Introduction

Around the world, liberal democracies have been affected during the past half century by the onset of “the age of migration,” defined in part by an increase in the number and diversity of international migrants as well as their countries of origin and destination. From a global perspective, there has been an estimated growth in the number of international migrants between 1960 and 2005 from 75 to 191 million, constituting a rise from about 2.5 to 3 percent of the world’s population. These migrants have become increasingly concentrated in the developed countries of the world, which now receive around 63 percent of international migrants, up from 43 percent in 1960. Moreover, the country origins of migrants to the developed world have changed markedly, with a general shift from Europe to Africa, Asia, and Latin America and the Caribbean. Such diversification is particularly striking in the traditional countries of immigration; for example, Australia, Canada, and the United States have seen the proportion of international migrants with developing country origins grow between 1970-1974 and 2000-2002 from 20 to 53 percent, 42 to 78 percent, and 70 to 81 percent, respectively. Although not on the same scale, Europe has also experienced greater diversification of late, with increased migration from, for example, Brazil, China, the Dominican Republic, Peru, Senegal, and Sri Lanka.

In many cases, international migration has produced new ethnic communities within developed countries, while in some instances (especially in traditional countries of immigration)

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2 United Nations, Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Population Division, Trends in Total Migrant Stock: The 2005 Revision [POP/DB/Rev.2005/Doc] (New York, February 2006), 1. Some caution is advised, however, as a considerable portion of this increase occurred as a result of the disintegration of states such as the former Soviet Union, which has often left the citizenship/nationality of many individuals in the resulting states in question.
3 Ibid., 1-2.
4 Castles and Miller, The Age of Migration, 77.
6 Ibid., 386.
it has also served to expand the presence of previously established groups. This has contributed to increasing debate over the effects of such diversification on politics in Western liberal democracies, even more so in the context of heightened security concerns after September 11, 2001. One prominent discussion surrounds the extent to which ethnic diversification undermines the core values assumed to provide meaning to national citizenship. Another involves whether ethnic communities promote “homeland” over “national” interests in foreign policy. In both cases, there is an underlying concern with how the political mobilization of ethnic communities – long-standing or more recent – affects public policy and national identity.

This can even be seen in the case of Canada, which in a comparative context is often praised and indeed promotes itself for its seeming ability to navigate the tensions that can arise in the context of ethnic diversity. For example, in 2009 the government released Discover Canada, a guide to assist new and old Canadians in learning the rights and responsibilities of being Canadian. By identifying and explaining core values and themes in the country’s history, the document seeks to “create the opportunity for as many Canadians as possible to strengthen our shared identity and benefit from our common values.” Its publication can be seen as a response to a more general public debate on the need to define better what it means to be Canadian amidst diversity. This is reflected in Jack Granatstein’s assertion that “[w]e need to make it clear to those we choose to admit to Canada that we are a nation with national interests, that we are a

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8 “Ethnicity” is defined here very broadly to mean not just a community of blood and kinship but a group that perceives itself as such based on any number of tangible or intangible factors; i.e., identity communities.


10 Citizenship and Immigration Canada [CIC], Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship (Ottawa, 2009).

formed society with values and ways of governing ourselves that have been shaped over centuries, and that, if they wish to come here to join our national project, they must accept these facts of life.”

Despite the certainty with which such claims are commonly made, however, all too little is known about the interaction between ethnic diversity and national identity in multicultural states. The research presented here builds on the understanding that identity is an important motivator for public policy but holds that identity is a complex concept that needs to be carefully conceptualized. For if identity provides political actors with guidelines for behavior, it is necessary first to consider that identity and its consequent values, preferences, and interests. Only then is it possible to determine the nature of the fit between particular identities and the national identity within a given state, and to understand not only why states pursue specific policies but when and why they may change over time. Identity is not, however, all-encompassing or fixed in time: within any given political community, groups routinely contest and shape its meaning and substance. In multicultural states, ethnic communities often seek to make connections between their more particular identities and the national identity, and thereby contribute to the latter’s meaning and the determination of policies held to be consistent with it.

To appreciate these linkages better, this paper undertakes the following tasks. First, it reviews how concerns over ethnic diversity and national identity have come to be understood in the Canadian context, especially in terms of the former’s purported negative effects on citizenship and foreign policy. Second, it draws on recent studies of identity formation from International Relations (IR) and on understandings of national-state identity from the public policy literature to conceptualize the relationship between ethnic identity, political mobilization,

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and national identity. Third, it pursues these ideas in the specific contexts of Canadian foreign policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict and Canadian citizenship revocation policy in the post-9/11 era. The conclusion suggests avenues for further consideration, as both scholars and practitioners grapple with the critical questions that emerge from these debates over the nature of multiculturalism, liberal democracy, and identity in Canada and beyond.

**Canadian Case Context and Conceptual Considerations**

The intersection of ethnic diversity and national identity is clearly a major policy issue across immigrant-receiving liberal democracies.\(^{13}\) Because these are democracies, groups have the political space within which to debate and compete with each other over alternate policy directions and the very meaning of the national identity. When the national identity is seen as being rooted in a particular ethnic identity (or a relatively defined set of identities) this can prove – and has proven – to be quite contentious. Increasingly, this issue is investigated within the context of social cohesion, a complex concept that “generally refers to belonging as well as attachment and involvement within the larger society and its values.”\(^{14}\) If the underlying concern is social cohesion (rather than identity privilege), then the efforts of different ethnic groups to interpret their particular interests in terms of the dominant national identity can be seen to strengthen rather than weaken such cohesion. This section explores this idea by reviewing the relevance and nature of the Canadian case. It then establishes some basic conceptual parameters for the two case studies that follow.

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\(^{13}\) See, for example, Irene Bloemraad, Anna Kortweg, and Gökce Yurdakul, “Citizenship and Immigration: Multiculturalism, Assimilation, and Challenges to the Nation-State,” *Annual Review of Sociology* 34 (2008), 153-79.

Ethnic Diversity and Its Management in Canada

There is a tendency to see the Canadian case as being relatively unique when it comes to studying ethnic diversity. For example, in a recent investigation of the field of citizenship and immigration, Christian Joppke suggests that Canadian research reveals “that promoting citizenship and official multiculturalism policies need not be contradictory … but may happily complement one another, if perhaps only in Canada.”\(^\text{15}\) However, while the Canadian case possesses, like all case countries, distinct contextual features that limit the extent to which the conclusions drawn from its experiences may provide directly transferable policy lessons,\(^\text{16}\) it nonetheless can assist in developing the conceptualization and empirical investigation of identity in other liberal-democratic multicultural states. Moreover, Canada may actually be moving closer towards European models of managing ethnic diversity, which further underscores the merits of considering the Canadian case within a comparative context.\(^\text{17}\) Indeed, in many respects the concerns that have been raised in Canada over ethnic diversity and national identity in the post 9/11 period are quite similar to those heard in other liberal-democratic states.

The fact of increased ethnic diversification in Canada is easy to establish. In the 2006 Census, Canadians reported more than 200 distinct ethnic origins, an increase from 25 in 1901.\(^\text{18}\) While this diversity is anchored in the country’s aboriginal and colonial histories, the real driver is now international migration. Indeed, in 2006, the foreign-born constituted 19.8% of the

\(^\text{16}\) For example, as Will Kymlicka’s suggests, part of the longevity if not success of Canadian multiculturalism lies in its spatial and temporal circumstances: Canada is geographically removed from major immigrant-sending states, and it first institutionalized multiculturalism in response to European rather than non-European immigration. See his “Canadian Multiculturalism in Historical and Comparative Perspective: Is Canada Unique?” *Constitutional Forum* 13:1 (2003), 1-8.
\(^\text{18}\) Statistics Canada, *Canada's Ethnocultural Mosaic, 2006 Census* (Ottawa, 2008), 6. These figures include Aboriginal cultural groups.
population, and more than two-thirds of the country’s current population growth now stems from immigration.\(^{19}\) During the past ten years alone, Canada admitted more than 2 million permanent residents, which has both increased the range of, and underscored a racial dimension to, ethnic diversity in Canada.\(^{20}\) Thus, according to the 2006 Census, more than 5 million people reported belonging to a visible minority category, representing a national population share of 16.2% (up from 1.1 million or 4.7% in 1981), around two-thirds of which is foreign-born.\(^{21}\) The increasing visibility of Canada’s ethnic diversity is reinforced by the presence of other international migrants, such as temporary workers, refugee claimants, and tourists.\(^{22}\) It is in the context of the increasing and evolving nature of ethnic diversity that contemporary debates over the effects of ethnic identity on Canadian national identity have unfolded.

