# Review Essay

# Multiculturalism Has a Past, but Does it Have a Future?

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A review of **Rita Chin's** *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe: a History* and **Hugh Donald Forbes'** *Multiculturalism in Canada: Constructing a Model Multiculture with Multicultural Values.*

## I. Introduction

In the last decade, liberal democracies have witnessed unprecedented mobilizations around issues of identity, diversity, and discrimination, such as Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, the Dakota Access Pipeline protests, Rhodes Must Fall, and the Catalan independence demonstrations. While it would seem to be the right moment for "multiculturalism" — a highly theorized and much discussed politics of diversity — to be advanced as a robust solution for minority recognition and empowerment, the term itself has been noticeably absent in public discourse; instead, current social movements have rallied around other ideas, including decolonization, anti-racism, defund the police, and Indigenization. This might suggest that multiculturalism has run its course and that it may not be seen as the politics of diversity best suited for the 21st century.

This essay reviews two recent publications — Rita Chin's *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe: a History* and Hugh Donald Forbes' *Multiculturalism in Canada: Constructing a Model Multiculture with Multicultural Values* — with an eye to examining what they can tell us about multiculturalism's near and longer-term prospects, both as a political project and as a research agenda. The books employ very different conceptualizations of multiculturalism. In so

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doing, they trace the origins of distinct European and Canadian forms of multiculturalism and highlight a range of different threats to their continuity. Each book also presents a vision of liberal democracy's engagement with diversity and minorities in the 21st century. Although the books provide rich accounts of multiculturalism's institutional past, intellectual origins, and foundational values, the visions of a politics of diversity for the 21st century that they present seem difficult if not impossible to achieve. More importantly, both books tell stories that have *already* been told in the scholarly literature on multiculturalism. In brief, the books can tell us a lot about multiculturalism's past but they do not show how multiculturalism can remain relevant as an idea, policy, nor object of study in a changing global context.

## II. Multiculturalism: a complex and contested concept

In *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe: a History* (CME)'s introductory chapter, Rita Chin eschews adopting a precise definition of multiculturalism and instead points to it being a "slippery word"[1] and "nothing if not a contested concept!"[2] In the book's first chapter she traces the first usages of the terms "multiculturalism" and "multicultural," respectively, to an article published in the academic journal *Hispania* in 1957 and to a *New York Times* article on diversity in Detroit's public schools published in 1962.[3] According to Chin, the term "multiculturalism" made its way to European public and academic discourse in the 1970s and has, over time, been imbued with various meanings, including being understood as a distinctive policy for the management of diverse societies, as a demographic descriptor, and as the celebration and, for some, commercialization of diversity.[4] While the term's conceptual elusiveness could be seen as problematic, Chin argues that: "For better or worse, the very ubiquity of the word marks an enormously valuable critical space in public discourse: it is the place where we acknowledge the lived reality of diverse societies and where we can move the discussion of diversity forward at the level of democratic politics."[5] Despite embracing this open-ended conceptualization, the two subsequent chapters in CME develop more precise understand-

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1  Rita Chin, *The Crisis of Multiculturalism in Europe: A History* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2017) at 8.
2  *Ibid* at 20.
3  *Ibid* at 9-10.
4  *Ibid* at 19-20.
5  *Ibid* at 21.

ings of "multicultural" — as a descriptor of religious, racial, and linguistic diversity brought to Europe by non-European immigration — and of "multiculturalism" — as a strategy for managing this diversity.

In Chapter Two, Chin traces the "Birth of Multicultural Europe" or, as she puts it, "how this diversity developed in Europe."[6] While the shift "from homogeneity to diversity"[7] began with the end of the Second World War, the process occurred in different ways and for different reasons across Europe. The shifts that took place in the UK and France were both set off by massive labor shortages at the end of the war and by the inability of these countries to fill the shortages by recruiting European laborers exclusively. The demand for labor in the UK was filled initially by migrants from the British West Indies (the so-called "Windrush generation") while in France it was largely filled by Muslim Algerian migrants. In both the English and French cases, immigration was facilitated by changes to nationality laws — most notably the adoption of the 1948 British Nationality Act and the reinstating of unregulated passage between Algeria and France in 1947 — and further propelled by the desire of "preserving empire."[8] In the Netherlands, by contrast, the shift "from homogeneity to diversity" was the result, first, of the decolonization of the Dutch East Indies and the immigration of Indisch Dutch and Moluccans to the Netherlands and, second, of the recruitment of foreign "guest workers" from Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, Turkey, and Morocco. By contrast, while shifts in Switzerland and West Germany resulted from the recruitment of "guest workers," both countries were unfettered by concerns with "preserving empire" and therefore took more restrictive approaches to the possible settlement of their imported labor force.

