the Canadian state. Although she begins to suggest that perhaps multiculturalism isn't as respected as it claimed to be, she quickly reverts back and assures me that she is grateful and thankful. This is in line with previous discussions on the importance of showing your loyalty to Canada, and how immigrants are meant to always be grateful to Canada (Nagra, 2017). Azar's expressions of belonging again echo the confusions that emerge when trying to manage and understand Canadian contradictions. Azar clearly doesn't feel that Canadians are as open and welcoming as multiculturalism suggests, however, she also does not want to suggest that she has struggled or had difficulties. Without the language to describe perhaps the more insidious ways she's dealt with discrimination, or the systemic ways

both racism and sexism have impacted her and those around her, Azar's expressions end up echoing these contradictions.

Of course, Azar does make a valid point: there are most certainly racialized and marginalized groups in Canada who face more overt and impactful forms discrimination. Indeed, the women in this study are all affluent, educated, and most point to the privilege that comes with their light skin. This in no way, however, assures that they are not discriminated against, or that systemic racism does not disadvantage them. Those who have had access to critical, anti-racist feminist narratives and produce counter-hegemonic expressions of Canadian identity, culture, and society, however, understand that these interactions with privilege do not mean that systemic racism does not disadvantage them, and that the Canadian state and its institutions are in any way committed to establishing a society based on racial and gender equality.

For those who do not possess a thorough understanding of Indigenous struggle and resistance and Canada's ongoing status as a settler state, claims to Canadian identity are made in the face of dominant ideologies that paint Canadian citizenship as white. While their negotiations of Canadian contradictions are not counter-hegemonic, and sometimes even work to reproduce the very discourses which marginalize them, Canadian identity clearly creates a sense of belonging and comfort for these women. While all of the women negotiated Canadian contradictions in varying ways, all feel they belong in Canada in some capacity. The nuance in belonging in Canada generally versus belonging in spaces that allow for and encourages critical understandings of history, sustained political engagement, and radical self-love is important. It seems that these spaces, while they may appear to be less valuable than belonging in Canada generally, allow women to have a stronger understanding of their position as settlers, of the history they have immigrated into, of the limits to tolerance and inclusion, of the insidious nature of racism and its toxicity, and if nothing else, allows them to make sense of the contradictions that have shaped their lives since immigration.

Conclusion and Discussions

In looking at the narratives of first-generation Canadian Middle Eastern women and exploring the ways in which they experience Canadian identity and belonging, this thesis has provided insights not only on how racialized women are perceived and positioned in Canada, but also on the ways in which multiculturalism functions. Middle Eastern women's experiences of belonging and inclusion in Canadian society reflect and often embody the contradictions of Canadian multiculturalism, demonstrating the absence of any real structural changes to the racial and gender inequalities that form the foundations of Canadian nationhood. It has been the goal of this thesis to provide an understanding of how this group of women experience and negotiate contradictions emerging from liberal multiculturalism and the continued existence of systemic racism.

With this goal in mind, I posed two research questions. The first question focused on how the women's position as racialized first-generation immigrants from the Middle East impacted their experiences of belonging and expressions of Canadian identity. In their responses, the women expressed complex and contradictory experiences of belonging and being Canadian. On the one hand, all of them had experienced some form of race and/or gender discrimination in Canada, leading many to express feelings of embarrassment or shame associated with their ethnic identity. Conversely, they also spoke of being reassured of Canada's humanitarian and benevolent nature, not only by Canadians themselves, but from their peers and families in the Middle East. These contradictions between their experiences and the various messages they reviewed led to confused and contradictory statements from many of the women when it came to belonging and feeling Canadian. Even though these contradictions create anxiety among these women, it does not prevent them from claiming a Canadian identity. Interestingly, all of the women who participated in the study pointed to advantages that come with having a lighter-skin complexion. This meant that many understood the value of being white in Canada, and some openly expressed desire to become white, or move closer to whiteness. This of course, is a venture that will lead to inevitable disappointment, as it leaves assessments and acceptance

of one's identity in the hands of a white population who decide how accurate or inaccurate performances of whiteness are. In turn, this can create self-policing.