A commitment to the recognition (as opposed to simply the assimilation) of ethnic diversity took hold with the unveiling of an official policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework in 1971. The government declared that “although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly.”\(^{23}\) At a time when both Aboriginal peoples and Québécois were prompting a reordering of the political and symbolic order against the status quo anchored in British-origin dominance, the government felt that a policy of multiculturalism would provide “a unifying force to build a strong Canadian identity.”\(^{24}\) Indeed, multiculturalism has since come to be considered a shared quality of all

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22 For example, among the top 10 countries of origin for refugee claimants in Canada at the end of 2008 were Mexico, Haiti, Colombia, China, India, Sri Lanka, Pakistan, Nigeria, and the Democratic Republic of Congo, accounting for more than 53,000 claimants; see CIC, *Facts and Figures 2008*, 91.
23 Canada, *House of Commons Debates* (October 8, 1971), 8545; emphasis added.
Canadians, as “[a] fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity.” This is captured in the notion of “civic multiculturalism” and provides the context for contemporary criticisms that ethnic diversity has become detrimental to Canadian national identity, that it is making it more difficult to realize the values and interests that ought to define Canadian citizenship and foreign policy, respectively.

**Ethnic Diversity and National Identity in Canada – The Critics**

Concerns over the effects of ethnic diversity on Canadian citizenship achieved prominence in the 1990s as critics warned that multiculturalism did more to divide than unite Canadians. This very public debate seemed to recede at the turn of the century before returning to the fore after 9/11. Although none of the perpetrators of the terrorist acts in the United States that day were connected to Canada, earlier cases (most notably that of Ahmed Ressam) and criticisms that Canada’s immigration and refugee policies were lax ensured that ethnic diversity would become enmeshed in broader security debates and policies. Within this new public discourse there has been a heightened focus on Muslims and Arabs in particular, which has been reinforced by debates over the appropriateness of giving recognition to Sharia law in Ontario, how far “reasonable accommodation” should go in Québec, whether a woman wearing a niqab should have to reveal her face to vote in federal elections, and the apprehension of “the Toronto 18” in 2006 on terrorism-related charges. In the context of the terrorist bombings in Madrid (2004) and London (2005), as well as race-related riots in Paris (2005) and Australia (2005), this

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28 This message can be found in, for example, Daniel Stoffman, *Who Gets In: What’s Wrong with Canada’s Immigration Program and How to Fix It* (Toronto: Macfarlane Walter & Ross, 2002) and Martin Collacott, *Canada’s Inadequate Response to Terrorism* (The Fraser Institute, 2006), accessed online on February 14, 2010 at http://www.fraserinstitute.org/commerce.web/product_files/InadequateResponseToTerrorism.pdf.
emphasis on the extent to which immigrants (especially Muslims) are “fitting in” with Canadian norms and values is reflected in a renewed debate over the meaning of Canadian citizenship.29

This issue has been pursued widely within the public domain and addressed in a number of best-selling books. Andrew Cohen, for example, is one of many critics who point to the 1976 *Citizenship Act* as a source of the problem, arguing that it “created a weak, amorphous idea of citizenship, easy to get and hard to lose … more about rights and benefits than duties and responsibilities.”30 As a result, Canada has become a fragmented country, offering citizenship “routinely to thousands of newcomers who barely meet its requirements.”31 He takes specific aim at the “many immigrants” who do not “understand the meaning of citizenship,” who hold “a vague view of a country that is cold, safe, rich, dull, and nice.”32 This encourages them to pursue an idea of Canadian citizenship that “may mean staying who they are in custom and practice, living the way they lived, in the language they lived, in Canada rather than in China, India, or Pakistan.”33 By making it too easy to get Canadian citizenship, he concludes, “we risk losing our centre of gravity and our fragile sense of place.”34 Thus, he identifies multiculturalism as one of the two greatest threats to the country during the next half century.35

Similarly, Rudyard Griffiths sees international migration as a serious problem for Canada, now and in the future. The fundamental issue, he suggests, is the “absence of a one-size fits-all national culture” based on “the immutable beliefs about the nature and purpose of Canadian society that our forbears fought to establish over generations.”36 Canadians have too

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30 Andrew Cohen, *The Unfinished Canadian: The People We Are* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 2007), 137.
31 Ibid., 154.
32 Ibid., 157.
33 Ibid.
34 Ibid., 163.
35 Ibid., 256; the other threat is decentralization of political authority within Confederation.
often been told, and have taken to the idea, that what defines them is their diversity rather than their unity. As a result, they have abandoned their shared history and instead “define, in their own terms, what it means to be Canadian” on an individual or group level. Moreover, he finds a growing divide (especially economic) between those born in Canada and those who naturalize, and warns that this could lead to

a dystopian future in which our once-vaunted multicultural society splinters into a patchwork of ethnic enclaves, each populated by a permanent immigrant underclass … [as] an ever more alienated immigrant population will be inclined … to find solace and understanding in religious and cultural beliefs that stand in sharp practice to the liberal values of mainstream society.

For Griffiths, then, an emphasis on diversity as opposed to unity in understanding what it means to be Canadian undermines citizenship.

Although these ideas resemble those debated in the 1990s, they have taken on additional meaning in the post-9/11 context. For example, Allan Gregg asserts that “it is with the second generation, the same demographic responsible for the London bombings and the riots outside Paris, that ethnic tensions and alienation most clearly reveal themselves.” As immigrants, he argues, become increasingly segregated within ethnic enclaves, a “growing sense of separateness can have troubling consequences for national identity.” Such developments have led, Janice Gross Stein concludes, to a situation in which “Canadians are uncertain about what limits, if any, there are to embedding diverse religions and cultural traditions within the Canadian context.”

A significant part of the problem, Tom Kent suggests, lies with dual citizenship, which “permits,

even encourages, confusion of loyalties and plurality of citizenship.” This is troubling, he holds, because “[a]s we have fewer babies and grow older, and thereby become increasingly dependent on immigration, the sense of a Canadian identity is increasingly diluted.”

A growing body of work suggests that the weakening of a clear Canadian identity also undermines Canadian national interests in its foreign policy. This position can be seen to rest on two foundations. First, critics assume that a specific set of national interests can be identified that exist apart from domestic affairs and follow from Canada’s position as a wealthy, Western democracy located beside the strongest world power, the United States. This set of exogenously-given factors defines specific roles, goals, and policies for Canada, including the areas of the world where Canada should be active. For example, Granatstein provides a list of such “objective” national interests: survival and security (including of its people), territorial integrity, prosperity, autonomy of action in the international system, and the promotion of democracy and freedom. He maintains that these interests flow from clearly-defined sources, “from the fundamental bases of a state – its geographical location, its history, its form of government, its economic imperatives, its alliances, and yes, of course, its people.”

In this view, then, ethnic diversity divides Canadian policy attention and leads to the diversion of foreign policy in the service of specific communities whose identities and interests are much narrower than and at odds with Canada’s. Indeed, it is suggested that the diversity and

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43 Ibid.
44 Critical views of the relationship between ethnic diversity and foreign policy are more recent and comparatively sparse. Indeed, there has been much more emphasis on the impact of other identity communities based in gender and Quebec; see, for example, Claire Turene Sjolander, Heather A. Smith, and Deborah Stienstra (eds.), *Feminist Perspectives on Canadian Foreign Policy* (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2003) and David G. Haglund, “And the Beat Goes On: ‘Identity’ and Canadian Foreign Policy,” in R. Bothwell and J. Daudelin (eds.), *Canada Among Nations 2008: 100 Years of Canadian Foreign Policy* (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2009), 343-367, respectively.
46 Ibid., 79.
number of new(er) ethnic communities in Canada – particularly those with non-Western European origins – has made it particularly difficult for the government to formulate a single “Canadian” foreign policy. A seemingly stark example that is often cited is the case of Croatian-Canadians who mobilized to promote and support Croatian separatists when Yugoslavia began to break apart in the early 1990s. This occurred while Ottawa was attempting to formulate a diplomatic and security policy response to the breakup. In the event, Canada found itself in a position in which Canadian soldiers sent to Croatia had to face Croatian troops armed in part by Croatian-Canadians.