In CME's subsequent chapter (Chapter Three, "Managing Multicultural Societies"), Chin uses the terms "multicultural management"[9] and "state multiculturalism"[10] to describe aggregates of policies adopted in Britain, France, and the Netherlands in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s. These policies were adopted to redress social, political, and economic inequalities between native-born populations and non-European immigrants as well as in response to increased tensions between native-born and immigrant populations.

In the UK, the concept of "race relations" emerged as the primary model for managing Britain's multicultural society. This comprised, *inter alia*, the

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6   *Ibid* at 23.
7   *Ibid* at 24.
8   *Ibid* at 43.
9   *Ibid* at 82.
10   *Ibid* at 112.

*Race Relations Act* of 1965 (which outlawed racial discrimination in public places and prohibited incitement to racial violence) and the *Local Government Act* of 1966 (which provided government funding to support communities with substantial numbers of immigrants) as well as the Urban Aid Programme and the Youth Training Scheme, both adopted in the wake of the Brixton riots in 1981 and the subsequent release of the Scarman Report. The Dutch model of "multicultural management" was implemented largely in response to acts of terrorism committed by Moluccan immigrants in the 1970s. In 1978, the Minorities Policy Directorate was established and in 1983 the government adopted the Memorandum on Minorities, outlining its anti-discrimination objectives as well as its promises to "create conditions that would help minority groups emancipate themselves and participate in broader Dutch society…[and] to reduce the social and economic deprivation faced by ethnic minorities."[11] The government's approach was patterned from the country's longstanding practice of "pillarization," which both "institutionalized diversity" of distinct religious and political "pillars" and promoted negotiation between "pillar" elites.[12] From the 1960s to the early 1980s, French governments pursued a strategy of "multicultural management" called "insertion." This strategy was meant "to incorporate foreigners and immigrants into France's economic and social fabric without insisting that they renounce their identities in favo[u]r of French culture,"[13] and its implementation entailed the creation of the National Office for the Cultural Promotion of Immigrants in 1975 and The National Council for Immigrant Populations in 1984. All three of these forms of "multicultural management" are presented in stark contrast to West German inaction regarding immigrant integration or, as Chin puts it, the country's "willful neglect"[14] of its multicultural society.

By contrast to Chin's wide-ranging historical account of multiculturalism's European origins and development, in *Multiculturalism in Canada: Constructing a Model Multiculture with Multicultural Values* (MIC) Hugh Donald Forbes puts forth an understanding of multiculturalism that draws attention to its distinct historical origins in Canada and to its five constitutive values: equality, freedom, recognition, authenticity, and openness. Canada's policy of official multiculturalism was first articulated by Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau in a speech to the House of Commons on October 8, 1971. In his speech, Trudeau outlined a policy of "multiculturalism within a bilingual framework,"

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11   *Ibid* at 108.
12   *Ibid* at 109-10.
13   *Ibid* at 115.
14   *Ibid* at 124.

thus reifying Canada's commitment to official bilingualism. The speech also detailed the four principal "ways"[15] in which the government would "assist" minority cultural communities. Taken together, these four "ways" combined three different approaches to managing diversity: "cultural preservation," "social integration," and "linguistic assimilation."[16] What is perhaps most important in his description of official multiculturalism is that Forbes reminds the reader that the policy was adopted in the wake of nationalist mobilization in Quebec and that "from a Quebec perspective, multiculturalism was (and remains) the antithesis of dualism, symbolizing a rejection of the 'national' aspirations of the Québécois and indeed of francophones elsewhere in Canada."[17] In other words, multiculturalism in Canada is synonymous with a "national unity strategy."[18]

One of multiculturalism's core values is a "commitment to treating all cultures equally,"[19] which is to say that multiculturalism represents a form of "*egalitarian* cultural pluralism"[20] that differs from "liberal egalitarianism"[21] and its insistence on enshrining an equality of opportunities. Multiculturalism's second main value is "cultural freedom." It differs from the classical liberal ideal of negative freedom as well as from the reform liberal conception of positive freedom, both of which, Forbes argues,[22] are intended to protect economic interests. Cultural freedom, by contrast, entails the protection by the courts and the state's bureaucracy of different sets of "meaningful choices."[23] Multiculturalism's third and fourth values are interrelated. The third value — "cultural recognition" — is a response to a societal demand for the equal recognition of "authenticity," multiculturalism's fourth value. Authenticity indicates an individual's "true self"[24] which is brought to light by "looking outward and engaging in dialogue with others."[25]