The second research question focused on how these women negotiate, manage and resist Canadian contradictions in their expressions of belonging and being Canadian. This inquiry led me to understand how women make sense of the contradictions that define Canadian multiculturalism. I found that while all the women demonstrate awareness of the ways in which they are othered in Canadian society, not all are critical of the actual practices and realities of multiculturalism or of ongoing systemic racism. Although the women outline experiences of discrimination, many of the women have in some ways, bought into the ideology of multiculturalism and Canadian exceptionalism, and therefore feel comfortable and confident in their claims to Canadian identity. Others, however, were informed about Canada's history of colonialism and the ongoing mistreatment of Indigenous peoples, and therefore were not only critical of liberal multiculturalism, but also of Canadian citizenship and nationalism generally. These women were reluctant to express a Canadian identity. While all of the interview participants are university-educated, those who had a better understanding of Canada's history and ongoing practices of colonialism had either studied in the humanities and social sciences or had friends and family who had access to counter-hegemonic discourses that they shared with them. This type of knowledge led these women to not only question Canada's claims to establishing racial and gender equality, but to also express highly critical and politicized approaches to national identity and whiteness. Through their counter-hegemonic, critical understandings of Canadian multiculturalism and their negotiations which firmly frame non-white Canadian as part of Canada, these women challenge ideologies of whiteness and racial hierarchy.

It should be noted, however, that this research is limited in terms of scope. The women who participated in this study belong to the middle and upper class and therefore experience race and gender in very specific, and often privileged way(s). Social class impacts one's position not only in the Canadian economy, but also one's position in society generally, in terms of feeling of accepted and

valued (Nagra, 2017; Satzewich & Liidakis, 2010). For example, it has been noted that middle class Canadian Middle Easterners were relatively more protected against the racism that has emerged since 9/11, in comparison to lower-class Middle Easterners (Nagra, 2017; Naber, 2006). The insights of lower class Canadian Middle Eastern women, therefore, would produce a very different, but critical understandings on the efficacy of multiculturalism and the position of racialized women in Canada today. Their vulnerable position in society not only as Others but as lower-class citizens would have potentially led to insights on class structures and could provide a fuller understanding of the racist and sexist foundations of Canadian society.

Additionally, those who are lower-class may not always have two hours of their day to spare for an interview with no compensation. Additionally, they might be afraid to speak out about their experiences if they don't have a clear sense of my research goals. University or college students on the other hand have a clearer understanding of "their rights and [are] less afraid of reprisal for speaking out," than those in more vulnerable and less privileged positions (Nagra, 2017, p.40). In other words, the more a group is marginalized and stigmatized, the harder time a researcher will have gaining access to that group. Although this data sample can be connected to larger themes and understandings of race relations within Canada and concepts of Canadian identity and belonging, it should not be generalized to the experience of all racialized Canadian immigrants, or even all female Canadian Middle Eastern. This research takes an in-depth look at the experiences of thirteen Canadian Middle Eastern women at a specific historical context, within its own specific political and economic structuring, and in doing so attempts to give insight on what their narratives and experiences say about Canadian identity, belonging and race relations generally. Their narratives stand as anecdotal evidence, but they are in no way eternal truths.

Through an anti-racist feminist framework, I was able to bolster the narratives of women not only as anecdotal evidence of their experiences, but also as a historically-specific reflection of current conditions for racialized Canadian women generally. This is particularly pertinent given the current