The Canadian Jewish community has been studied in this context more than any other. Indeed, analysis of this community’s influence has constituted an academic and public debate that often devolves into polemics and assumptions. Some argue that Canadian Jewry’s influence is limited by structural, electoral, and personal factors. For example, Zachariah Kay, in his study of Canadian policy toward the Middle East from 1948 to 1958, concludes that the cabinet was guided first by consideration for its Western friends, particularly the U.S., Britain, and France, then by the security and defence needs of Israel in quasi-balance with its neighbours, third by the United Nations and its role in the conflict, and fourth by the impact of policy decisions on the body politic in Canada. Finally, Canada tries to stay uninvolved wherever possible, and when involvement became necessary it acted … in concert with its allies.

Others insist that the community’s influence is obvious. Thus, Tareq Ismael argues that Canada’s Middle East policies emerge from “a common view among those states sharing a particular

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47 See the contributions in Carment and Bercuson, *The World in Canada*.
49 However, there has been less work on this topic since the mid-1990s, which reflects the paucity of academic discussion of Canadian ethnic communities and foreign policy more generally.
historic orientation to Judaism and Zionism which provides a basis for a very similar policy on the part of all West European states, Canada, and the United States” and based on which “[a] well-organized and well-financed Canadian Zionist lobby, supported by an influential and wealthy Jewish community, maximizes this inherent cultural bias in western civilization to create public empathy for and sympathy with Israel and to apply pressure to the Canadian government to support Israel.” 52 John Sigler states more specifically that “[t]he impact of domestic interest groups on Canadian policy [toward the Arab-Israeli conflict] has been overwhelming,” particularly – he implies – Jewish groups. 53

The second foundation concerns a perceived tension or conflict between ethnic diversity and national identity. In this case, critics assume that a discussion of identity as a necessary guideline for Canadian foreign policy automatically leads to a focus on “values” or “principles” at the expense of “national interests.” The former are seen as being potentially contrary to the latter, to the extent that as a guiding framework they can undermine or even endanger Canadian interests. According to Granatstein, this leads to “the denigration of national interests,” which is “almost wholly wrong, naive, and ultimately misguided.” 54 For Denis Stairs, a value-based foreign policy is inappropriate because it distracts Canada from understanding its real roles and limitations, and in fact can convince Canadians of their (misplaced) righteousness: “Canadians have grown alarmingly smug, complacent, and self-deluded in their approach to international affairs… More specifically, they have come to think of themselves not as others are, but as

54 Granatstein, Whose War Is It?, 51.
morally superior. They believe, in particular, that they subscribe to a distinctive set of values – ‘Canadian’ values – and that those values are special in the sense of being unusually virtuous.”

Andrew Cohen agrees, citing several examples of policies that Canadians have convinced themselves are driven by their value system and contribute to a prominent, even better, international policy, such as peacekeeping.

_Problematizing Canadian Identity_

A major difficulty with the works mentioned above is that they assume a “Canada” and a “Canadian people” whose interests and values should play a central part in structuring national identity and policy. For example, David Carment and David Bercuson argue that “a Canadian foreign policy cannot be considered viable if it contradicts the preferences of ordinary Canadians.” But it is not clear who these “ordinary” citizens are or when new immigrants (or even long-standing ethnic communities) become “ordinary.” Even when the effort is made to be more specific, much ambiguity remains in terms of the content of these interests and values but also – perhaps more importantly – the possible range of interpretations. Instead, the assumption of the existence of a relatively monolithic, static, and obvious Canadian identity derived from an unproblematic reading of history seems to be made. This, however, obscures the fact that Canadian identity has always been in a state of evolution (however incremental and intermittent) and has long revealed an ability to absorb, adjust to, and reflect different and increasing numbers of ethnic identities. This requires a more focused effort to think through the concept of identity, three core dimensions of which are highlighted here.

56 Andrew Cohen, _While Canada Slept: How We Lost our Place in the World_ (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 2004).
The first is that identity is “performatively constituted.”\textsuperscript{58} It is produced (and reproduced) and therefore understood through specific actions (whether intentional or not) and their interpretation. Thus, there can be no a priori assumptions of what constitutes the national identity. Indeed, to make such assumptions concerning the substance of an identity without exploring its origins and expressions in sufficient detail raises several theoretical concerns and policy misperceptions.\textsuperscript{59} In particular, it fails to ascertain the political impact of ethnic diversity. As Iver Neumann argues, an assumption concerning a particular identity “is only a starting point. It is a research question, and not a question of conjecture, to decide which are the diacritica that mark a particular self/other nexus between nations as well as between other human collectives.”\textsuperscript{60} Thus, critics who maintain that there is a given national interest that the state ought to pursue, or core values that it ought to reflect, in its actions seem to assume that national identity is understood and unchanging. However, as Doty has shown in the British case, for example, as it lost its possessions and different patterns of immigration into Britain itself occurred, its national identity was transformed from an imperial to a national one, which in turn had critical implications for political action.\textsuperscript{61}

Canadian identity has similarly evolved, especially in the decades after the Second World War, which saw a transformation from a predominantly British self-understanding towards one that – at least but not simply symbolically – was reoriented around multiculturalism within a

\textsuperscript{60} Iver B. Neumann, “Self and Other in International Relations,” \textit{European Journal of International Relations} 2:2 (1996), 143.
bilingual framework and upon an aboriginal foundation. 62 Although it recognizes that Canadian identity has changed over time, the citizenship literature tends to emphasize the need to recover something about being Canadian that has been lost in the process, seen most distinctly in a valorization of military accomplishments and the country’s British heritage. 63 In this vein, Philip Resnick writes:

Canada is not a blank slate to be reinvented with each new immigrant group or group of immigrants that arrives at our airports. Its underlying political and social values are ultimately European-derived ones: peace, order, and good government, constituted authority, political community, individual liberty, and citizen equality. 64

However, while such values are commonly and widely considered crucial to understanding Canadian identity, there is too little recognition of the need to avoid “the attempt to drag the memories and hopes of yesterday into tomorrow without subjecting them to the glare of today.” 65 After all, for much of the country’s history, “[c]itizenship was predicated predominantly on separation. Exclusion was based, in the main, on the colour of the skin, ethnicity, or culture.” 66 Thus, many of these “immutable beliefs about the nature and purpose of Canadian society” that Griffiths, Resnick, and others refer to require considerable contextualization to elucidate how, in “performing” political acts, state and non-state actors create more explicit and precise meanings to and articulate competing interpretations of the national identity.


63 This was widely noted about the government’s Discover Canada document, and praised by a number of commentators; see, for example, Adam Chapnick, “At last, an honest ‘look at Canada,’” The Ottawa Citizen (November 14, 2009), B7. A similar approach is reflected in the work of Cohen and Griffiths, cited earlier, as well as C.P. Champion, The Strange Demise of British Canada: The Liberals and Canadian Nationalism, 1964-1968 (Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen’s University Press, 2010).


66 Ibid., 27.
This leads to a second point, which is that policies do not simply reflect and follow from the national identity. It is more accurate to highlight the mutual constitution process through which identity and policy produce and reinforce each other without one necessarily being prior to the other. This is because a state’s policies (especially toward other actors) and a state’s identity are formed in part through its interaction with others. As Alexander Wendt has observed, “structure has no existence or causal powers apart from process.” As states act toward others, they reveal who they are to others (and themselves), and in doing so they behave in specific ways that both reinforce and shape that behavior.