Openness, multiculturalism's fifth key value, stands apart in Forbes' analysis as "the key to understanding multiculturalism in Canada and its search for equality and justice."[26] Openness has four main dimensions: "open societies," "open borders," "open horizons," and "open minds." Basing his analysis on the

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15 Hugh Donald Forbes, *Multiculturalism in Canada: Constructing a Model Multiculture With Multicultural Values*, (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2019) at 4.
16 *Ibid* at 43-44.
17 *Ibid* at 46.
18 *Ibid* at 34.
19 *Ibid* at 73.
20 *Ibid* at 74 [emphasis in original].
21 *Ibid* at 75.
22 *Ibid* at 97-100.
23 *Ibid* at 106.
24 *Ibid* at 131.
25 *Ibid* at 153.
26 *Ibid* at 168.

works of Karl Popper, Forbes defines an "open society" as not only one "that [encourages] the public expression of private political opinions"[27] but also one that takes a scientific approach to governing, an approach that entails "the small-scale tinkering with policies to maximize popular satisfaction."[28] "Open borders" is more or less synonymous with the acceptance of immigration for (mainly) economic reasons. "Open mindedness" implies receptiveness to new ideas and a willingness to abandon one's prejudices. And "open horizons" suggests dual commitments to an "open-ended future"[29] and to transcending national belonging "in favour of an overarching loyalty to all mankind."[30]

## III. Challenges to multiculturalism's continuity

Shortly after opening their borders to non-European immigration, Britain, France, the Netherlands, and West Germany took legislative steps to curb the shift from "homogeneity to diversity." Chin shows[31] that this was achieved in Britain by the adoption of the Commonwealth Immigration Act of 1962, which imposed a quota on unskilled United Kingdom and Commonwealth (UKC) citizens, by the Thatcher government's decision to impose restrictions on family reunification in 1979, and by the enshrinement of the *British Nationality Act* of 1981, which did away with UKC citizenship altogether and eliminated *jus soli* birthright citizenship. In France, efforts to limit the shift to diversity included the suspension of immigration in 1974 and an attempt in 1977 by the Secretary of State of Foreign Workers to repatriate Algerian guest workers by offering "ten thousand francs to any migrant willing to return to his or her country of origin."[32] Paradoxically, the push to restrict immigration in the Netherlands, articulated in the 1979 Memorandum on Alien Policy, coincided with changes in the *Dutch Nationality Act* of 1984, which actually extended birthright citizenship to third generation immigrants. And, five years after the West German government issued an *Anwerbstopp*, effectively halting foreign worker recruitment, a Federal Court ruling in 1978 limited the "state's ability to reverse immigration processes through deportation and the termination of residency rights."[33]

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27  *Ibid* at 169.

28  *Ibid* at 171.

29  *Ibid* at 184.

30  *Ibid* at 187.

31  Chin, *supra* note 1 at 87-96.

32  *Ibid* at 120.

33  *Ibid* at 134. [Chin is quoting: Triadafilos Triadfilopoulos, *Becoming Multicultural: Immigration and the Politics of Membership in Canada and Germany* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2012) at 123.]

European multiculturalism has faced three waves of opposition or "backlash,"[34] culminating at the beginning of the second decade of the 21st century with what Chin terms the "Death Knell for Multiculturalism."[35] The first wave of opposition occurred during the 1970s and 1980s, and was characterized by two interrelated developments. First, it occurred within the context of the emergence of a "new racism" — "a system of racialized thinking in which culture supplanted biology as the key marker of incommensurable difference."[36] Second, and following from the previous point, the political right (e.g., Thatcher in Britain, Alfred Dregger in Germany, Le Pen in France) mobilized "new racism" in the form of a dichotomy between the preservation of the nation and a sense of cohesive national belonging, on the one hand, and the recognition and accommodation of diversity, on the other. The second wave of opposition lasted from the early 1980s to 2010. It was marked by a convergence between left and right-wing intellectuals and activists (kickstarted by the Salman Rushdie affair) over the incompatibility between Islam and European democracy, and by the rise of "sexual democracy" movements that saw religious accommodation and sexual freedom and equality between the sexes as contradictory objectives.

At the turn of the millennium, just prior to the third wave of opposition, the Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain's report had ostensibly "[crystalized] state-sponsored multiculturalism"[37] in Britain, and the enshrinement of the *jus soli* citizenship law in Germany signaled that the time had finally come for "a serious conversation about multiculturalism as a model for social organization."[38] Yet by 2010 multiculturalism's "failure" was evident and a "conservative backlash"[39] pushed for the adoption of a "muscular liberalism" in Britain, a return to assimilation in France, and requirements that immigrants "meet a concrete set of [social and linguistic] demands"[40] in Germany.