period of multiculturalism, which has heralded a rejuvenation of uncritical claims to realigning with tenets of multiculturalism that were lost during the second period. For the most part this rejuvenation remains superficial and can at times appear in line with growing right-wing, anti-immigrant sentiments. In fact, as I write this Canada is approaching another federal election, in October of 2019. Immigration has been a hot button topic, with many Canadians expressing concern with the number of migrants entering Canada; often questioning their ability to integrate; or worse, accusing them of stealing away jobs and deteriorating an allegedly distinct Canadian culture (Ipsos, 2019). These sentiments have become so popularized that at the time of writing, Prime Minister Trudeau had begun efforts to alter the Canada-U.S. Safe Third Country Agreement, by marking the entire Canadian border as a port-of-entry, thereby making it harder for asylum seekers to enter Canada and potentially subjecting asylum seekers to immediate deportation back to the United States. Immigration scholar Craig Damian Smith believes these amendments come in response to pressure from large swaths of the Canadian public and their disdain for the growing number of migrants (Zilio & Morrow, 2019). It appears then, that while the Canadian state continues to present itself as aligned with an anti-racist position, this image remains shallow and superficial and is easily thwarted by legislation that goes in the opposite direction.

Additionally, it appears that confusions and contradictions rooted in the first period of multiculturalism, are now rejuvenated in the third period. This time, however, the additional challenge is that the more hostile discourses popularized in the second period of multiculturalism remain significant to the mainstream. Multiculturalism as ideology then, has altered and shifted its goals and produced different responses depending on the historical epoch, but largely, has functioned to maintain a racial hierarchy established through settler colonialism. The idea that the hierarchy would be eradicated by implementing a policy of multiculturalism ignores the very fact that racial hierarchy was intentionally established, and not a natural or inherent social structuring. Racial hierarchy, however, has become the hegemonic structuring of Canada, one that is masked behind ideologies of a valued

multiculturalism and diversity. To make the contradictions appear more contradictory and to ease confusions, hegemony needs to be pointed to and seen as hegemonic, not natural.

In his study on hegemony and dominance established through settler colonialism, and the ways in which structural and revolutionary change can occur, Noaman G Ali (2015) looks at the work of Frantz Fanon and Gramsci. Fanon argues that national culture is built on a collective understanding of the struggles of the masses. For nations that have suffered through a settler colonial past, this means bolstering indigenous history, culture, politics, and languages. Like Maira (2018), Ali (2015) points to the value and necessity of “an alliance of subordinate groups” and an understanding of the similar and differing ways they are impacted by systems of oppressions, such as the outcomes of ongoing colonialism, like systemic racism (2015, p.251).

This study confirms the general lack of knowledge in mainstream Canadian society when it comes to Canada’s history of colonialism and its ongoing impacts. Several of the participants expressed either a lack of awareness on the mistreatment of Indigenous people, or at best, a minimal and dehistoricized understanding that positioned colonialism as an ill of the past. Informed by Fanon and Gramsci, Ali (2015) argues that without an understanding of colonialism, “marginal concessions” to anti-colonial or anti-racist efforts will not appear like “marginal victories but like victory itself” (2015, p.250). This can be seen in the implementation of multiculturalism and the assumed equality it heralded, without any substantive and structural changes to the class, race, and gender relations in society. Ali’s observation is echoed in the narratives of some of the women in this study, who ended up repeating the ideology of multiculturalism and pointing to it as a victory for racialized citizens. This is not to say that these women buy into every promise of the Canadian state or even all the promises of multiculturalism. In fact, many questioned its efficacy through the course of their interview. For the most part, however, they believe in the value of multiculturalism and believe that its failings stem from the discriminatory acts and intentions of few individual Canadians.