The literature on identity and threat provides insight into this mutual constitution process. In stark us-versus-them terms, “[b]y dealing with enemies, identity is reinforced through the specification of what ‘identity’ is not, presenting these differences as a threat to what the self is believed to be. … [In contrast, b]y dealing with allies, one’s identity is reinforced by affirming the links and characteristics that make that specific other an ally.” A state (or a group) perceives itself at least in part in relation to others, because without knowing who the Other is, one cannot know the Self since there is no orientation or comparison point for understanding. States can also come to feel threatened in this manner: as they get to know other states, they can become fearful of what the Other represents, which is a threat to their own distinctiveness. This can produce insecurity and policies that respond to such insecurity/Otherness. As the Other goes through the same process of differentiation and insecurity, identity differences are increased.

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Thus, a structure of difference leads to specific policies while at the same time these policies lead to understandings of difference.\textsuperscript{70}

A process of mutual constitution between identity and policy can be seen in the history of how the Canadian state has sought to manage managed ethnic diversity over time. Although recognition of cultural pluralism appeared on the margins of public discourse at the outset of the twentieth century, it focused on European immigrants and was largely directed towards their assimilation into presumed British political and societal norms.\textsuperscript{71} It was not until the middle of the century that, in response to war-time fears over “fifth column” activities among “enemy alien” immigrant populations, increasing immigration from war-torn Europe, the onset of the Cold War, and a new push to develop a distinctly “Canadian” national identity, state and non-state “gatekeepers” sought to foster greater cultural integration through a general “unity in diversity” approach that – while continuing to privilege perceived British norms – promoted greater appreciation of ethnic diversity.\textsuperscript{72} After 1971, Canada first entered into a period of “ethnicity multiculturalism,” wherein policy continued to be directed at facilitating integration without challenging Canada’s cultural status quo.\textsuperscript{73} As immigration patterns shifted towards non-European countries, however, this approach gave way to growing concerns over racial discrimination and inequality in the 1980s, which brought about a period of “equity


\textsuperscript{73} On these post-1971 policy periods, see Fleras, \textit{Unequal Relations}, 294-97.
multiculturalism,” reflected in policies directed at employment equity, institutional inclusion, and anti-racism. Since the 1990s, a less interventionist approach has taken hold, one that reflects a broader neo-liberal shift in Canadian politics centred on “selling diversity” both at home and abroad as a distinctive advantage in and trait of Canada.\textsuperscript{74} These various policies did not simply reflect Canada’s national identity at any particular time, as implied by authors such as Champion,\textsuperscript{75} but rather both drew from aspects of Canadian national identity and subsequently informed its content.

Third, states operate within and reflect a hegemonic national identity, generally produced and reproduced by those who occupy authoritative decision-making positions within the political system. This typically extends from that of the specific “ethnic” group (or groups) that “founded,” created, or “re-created” the state at a given time. In this context, the state wields “discursive authority”\textsuperscript{76} over its citizens because it has the legitimacy to do so.\textsuperscript{77} This hegemonic framework sets parameters within which both identity and policy are interpreted and performed. In Canada, state policy was directed by a British orientation that stemmed from the long history of British rule in the region and incorporation within the British empire. This was reflected in both citizenship and foreign policy. In the former, the British orientation conditioned which new immigrants Canada wanted to attract, while in the latter it manifested itself in a strong preference for looking out for British interests.\textsuperscript{78} Not until the post-Second World War period did these general orientations start to change, through the conscious forging of a more distinctly Canadian

\begin{footnotes}
\item[75] For example, Champion argues that multiculturalism constitutes not a break with Canadian British traditions but rather that “the embrace of a more diverse Canadianism … was in accord with the broad liberal conception of Britishness.” (156)
\item[76] Doty, “Sovereignty and the Nation.”
\item[77] Weldes, “Constructing National Interests.”
\item[78] At the same time, the precise nature of Canada’s British identity (past and present) has been little studied, as Champion and others have observed. As is the case with other ethnic identities, British identity should not be seen as being either simple or static.
\end{footnotes}
national identity within the context of substantially changed global conditions. Nonetheless, if identity is performatively and mutually constituted, then it is still necessary to identify who is involved in this process of defining and shaping the hegemonic identity interpretation and how this occurs.

In a multicultural democracy, the nature of the political arena allows for the possibility of significant group mobilization, however effective it may or may not be in policy terms. Moreover, the policy process is about more than simply the allocation of resources: it is not only about “who gets what but of who persuades whom in an ongoing negotiation of reality.”79 With its focus on ethnic diversity and national identity, the emphasis in this paper is on groups that represent newer and older ethnic identities. By definition, the groups under consideration are non-hegemonic – they do not extend from the British and French origins that anchor Canadian national identity. As a result, they constantly seek to negotiate the linkages between their particular identities and the national identity. In this reading, then, national identity and ethnic diversity are less usefully assumed to be in opposition and more usefully explored as being mutually and perpetually reinforcing. It is through the performance of identity engagement in the policy process that a clearer understanding of the national identity is attained. As Weldes et al. note, “any representation can potentially be contested and so must actively be reproduced. Meanings are not given, static, or final; rather, they are always in process and always provisional.”80

Although the three points made above underline the idea that the substance of national identity arises from the political interaction of state and non-state actors, this is not meant to

suggest that there is no identity or policy framework that can be pointed to as “Canadian.” In Canada, as in other Western democracies, there is considerable political space open to many different groups in society to participate but it is equally obvious that there is a dominant identity that provides a framework within which political actors operate. These basic parameters can be and on occasion are contested, but more frequently political and policy debates serve to provide sharper definition to the existing terms of that national identity. It is this internal, dynamic aspect that is of direct relevance to the case studies presented below. What it means to be Canadian and act Canadian varies over time and is – while not necessarily given to immediate and easy change – subject to interpretation and influence. The case studies below explore this process in greater detail.

**Canada’s Position on the Arab-Israeli Conflict**

No democratically-elected government can afford to ignore its citizens’ preferences completely, even in foreign policy. And yet, if the critics discussed above are correct, there should be an array of obvious national Canadian interests that set out clear objectives, and strategies and tactics to achieve them, which generally exist apart from the population’s preferences and demands. In such a conceptualization there should be limited room for citizen involvement, particularly in a multicultural country such as Canada: the sheer diversity of ethnic communities necessarily means there will be different, including opposing, policy preferences and identities. This would make it difficult for the government to know which one to incorporate, and perhaps even lead to unstable (that is, always changing) policies as it tries to accommodate and respond to different demands from different groups.

But, in keeping with the critics’ negative reviews of Ottawa’s ability to follow such interests, Canadian policy toward the Arab-Israeli conflict has always been framed by something
more than simple “objective” interests. Indeed, in Kim Richard Nossal’s words, “[s]imply put, appeals to the national interest do not make a lot of sense in the case of the Middle East conflict.” 81 What is the relevance then of the fact that Canada has long been effectively involved in the region, and that many argue that it should, can, and must remain involved? 82 In addition, how can the intense, sometimes fierce, debates and disagreements over Canadian policy as being “fair-minded” and “balanced,” “pro-Israel,” or “pro-Palestinian/Arab” be explained? 83 In recent years, the perception of many of a “tilt” toward a pro-Israel position, beginning under Paul Martin and building under Stephen Harper, 84 and the much-discussed “problem” of whether and how Canadian Jewish groups have contributed to this change, 85 have ensured the continued relevance of such questions.

A further twist is found in polls suggesting that the Canadian public is – like citizens everywhere – less interested in international affairs. But when asked specifically about the Arab-Israeli conflict, Canadians adopt generally middle positions on related issues. For example, in April 2002, at a time of some of the more horrific violence between Israelis and Palestinians, Canadians tended to hold quite even-handed views about the conflict: 79% of the public did not want Canada to take either side’s position; while 28% blamed both sides equally for the violence and 25% and 23% blamed the Palestinians and Israel respectively. 86

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82 In a recent volume examining contemporary Canadian policy in the region, most of the contributions—by academics as well as practitioners—explicitly make these assumptions. See Paul Heinbecker and Bessma Momani (eds.), Canada and the Middle East: In Theory and Practice (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2007). Rex Brynen’s chapter is the most circumspect regarding Canadian abilities and influence there.
83 For one example that encompasses several aspects of these debates, see Taras and Goldberg, The Domestic Battleground.
84 Rex Brynen, “Canada’s Role in the Israeli-Palestinian Peace Process,” in Heinbecker and Momani, Canada and the Middle East, 78.
86 Ipsos-Reid/CTV/Globe and Mail, 12 April 2002.
Canadian Jewish and Arab communities work within these overlapping contexts to shape Canadian Middle East policy. Of course, part of their efforts focus on material benefits policymakers can obtain by supporting their policy preferences. For elected officials this could be campaign funding and electoral votes, while for civil servants it could include increased economic and financial activity for Canada. The major problem with this analysis is that the Canadian political system is constricted: interest groups in general do not have the same access or ability to contribute to decision-makers that they do in the American political system.\(^87\)

Ethnic communities do provide another, more intangible, benefit, which they emphasize in their advocacy efforts: the currency of identity. They lobby the government, parliament, media, and others to insert their preferred identities into the decision-making process and to convince Canadians of the “right-ness” of their positions. Indeed, Canadian leaders assume a given identity to various ethnic communities, and that identity prescribes a set of policies that may (or may not) be appropriate for Canada. For example, the House Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs and International Trade’s 2004 report on Canada’s relations with Muslim countries in the Middle East included witnesses representing Muslim Canadians, who discussed the role Canada could play in the Arab-Israeli peace process. It was assumed that their very identity as Muslims gave them insight into Canadian policy in a region dominated by Muslims.\(^88\)

In the political process, ethnic groups make reference in their advocacy to Canadian values, ideas, norms, and traditions. Their priority is not to argue that their preferred Canadian foreign policy is good for Canadian interests (although such arguments do play a role), but that

\(^{87}\) Brent E. Sasley and Tami Amanda Jacoby, “Canada’s Jewish and Arab Communities and Canadian Foreign Policy,” in Heinbecker and Momani, *Canada and the Middle East*, 187.

their preferred policies fit with Canadian identity. They are in effect telling Canada and Canadians that a specific foreign policy should be pursued not so much because it is the right policy but because it is the right Canadian policy. The right Canadian policy corresponds, they argue, with important facets of their community’s own identity.

To understand this process better, it is necessary to consider the development of Canadian identity on the world stage over time. During the 1940-60s, Canada developed an identity predicated on a specific role in the international system, that of helpful fixer and balanced arbiter.\(^{89}\) Later this was supplemented with a recognized and respected concern for democratic development, rule of law, human rights, and humanitarianism.\(^{90}\) But none of these characteristics lay out clear, specific policies. This has allowed Canadian Jewish and Arab groups to interpret them in different ways and, especially, to emphasize and promote one interpretation at the expense of another, or even of one of these concerns at the expense of another.

For example, Canadian Arab groups often highlight Ottawa’s interest in the rule of law as governing the behavior of states. This allows them to argue that Canada should push Israel to respect United Nations General Assembly and Security Council Resolutions calling on it to end settlement activity in the West Bank and remove other obstacles to a Palestinian state in the West Bank and Gaza. Canadian Arab emphasis on humanitarianism and human rights similarly provides opportunities to criticize Israel, by reference to Canada’s own public statements on related issues, for using force, collective punishment, assassination, deportation, and blockade against the Palestinians.


In contrast, Canadian Jewish groups focus more on the importance that Canada has long placed on good governance and democratic development. Palestinian actors (and Arab states) that do not meet these criteria can be censured – again, according to Canada’s own preferences – thus making it harder to criticize sister democracy Israel for its policies in the face of authoritarian regimes. In addition, where Arab Canadian groups argue that Canada’s human security agenda means Israel must not use violence against Palestinians, Jewish Canadians counter that Palestinian terrorists and militants must be sanctioned by Canada for committing acts of violence against Israeli civilians.91

One piece of the puzzle consists in understanding government reactions to developments in the region. These are relevant in two ways: First, they force leaders to enunciate a clear position on an issue; this becomes more necessary when processes are ongoing such as war or continuing violence. Second, global developments provide opportunities for ethnic group mobilization and can be utilized to promote group preferences. Because “change” is an abstract formulation, these international occurrences do not of themselves address either a country’s identity or its foreign policy. For the external changes to matter, state leaders must adopt specific policies in response to them. Because change by its very nature involves flux, decision-makers need time to develop new policies, by studying the change and its consequences, forming options for response, and then selecting a particular option and making it policy. In this way, ethnic communities can lobby to convince state leaders that their policy preferences would be most consistent with national interests and values.

A brief look at how three prime ministers have responded to violence between Israelis and Palestinians over time makes the point clearer. Jean Chrétien (1993-2003) was least

91 The use by both communities of the same Canadian values is most obviously played out in General Assembly voting at the United Nations.
interested in the Middle East. It was during his tenure that the centre of the Arab-Israeli conflict shifted to the narrower Israeli-Palestinian arena. Although he took office in the period of the Oslo Accords, violence between Israelis and Palestinians broke out on a number of occasions. This included several particularly horrific terrorist attacks by Hamas and Islamic Jihad against Israelis, the onset of the Second Intifada at the end of September 2000, and the Israeli invasion of the West Bank and re-occupation of several of its cities in March-April 2002.

Chrétien’s responses to Arab-Israeli violence tended to be muted. He did, at times, express genuine horror and sadness at moments of particular violence, but on the whole was never galvanized by any of it, instead offering low-key reactions. For example, when Baruch Goldstein, an extremist American immigrant to Israel, murdered almost 30 Palestinians at prayer service in a mosque in Hebron in February 1994 by spraying them with gunfire, Chrétien commented quietly on this “sad incident” that could derail the peace process. In response to a suicide bombing in Israel in March 1996, in a popular area in downtown Tel Aviv, which killed 13 Israelis, Chrétien reacted by saying: “We hope it will not deter the peace process, but there’s not much we can do but to deplore the incident.” At the outset of the Second Intifada, when Israeli-Palestinian violence was particularly bloody, Canada voted for a UN Security Council Resolution on October 7, 2000 that the Canadian Jewish community argued was biased against Israel, because it referred specifically to Palestinian and not Israeli deaths, and to Israeli and not Palestinian violence. Chrétien defended Canada’s vote, arguing that it was a vote “for peace.”

Canadian Jewish groups were particularly upset at this resolution, coming as it did around the time (October 12) of a horrific scene of Palestinian violence against Israelis, when two reservist

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92 Robert Fife, “Chrétien: Carnage a ‘Sad Incident’,” The Toronto Sun (February 26, 1994).
93 Dale Anne Freed, “Jewish Group Urges Canada to Join Fight on Terrorism,” The Toronto Star (March 5, 1996).
95 “PM Defends Canada’s UN Vote against Israel,” The Ottawa Citizen (October 11, 2000).
soldiers were brutally lynched by a Palestinian mob, and their bodies then abused and celebrated over. Later, after Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon launched Operation Defensive Shield in March-April 2002, a military effort to take (or re-take) control of parts of the West Bank and destroy the “terrorist infrastructure,” Chrétien specifically called on Israel to pull back its forces from Palestinian cities and return to the negotiating table. He added that this must happen even if terrorism continued against Israeli civilians.\footnote{Daniel Leblanc, “Chrétien Wants Israel to Pull the Tanks Out,” \textit{The Globe and Mail} (April 4, 2002).}

Paul Martin’s tenure was much shorter (2003-2006). But at the same time, Martin’s term is considered to be a bridge between Chrétien’s and Stephen Harper’s Middle East policy because of the first hints that occurred of a change in rhetoric and policy that later, under Harper, became full-blown. He started off by maintaining the standard balanced statement that Chrétien had given in response to Israeli-Palestinian violence. During one Israeli incursion into the Rafah refugee camp, in the Gaza Strip, in May 2004, a number of Palestinian civilians – including children – were killed. Martin said he appreciated Israel’s right to defend itself from Palestinian attacks, but added that Israeli military actions must be “consistent with international law and with international efforts to improve the already dire humanitarian situation in the Gaza Strip.”\footnote{“Israel Withdraws from Refugee Camp: Deadly Three-Day Incursion Left 39 Palestinians Dead,” \textit{The Montreal Gazette} (May 21, 2004).}