Narratives that position Canada as a white nation, recently tainted or altered demographically by racialized immigrants, are now gaining popularity as we approach the next federal election. This myth—or rather, fantasy—pertaining to Canada’s history has sustained itself since confederation, finding new ways to express itself through modern discourses of multiculturalism and diversity, as they have made Canada appear inclusive and accepting but in reality, cementing a white Canadian identity and an exalted whiteness. In the statements of these women, we see that multiculturalism has in some ways functioned as a veil for continuing racism, and in doing so has produced confusion or silencing of critical discussions on racism in Canada. I argue that this silence, shaped by the promise of a nationally valued multiculturalism has allowed for growing discrepancies between how Canada presents itself nationally and internationally; what the Canadian state does and does not do; and how Canadians feel and act, especially in terms of race and gender. Space needs to be made for marginal groups to voice their confusions, ambiguities and concerns and address their grievances on belonging and being Canadian. Difficult conversations need to happen not only between racialized people about their common experiences of marginalization, but also between Canadians, racialized or otherwise, on our shared history. Additionally, these conversations need to happen not once, or twice, but over and over again, as part of an active and engaged exercise of/in citizenship. Furthermore, these conversations do not need to be sanctioned by the state. In fact, in order to develop genuine reflection over Canadian identity, these discussions need to be removed from relations of power and a reliance on the state and other ideological apparatuses, such as mainstream media.

This study then, calls for an increased availability in public discourses of honest and critical discussions and debate regarding the history and the present of Canada. I argue that without challenges to myths of Canadian nationhood, Canada will remain structured through a racial and gender hierarchy. As I mentioned earlier, my own experiences of being a first-generation Middle Eastern woman has inspired this research. I, like other women this study have had the privilege of accessing critical discourses, which have ironically contributed to our sense of belonging and self-acceptance. In other

words, the self-hate we were taught in the media we consumed, the histories we studied, and some of the negative interactions we had with our peers were mitigated through this knowledge and awareness. As I trust the strength of alternative and critical discourses, I also empathize and am concerned about the racialized women who do not possess such awareness; who accept and find ways to justify their marginal position in society; who question their value because of the colour of their skin or the country/culture they come from; who are scared to express parts of themselves and therefore learn to push them away; who believe in the promise of an inclusive Canadian society. It is the responsibility of those who do possess such alternative and critical knowledges then, to share it, widely and loudly.

Appendix A: Consent Form



Form of Information on Informed Consent and Consent Agreement for One-on-One Interviews and Focus Group Discussion

Thank you for expressing interest in participating in this study. This form is to confirm that you would be willing to participate in a study I am carrying out on the experiences of racialized first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East and their experiences with multiculturalism and of 'being Canadian.' Further details are provided about the study below.

Title of study

Negotiations of Canadian Multiculturalism: Experiences of Female First-Generation Immigrant Youth from the Middle East

Investigators

I, Niki Mohrdar, will be the Principal Investigator of this research. I am currently completing my M.A. in Communication and Culture Ryerson And York University's joint Communication and Culture program.

As a graduate student, I am working under the direct supervision of Sedef-Arat Koç, a professor at Ryerson University.

Purpose of the study:

The study wishes to look at how the experiences of first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East, currently residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), experience notions of Canadian multiculturalism and of being Canadian in general. I wish to ask:

- What has the process of immigrating to Canada been like for first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East?
- How have first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East experienced multiculturalism in Canada, if at all?
- How do their positions as Middle Eastern women impact how they interact with Canadian society and Western ideologies, such as Western feminism?
- What sort of impact does immigrating at a young age, alongside your guardian, have on first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East?
- What do the experiences of first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East say about Canadian multiculturalism, both as policy and popular discourse, and Canadian race relations in general?

The study will use community-based, feminist research methodology in order to encourage active collaboration between myself and participants. Conclusions drawn from both interviews and focus groups

will be confirmed with participants themselves to ensure they have agency over how their narratives are presented. By collaborating with participants, I hope to create understanding and comfort among first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East, and allow for broader conversations to emerge among Canadian Middle Eastern women and others.

What will my participation in the study be?

Part 1: Individual Interview

I will be interviewing 15 women for this study. The first portion of this study will involve semi-structured one-on-one interviews with the principal investigator. Questions have been determined prior to meeting, however, the semi-structure of the interview allows for flexibility. This means the unique narratives of each woman can be expressed. The aim of these interviews is to understand the nuanced yet individual experiences of first-generation immigrant women from the Middle East, and how their racial identity has, if at all, impacted their experiences of being Canadian, living in Canada, and experiencing ‘multiculturalism.’