But later he tended to be firmer about this right, particularly when speaking to Jewish audiences. On November 1, 2004, Martin spoke to the recently-formed Canadian Council for Israel and Jewish Advocacy, proclaiming that Canada “will not, nor will we ever, waver in our support for Israel,” adding that “[w]e believe strongly, incontrovertibly in Israel’s right to defend itself from those bent on destroying it.”\footnote{Graham Fraser, “Martin Restates Canada’s Support for Israel,” \textit{The Toronto Star} (November 2, 2004).}
Stephen Harper has been Prime Minister now for more than four years (2006-present). Although he did not seem to have set out to adopt an activist foreign policy, he clearly intended to shift policies. But events seemed to have prompted him to become more activist, by taking a very clear line on global issues, including in the Middle East. The clearest difference between Harper on the one hand and Chrétien and Martin on the other is what observers have noted as a principled determination to conduct foreign policy toward what is “right” and not necessarily what is traditional or popular.\(^9\)

Instead of the continuing, low-intensity violence that had become the norm, Harper had two major conflicts in the region to respond to. The first was an intense round of fighting between Israel and Hezbollah, in summer 2006. On July 12, Hezbollah conducted a cross-border raid from Lebanon, killing three members of an Israeli patrol and kidnapping two others as hostages. Israel responded almost immediately with both ground troops and air strikes against Hezbollah targets and Lebanese infrastructure; Hezbollah in turned fired around 4,000 rockets into Israeli population centres. Close to 1,000 Lebanese\(^1\) and up to 170 Israelis were killed; about 1 million Lebanese and almost 400,000 Israelis were displaced by the fighting.

Harper immediately and consistently insisted on Israel’s “right to defend itself” and called its military response “measured.”\(^2\) Israeli actions at the time and later came under heavy criticism due to the amount of damage to Lebanese infrastructure and the number of Lebanese killed in the fighting, with some referring to its activities as disproportionate to Hezbollah’s provocation. But Harper’s understanding of the Lebanon War was that Hezbollah had attacked Israel from territory Israel had voluntarily withdrawn from, itself a positive step. This gave Israel the right to respond aggressively. He asserted that it was Hezbollah’s actions against Israel that

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9 See, for example, Graham Fraser, “A Change in Emphasis,” *The Toronto Star* (July 22, 2006).
10 Exact figures are difficult to come by, including distinguishing between combatants and civilians.
had caused the crisis and war. Where Chrétien and Martin had in similar situations called for restraint, ceasefire, and a return to the negotiating table, Harper took the position that the only way to end this conflict was for Hezbollah to free the kidnapped soldiers and to end its attacks on Israel. The most criticism he initially seemed willing to level at Israel was a call for minimization of civilian damage – though he added that this was difficult when Hezbollah fighters were embedded within the civilian population.102

Just over two years later a similar conflict erupted between Israel and Hamas in the Gaza Strip. Fighting between Israel and Hamas (and other Palestinian militants) had been ongoing for years, but on December 27 Israel began a series of air strikes against Hamas targets in Gaza, followed by naval and ground operations. Hamas and other Palestinian groups engaged in (limited) fighting against Israeli soldiers, and launched several hundred projectiles against Israel in the course of the war. The fighting ended on January 18, but accusations of war crimes and crimes against humanity have bounced back and forth among the parties, and the question of responsibility for the violence and the deaths of about 1,400 Palestinians103 and 13 Israelis has made it difficult for third parties to avoid placing blame.

Harper reacted to the Gaza War in much the same way he had to the Lebanon War. Most significant, though, was his near-complete silence on the conflict for most of it.104 His Foreign Minister, Lawrence Cannon, and junior Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, Peter Kent, provided most of the government’s reaction. As in Lebanon, Hamas was blamed for initiating the conflict (in this case, the launching of hundreds of rockets against Israeli civilians over the course of a number of years), and for Palestinian civilian deaths that occurred once the Israeli

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103 Similar to the Lebanese conflict, it has been difficult to determine who killed whom, and who was a civilian or a combatant.
104 Not until January 9 did he make a statement on the conflict, two weeks after the fighting broke out.
military attacked Hamas positions. And, as with Hezbollah, the government insisted that a true end to the conflict would only come when Hamas disarmed and genuinely joined the peace process.  

Although this time Ottawa called for a ceasefire, both ministers also reaffirmed Israel’s right to defend itself against attacks from groups committed to destroying it. 

The issue of whether the Harper government is driven by ethnic lobbying or by its own principles and ideas is open to debate, but it seems likely that ethnic communities are one factor out of several. In any case, the answer is less directly relevant for the analysis at hand, since regardless of how he came to his principles, the facts of his “pro-Israel” policy provide more opportunity for Canadian Jewish groups to register their concerns and preferences. A closer parallel between these two identities (the Canadian Jewish community one and the national one as defined by the government) allows the former to insert its policy preferences into the latter. Arab leaders have consistently noted that “doors have been closed” to them since Harper became prime minister, while Jewish leaders have expressed concern that Harper’s strong stance in support of Israel could make it too much of a wedge issue in politics (interviews with author). Where Chrétien and Martin sought to retain an image of balance between the two communities, Harper has been insistent that Canada identify with one over the other.

**Canadian Citizenship Revocation Policies**

Citizenship in a liberal democracy is a fundamental indicator of belonging within a national political community wherein members “are entitled to participate on an equal basis with their fellow citizens in making the collective decisions that regulate social life.” In the

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Canadian context, citizens possess important rights that non-citizens lack, including Charter-protected rights to vote in and stand for federal elections, and “to enter, remain in and leave Canada.” (s.6.1) Citizenship also provides for privileged access to a wide range of social and economic benefits. The precise terms of citizenship status (in its acquisition and privileges) vary over time and across countries.¹⁰⁸ This underlines the fact that citizenship is a political and social construct – it is produced (and reproduced) through political engagement. Thus, in the connection between citizenship and national identity, changes in the one may produce changes in the other, and vice versa – they are mutually constitutive.¹⁰⁹

Canadian public discourse and policies concerning citizenship have changed markedly since 9/11 as citizenship and national security have became more closely intertwined.¹¹⁰ Although “[t]he citizenship regime in Canada [was already] shifting to a more exclusive one focusing on the soil, allegiance and loyalty”¹¹¹ in the 1990s, this process has now become enmeshed within a much broader set of debates over the meaning of being Canadian. Indeed, the interpretation of certain traditional features of Canadian citizenship – including such core values as equality and due process – has been deeply contested through a number of recent national security initiatives.¹¹² This has produced considerable organizational and intellectual...

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¹⁰⁸ Although such variation seems to be decreasing among liberal-democratic states; see Marc Morju Howard, *The Politics of Citizenship in Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

¹⁰⁹ Changes in citizenship may come from other sources as well – such as macro-economic paradigmatic shifts in policy and governance (which can also produce changes in national identity; see Janine Brodie, “Three Stories of Canadian Citizenship,” in R. Adamski, D. Chunn and R. Menzies (eds.), *Constructing Canadian Citizenship: Historical Readings* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2002), 43-66.

¹¹⁰ This is occurring across liberal-democratic states; see Benjamin J. Muller, “(Dis)Qualified Bodies: Securitization, Citizenship and ‘Identity Management,’” *Citizenship Studies* 8:3 (2004), 279-94.


¹¹² “[W]hat we have seen in Canada of late is a disturbing number of illustrations of national security preoccupations severely impinging on freedom and liberty, not only undermining civil liberties but also undercutting broader citizenship, equality, and human rights.” Sandra Rollings-Magnusson, Alexandra Dobrowolsky, and Marc G.
mobilization around these issues. Thus, an official discourse rooted in a dominant conception of Canadian citizenship and national identity embodied in particular policy proposals has been contested by non-state actors (including ethnic and immigrant groups), which has fostered debate over the values that underwrite being Canadian and alternate suggestions on how best to realize them. Indeed, it is through this process that these core features of Canadian identity are given more concrete definition – they are performatively constituted. This can be seen in the case of citizenship revocation.