Part 2: Focus Group

The second and final portion of your participation will be done in a focus group. Once the interviews are completely, *which will take about four to six weeks*, Participants will be placed in to focus groups of 6-7 people. The goal of the focus group is to further flesh out common or contradictory ideas presented in the interviews. Information shared in the interviews will not be disclosed to other participants. Simply, common themes, or completely opposing views, will frame the discussion.

Confidentially on Interviews and Focus Group

If you agree to participate in the study, your name will not be used in any public publications. Additionally, details of your identity which might make you recognizable will be kept confidential. The same confidentiality applies for focus groups. Only Dr. Sedef Arat-Koç and I will have access to this data. It’s important to note, however, that I cannot promise that other participants will abide by this confidentiality. I will do my best to highlight the importance of confidentiality and urge participants to respect the privacy of others. I request that you respect the confidentiality of others in focus groups in order to create an environment of mutual trust and respect.

Voluntary Nature of Participation

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. If you decide to participate, you are able to withdraw your consent and stop your participation at any time. Additionally, you are able to refuse to answer any questions at any point during the study.

Time Commitment and Compensation

The length of these interviews will vary, though at least 2 hours should be allotted. The same should be allotted for focus groups. That is a total of 2 days, 2 hours per day. Participants will be provided with a copy of the final research paper, and will also be sent an additional, shorter, edited version.

Data Collection and Storage

Voice recording of the interviews and focus groups will be kept for two years after the interviews. They will be kept to ensure enough time for analysis and completion of the research. Data will be kept in a locked safe, and any digital data will be encrypted, and secured with a password. If you decide to withdraw from the study, your data will be destroyed immediately.

It is possible that within the two year period, data may be applied to other pieces of research and writing I publish. Participants personal data will **always** remain confidential. The overall context of data collection will remain intact, to ensure that participants intended meaning comes through. If data is used in later publications, participants will be contacted via the contact information you've provided me with. After two years, all data will be destroyed.

Anticipated Benefits and Risks

Your participation will add to a growing discussion on the experiences of Middle Eastern immigrant women in Canada. The knowledge created from his study has the potential to encourage a discussion on the treatment, framing, and valuing of Middle Eastern Canadian women and migrant bodies in general. Additionally, participating in these discussions can ease participants feeling of exclusion and foster understandings about their position(s) in Canadian society.

There are no foreseeable risks. However, there is the possibility that some questions could make participants uncomfortable, as it may spark unpleasant memories. If this happens, participants can choose to not respond to a question, disengage from the discussion, or withdraw from the study all together. Additionally, counselling resources have been attached to this form, if participants require further assistance in dealing with recounting potentially emotional experiences.

How do I sign up?

If you are comfortable with what has been outlined above, please take the time to read and sign the Consent Form, attached at the end of this document. I will take the form, however, you may keep this letter for your own reference. My contact information, as well as the contact information of the Ryerson Research Ethics Board (REB) have been provided for your reference.

Contact

If you have any further questions or concerns about the study, please contact the principal investigator.

Principal Investigator: Niki Mohrdar
Phone: (438) 822-9936 (call or text)
E-mail: nmohrdar@ryerson.ca

If you have questions regarding your rights as a participant in this study, you may contact the Ryerson University Research Ethics Board for information.

Research Ethics Board
rebchair@ryerson.ca

C/o Office of the Vice President, Research and Innovation
Ryerson University

350 Victoria Street,
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Counselling Resources

Family Service Toronto

Counselling services for both families and individuals

www.familyserVICEToronto.org

General Information Line: (416) 595-9230 ext. 0

Free single session counselling: Wednesdays from 3:30-7:30pm @ 128A Sterling Road, suite 202