Citizenship revocation is not new in Canadian politics but it has rarely been a prominent concern, except in the specific context of suspected war criminals from the Second World War. Revocation divides Canadians into two groups: the Canadian-born – for whom it is not supported under Canadian or international law – and the foreign-born – for whom Canada has reserved the right to revoke citizenship since Confederation. In a bid to ensure that revocation would henceforth take place in accordance with “the most fundamental traditions of this country” – notably the core values of equality and due process – the government reformed the country’s citizenship law in the mid-1970s.


There is a complex interaction between ethnic and immigrant identity that is not addressed in this paper but that will, in future analyses, need to receive attention. For the moment, given that contemporary immigration to Canada is predominantly non-European, and that many ethnic communities in Canada have a higher than average proportion of immigrants, a sufficient degree of overlap between the two is assumed for the purposes of this paper in addressing the intersection of ethnic diversity and national identity.


The Canadian-born can lose their Canadian citizenship under certain circumstances but this not the same as revocation.

Governor in Council [cabinet], on a report from the [Immigration] Minister, is satisfied” that an individual has “obtained citizenship by false representation or fraud or by knowingly concealing material circumstances” that would have rendered them ineligible, “the person ceases to be a citizen … as of such date as may be fixed by order of the Governor in Council.” (s.10) Before reporting to cabinet, the minister must contact the individual, who can decide (within 30 days) to have their case referred to the Federal Court, whose decision cannot be appealed. Since the law came into effect cabinet has revoked Canadian citizenship 63 times.\(^\text{118}\)

Although the government twice sought to expand its revocation powers during the 1990s in response to the general failure of its efforts to remove suspected Nazi war criminals from Canada, the focus changed considerably after 9/11. Indeed, revocation became part of a much broader debate sparked by a raft of national security measures that raised questions about the rights of citizens and non-citizens alike, such as the 2001 Anti-terrorism Act, the 2002 Immigration and Refugee Protection Act [IRPA], and the proposed Public Safety Act. As a result, the meaning of Canadian citizenship was increasingly discussed within the context of the “fight against terrorism.” Perhaps most dramatically, concerns that Canadian citizenship was becoming increasingly fragile were underscored when Maher Arar, a Syria-born Canadian, was deported to Syria by the United States to face detention and torture in late 2002.\(^\text{119}\)

As well as proposing numerous changes to the acquisition of Canadian citizenship, Bill C-18 was introduced in October 2002 to alter the terms of citizenship revocation. In describing the importance of the legislation, the government declared that “[p]eople who want to live permanently in our society as full participants must share the values of a free and democratic

\(^{118}\) CIC, “Backgrounder: Strengthening the Value of Canadian Citizenship: Amending the Citizenship Act to streamline the revocation and removals process” (Ottawa, 2010). The number of revocation proceedings initiated is greater than this total, while the final tally of successful revocations will be smaller.

\(^{119}\) On the Arar case and others, see Kerry Pither, Dark Days: The Story of Four Canadians Tortured in the Name of Fighting Terror (Toronto: Viking Canada, 2008).
society.” In an important departure from its previous two efforts in the 1990s, the government proposed that revocation would henceforth be determined by a Federal Court judge (as opposed to cabinet) and that an appeal of this decision would be allowed (the government had long resisted instituting an appeal). These moves were generally seen as being consistent with both equality and due process values, but such consensus was lacking for two other major proposals.

First, in keeping with provisions introduced under the 2002 IRPA, the government proposed that when the solicitor general and the immigration minister issued a security certificate, individuals would be given only a summary of the evidence in revocation proceedings, with information deemed sensitive by the Federal Court judge excluded and discussed in the absence of the accused. Moreover, the revocation decision (made on a lower standard of “the balance of probabilities”) would be final, with no right of appeal or review. (s.17) Second, naturalized citizens could have their citizenship annulled up to five years after it had been granted if the minister was “satisfied” that an individual had used a false identity or fell within one of the prohibited categories; the minister had to provide a summary of the grounds for annulment to the individual and advise them of their right to judicial review. (s.18) Although C-18 died on the order paper in late 2003, these proposals generated debate for a number of years.

The government defended both the Section 17 and 18 proposals with the argument that the state occupied a privileged position when it came to the information to be used. With respect to secret hearings, officials argued that in such cases information could not be revealed for reasons of national security. The Federal Court judge would, however, hear the information, and

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120 Immigration Minister Denis Coderre, quoted in Allan Thompson, “Citizenship regulations overhauled, toughened up,” The Toronto Star (November 1, 2002), A8.
therefore could ensure due process.\textsuperscript{121} As for annulment, officials suggested that the sources of information used “don’t need an independent decision-maker, like the court, to weigh conflicting evidence and to make a decision as to whether something is hearsay, whether something is third-hand evidence, whether something is credible.”\textsuperscript{122} It was also argued that the new powers under Sections 17 and 18 would be used in very few instances and only in those where it was clear to officials that the accused was guilty – again obviating the need for greater judicial involvement.\textsuperscript{123} Finally, officials expressed dismay at the lack of trust reflected in concerns over situating revocation within more of an administrative than judicial process.\textsuperscript{124} Overall, the bill was said to embody “the government’s intent to try to enhance the value of citizenship and ensure that our citizenship legislation is promoting the values that we aspire to and hold as Canadians.”\textsuperscript{125} Critics, however, argued that the proposals would do the opposite.\textsuperscript{126}

There was an overarching concern that these measures reinforced the notion of first- and second-class citizenship, that a differentiation between the rights of the Canadian-born and foreign-born to retain their Canadian citizenship undermined the Canadian value of equality.\textsuperscript{127} Moreover, it was argued, such distinctions fostered social exclusion, which could “be a very

\textsuperscript{121} See, for example, Rosaline Frith (Director General, Integration, Department of Citizenship and Immigration), in Canada, \textit{Minutes and Proceedings and Evidence of the Standing Committee on Citizenship and Immigration [SCCI]} (Ottawa, December 10, 2002), 0910.

\textsuperscript{122} Patricia Birkett (Registrar, Citizenship, Department of Citizenship and Immigration) in \textit{ibid.}, 0915.

\textsuperscript{123} See, for example, comments made in \textit{SCCI} (November 21, 2002), 1030 and (April 30, 2003), 1650.

\textsuperscript{124} “As a civil servant, I was also dismayed to hear some witnesses question the ability of and care taken by civil servants in their roles as decision-makers. References have been made to the faceless bureaucracy. I would like to assure the committee that, as individuals, we recognize the responsibility we have taken on to serve fellow Canadians and try to reflect this responsibility in the decisions we make.” Daniel Jean (Acting Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy and Program Development, Department of Citizenship and Immigration), in \textit{ibid.}, 1540.

\textsuperscript{125} Joan Atkinson (Assistant Deputy Minister, Policy and Program Development, Department of Citizenship and Immigration), in \textit{SCCI} (December 5, 2002), 0905.

\textsuperscript{126} Many of the organizations that appeared before the committee on this issue eventually formed the Canadian Citizenship Coalition, which consisted of representatives from the African, Arab, Chinese, German, Islamic, Sikh, Somali, and Ukrainian communities, among others, as well as the National Anti-Racism Council of Canada and various immigrant, refugee, and civil liberties organizations.

\textsuperscript{127} It was also suggested that it contravened the \textit{Charter} and a proposed affirmation of the equality of all citizens contained within the bill.
serious threat to social cohesion.” This was especially problematic for Muslim and Arab immigrants, some suggested, since they had been – directly and indirectly – the targets of recent national security measures in Canada and the United States. As a result, immigrants might well feel less of an attachment to Canada, given the possibility that their citizenship status was more precarious: “when does a citizen become a full-blown citizen? When can he feel this is his home?” This sense of second-class citizenship was directly linked to the issue of due process protections afforded naturalized Canadians under Sections 17 and 18.

With respect to Section 17, it was noted that with the 2002 IRPA the use of security certificates had been expanded from foreigners to permanent residents while C-18 now proposed their use against naturalized Canadians. The process itself was criticized for using secret evidence and for not allowing for an appeal, factors that can potentially lead to a denial of due process. There was a need to have, it was said, more “faith in the justice system … because when you take away citizenship, you take away a constitutional right.” As for Section 18, there were concerns that it offered a very low standard of justice, one in which the minister had only to be “satisfied” with the evidence, while the individual would not see all the information used against them. As a result, some argued that these provisions should be removed: “It doesn't

128 Elizabeth McIsaac (Manager, Maytree Foundation), in SCCI (February 11, 2003), 0900.
129 Hassan Yussuff (Secretary-Treasurer, Canadian Labour Congress), in SCCI (January 30, 2003), 1225.
130 Tarlochan Binning (Guru Nanak Sikh Society of Port Alberni) in SCCI (February 17, 2003), 1305.
131 Gordon Maynard (Vice-Chair, National Citizenship and Immigration Law Section, Canadian Bar Association), in SCCI (November 10, 2002), 0940.
132 Emilio Binavince (Honorary Legal Counsel, Canadian Ethnocultural Council), in SCCI (January 30, 2003), 1120.
133 Moreover, “the person concerned can only make written representations to the minister and has no right to a full hearing. That's a problem and, again, it contradicts what it means, I think, to live in a democratic society like Canada.” Erica Lawson (Policy and Research Analyst, African Canadian Legal Clinic), in SCCI (February 10, 2003), 0820.
necessarily make sense to say that the longer you’re here, the more fairly you're going to be treated. People should be fairly treated from the moment they enter.”\textsuperscript{134}

Thus, these various organizations put forward a different interpretation of some of the core values of being Canadian, such as “the rule of law, the value of equality, and the principle of fairness.”\textsuperscript{135} While the government argued that it needed increased powers to revoke citizenship in order to preserve its value, critics maintained the opposite, that while “[o]btaining citizenship should not be easy, revocation and annulment of citizenship should also not be easy. Otherwise, Canadian citizenship would be of no value.”\textsuperscript{136} Against the tendency to hearken back to a more exclusive idea of citizenship, whereby newcomers simply adapted to an assumed set of Canadian values,\textsuperscript{137} some argued that more focus needed to be placed on “citizenship as a positive issue that we value as a nation, as a diverse nation, [that] needs to be added to it to make people feel it’s not just to check them on all these grounds of possible wrongdoing or whatever but also to give people a sense of value in getting this Canadian citizenship.”\textsuperscript{138} More than looking at finding expeditious ways of taking citizenship away, “[w]e need to protect all our citizens and all our immigrant communities, because this is what we're founded on, this is who we are as a country.”\textsuperscript{139} This was seen to be all the more crucial after 9/11.\textsuperscript{140} In sum, the meaning of equality and due process could not simply be assumed but instead ethnic and immigrant groups – as Canadians and potential Canadians – argued that they had a legitimate say in giving substance to these issues.

\textsuperscript{134}David Matas (Lawyer, B’nai Brith Canada) in SCCI (November 28, 2002), 1035.
\textsuperscript{135}Avvy Yao-Yao Go (Director, Metro Toronto Chinese and Southeast Asian Legal Clinic), in SCCI (February 11, 2003), 0815.
\textsuperscript{136}Mr. Ezat Mossallanejad (Settlement Counsellor, Canadian Centre for Victims of Torture) in SCCI (February 10, 2003), 0845.
\textsuperscript{137}“There is an underlying presumption that disturbs me, that a certain class of Canadians have a monopoly on a certain set of values.” Erica Lawson (Policy and Research Analyst, African Canadian Legal Clinic) in \textit{ibid.}, 0935.
\textsuperscript{138}Jonas Ma (President, Chinese Canadian National Council) in SCCI (February 4, 2003), 1240.
\textsuperscript{139}Audrey Jamal (Executive Director, Canadian Arab Federation) in SCCI (February 10, 2003), 0820.
\textsuperscript{140}Lawson, in \textit{ibid.}
Conclusion and Implications

As noted at the outset, Western multicultural democracies are struggling to define themselves in an era of changed migration patterns and its resultant ethnic diversity. The above analysis provides an indication of the importance of studying the Canadian case in this context, both to produce a better understanding of Canada itself and because it may provide opportunities to reflect upon more effective comparisons with and studies of other multicultural liberal democracies. It problematizes simple assertions of an essential conflict between ethnic diversity and national identity by exploring ways in which political contests over policy directions provide insight into the meaning of core interests and values that are broadly understood to define what it means to be Canadian. By conceptualizing identity as being both performatively and mutually constitutive, and by examining how different state and non-state actors seek to shape hegemonic interpretations of the national identity by situating their policy preferences within particular interests and values, the paper seeks to move the debate beyond more essentialist notions of identity. With respect to Canadian policies concerning the Arab-Israeli conflict, the paper explores how Arab and Jewish group policy preferences have been anchored within different core interests and values, and how changing government policy provides different opportunities for groups to situate their policy objectives in this fashion. As for citizenship revocation, the analysis shows how ethnic (and immigrant) groups provided alternative interpretations of such core values as equality and due process in their efforts to contest government attempts to redefine the rights of Canadian citizenship, and how in doing so they defined an alternate understanding of what it means to be Canadian.

This paper constitutes but an initial foray into this area, and thus it is appropriate to close with some thoughts on pushing forward for a more rigorous study of Canadian identity and
public policy. First, more effort needs to be put into the conceptualization of identity, whether particular or national. As Miriam Wells has observed, “the distinction between ethnicity and nationality, although useful in conceptualizing the relation of cultural boundaries to territory and political jurisdiction, may exaggerate the extent and permanence of the separation between the two sorts of identification.” Such distinctions are made even more complicated by issues of international migration, as migrant status itself adds another dimension to identity. In the absence of more detailed and structured examinations of ethnic identity in Canada (particularly an understanding of “British” identity), there has been a tendency to rely upon vague references to – or precise but open to interpretation lists of – core interests and values that are deemed to reflect being Canadian. There may very well be fundamental conflicts between certain aspects of particular identities and important features of Canadian identity, but these need to be studied with much greater precision and within a much more complex framework of analysis.

Second, in order to do so, greater attention needs to be paid to the activities of ethnic communities in the policymaking process. Many groups in society compete for political resources and a chance to shape the national identity, but special attention has been paid in recent years to ethnic communities, especially in a post-9/11 national security context. Indeed, ethnic group mobilization has been stigmatized by some as verging on illegitimate. However, it may be that the concerns discussed above – that ethnic diversity weakens the “nation” (or more appropriately, the state) because it embodies too many divergent interests and values, and even conflicting loyalties – may be less relevant than critics suggest. Certainly, the research presented above supports the call for a much more nuanced appreciation of the nature of ethnic group political mobilization and participation in liberal democratic states. Indeed, such mobilization

and identity contestation may very well provide a mechanism whereby many core interests and values become defined more concretely.

Third, the case studies discussed above were of necessity brief. More analysis of activities across ethnic communities on particular issues would be helpful for a broader appreciation of the intersection of ethnic identity, political mobilization, and national identity. In this context, process tracing would be a useful approach to understanding how a specific policy decision is made, who was involved in it, what and how identity groups advocated with respect to that decision, and so on. Policy decisions are rarely the outcome of a single factor, but we cannot know which other factors – including whether ethnic groups are one of them – are important without empirical evidence. Direct comparisons between Canada and other countries would assist, furthermore, in developing a better understanding of whether Canada represents a unique case due to its particular contextual features or whether underlying conceptual and theoretical insights might assist in improved empirical investigation elsewhere (or vice versa).

Finally, the impact of international developments must be examined more closely. If global changes open up opportunities for ethnic communities to engage the policy process more effectively, then understanding which changes are relevant and how is extremely important. Are such changes relevant because they open up space for ethnic groups, or because they prompt decision-makers to reconsider policy? Moreover, public policy is increasingly undertaken within an internationalized context, and identity mobilization unfolds within a transnational space. This is especially germane in the case of issues surrounding state and societal responses to increased ethnic diversity, which as was seen at the outset has a fundamentally international foundation.