Toronto Central Health-line

Online database of various mental health services across the GTA

www.torontocentralhealthline.ca

211 Toronto

Counselling services for Toronto, Durham, Peel and York region

www.211Toronto.ca/topic/mental-health-addictions

Call: 211 — 24 Hours a day, 7 days a week

Text: 21166 — Mon-Fri, 2-9PM

Margaret's Housing and Community Support Services

Crisis support, psychiatric assessment and monitoring, housing, short-term support

www.margarets.ca

Phone: (416) 463-1481

Email: infor@margarets.ca

408 Help Line

24 hours a day, 7 days a week, year-round distress line to help with any sort of emotional crisis

www.torontodistresscentre.com/408-help-line

Phone: (416) 408-HELP (4357)

WoodGreen Walk-in Counselling

Free walk-in counselling services (other, paid-for services also available)

www.woodgreen.org

Tuesdays and Wednesdays, 4:30-8:30pm (last arrival @ 6:45pm), 815 Danforth Ave, 1st floor

Phone: (416) 572-3575

CONFIRMATION OF AGREEMENT

Negotiations of Canadian Multiculturalism: Experiences of Female First-Generation Immigrant Youth from the Middle East

CONFIRMATION OF AGREEMENT:

Your signature below indicates that you have read the information in this agreement and have had a chance to ask any questions you have about the study. Your signature also indicates that you agree to participate in the study and have been told that you can change your mind and withdraw your consent to participate at any time. You have been given a copy of this agreement. You have been told that by signing this consent agreement you are not giving up any of your legal rights.

Name of Participant (please print)

Signature of Participant

Date

I agree to be audio-recorded for the purposes of this study. I understand how these recordings will be stored and destroyed.

Signature of Participant

Date

Appendix B: Interview Guide

1. Where did you emigrate from? When (year)? How old were you?
2. What is your religious background, if any?
3. What do you do? (student, employed, etc.) And where?
4. How old were you when you moved and where did you move from?
5. Do you remember how you felt when you were moving? How?
6. Did you want to move? Why?
7. Do you remember how you felt when you arrived? How?
8. Do you remember how your guardians reacted to emigrating? How?
9. Why do think your guardians decide to immigrate to Canada?
10. Tell me about your process of being granted citizenship.
11. Did you attend the ceremony? What did you feel during it?
12. Who is Canadian? Why?
13. What does it mean to be a Canadian?
14. Who decides who is Canadian?
15. How do you think people outside of Canada see Canada? How do they see Canadians? Are their perceptions correct?
16. Do you feel Canadian? Why?
17. When did you begin to feel Canadian?
18. How does someone 'become' Canadian?
19. In what spaces or situations do you feel most Canadian?
20. Is connecting with Indigenous culture part of being Canadian?
21. Does being a woman ever get in the way of you feeling Canadian? How?
22. Does being Middle Eastern ever get in the way of you feeling Canadian? How?
23. What is multiculturalism to you?
24. Is Canada multicultural?
25. What is the Canadian government's role in multiculturalism?
26. What are citizens' role in multiculturalism?
27. What does multiculturalism look like?
28. Where do you see multiculturalism existing?
29. Do you add to multiculturalism?
30. Where do you experience multiculturalism?
31. What does multiculturalism mean to you?
32. Does multiculturalism reduce discrimination and racism in Canada?

323. In what situations or spaces do you feel your ethnicity is highlighted?
34. How do you manage and negotiate Canadian culture with your culture of origin? Does it need to be managed?
35. How have your parents been involved in this process?
36. Do you speak any other languages? Does your family?
37. Do you maintain fluency in this language? Why or why not?
38. Do you consider yourself to be religious? Which religion?
39. Do you feel you belong in Canada?
40. Have you ever avoided going somewhere because you felt you wouldn't belong? Why?
41. Have you ever felt unsafe in Canada?
42. Do you feel hopeful for the future state of immigrants and people of colour in Canada? In the world?

IF YES TO RELIGIOUS:

43. How is religion a part of your daily life?
44. Can ____ be Canadians? Why?
45. Does religion ever impact you feeling like you're Canadian? How?
46. Do you feel Canadian when you attend a prayer or religious ceremony?

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