The challenges to Canadian multiculturalism are quite different. Hugh Donald Forbes begins his discussion of Canadian multiculturalism in MIC with an anecdote about shopping in Toronto and coming across an outfit for newborns with the word "Diversity" stitched into it. This anecdote serves as a demonstration that diversity has now become "the right word … to lift something cheap and prosaic … into the realm of something special, expensive, and

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34  *Ibid* at 140.
35  *Ibid* at 281.
36  *Ibid* at 140.
37  *Ibid* at 253.
38  *Ibid* at 260.
39  *Ibid* at 238.
40  *Ibid* at 282.

presentable,"[41] and it also sets the stage for Forbes' critique of multiculturalism and its contemporary associations with the celebration of diversity or, as he calls it, the "DIST syndrome" (the Diversity Inclusivity Sensitivity Tolerance syndrome). While this critique might initially seem paradoxical — given that multiculturalism is often used interchangeably with the celebration of diversity — it does make sense within the context of Forbes' contention that Canadian multiculturalism's main value is "openness," which can actually entail either transcending difference (through "open horizons") or the erosion of cultural practices (as a result of "open mindedness") or both. In fact, MIC's main objectives are to show that "[diversity] and its front-line companions are not … the most important values for understanding what multiculturalism is in Canada or anywhere else,"[42] and that equating multiculturalism solely with diversity has obscured Canadian multiculturalism's specific goals and ambitious aims.

In fulfilling MIC's main objectives, Forbes also reaffirms a *Trudeauist* vision of Canadian multiculturalism which he details at length in MIC's third chapter, "Visionary Politics." In sum, the *Trudeauist* vision of Canadian multiculturalism, rather than celebrating diversity per se, is a reason-based, bureaucratic-administrative, profoundly anti-nationalistic political project that sees the state as embedded within a system of global governance and values global coordination.

## IV. Charting multiculturalism's future

In the epilogue to CME, Chin reminds the reader that denying the existence of real demographic differences, in the wake of multiculturalism's ostensible "failure," is likely to actually recreate the societal tensions that led to the adoption of state multiculturalism in the first place.[43] She then highlights four conditions that might lead to a "more productive engagement"[44] with European diversity.

The first condition entails "recognizing that … the political, cultural, and discursive space opened up by the 'multicultural question' must resonate within the public sphere for European democracy to function properly."[45] In other words, this means both ensuring that European democracies continue the debate over the best means of acknowledging diversity within a context of national belonging, and ensuring that answers emerging from this debate,

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41 Forbes, *supra* note 15 at 1.
42 *Ibid* at 19.
43 Chin, *supra* note 1 at 299.
44 *Ibid* at 300.
45 *Ibid* at 300-01.

such as multiculturalism, remain open to contestation. The second main condition is that these democracies abandon an "originalist" understanding of Enlightenment values of individualism. These values, which undergird "sexual democracy," "muscular liberalism," and other alternatives to multiculturalism, have also "authorized a belief in the fundamental inequality of humanity advanced through scientific racism and ideologies of conquest."[46] The third condition is that democracies also abandon cultural relativism as well as the unreflective "[reification of] cultures as monolithic and unchanging."[47] Instead, for the second and third conditions to be fulfilled, "we need to uphold both liberal conceptions of individual freedom *and* pluralistic communitarianism."[48] The final condition that Chin highlights is the need for widespread acknowledgement that "European diversity is democracy itself."[49] This would mean abandoning the idea of the return to a halcyon vision of a monocultural or mono-ethnic Europe and instead entrenching in Britain, France, Germany, and other European democracies a genuine "recognition of shared histories and lived diversity."[50]

Hugh Donald Forbes similarly describes a potential future for Canadian multiculturalism in MIC's concluding chapters. In "Culturally Open Governance" (Chapter Nine), Forbes outlines "five possible changes that would make Canada's political institutions better expressions of [multiculturalism's values] and more likely to promote the development of stronger multicultural policies."[51] First, Forbes recommends reforms to the electoral system in order to make it more representative. However, he dismisses the oft-recommended shift towards proportional representation in favour of either increasing the size of the House of Commons or reforming campaign financing laws to encourage the recruitment and nomination of minority candidates (or both). Second, he recommends the adoption of a "fully inclusive definition of those who are eligible for all the rights and responsibilities of basic Canadian citizenship."[52] Third, he recommends rewarding good citizenship through a voluntary citizenship test in order to "weed out … the hate filled-fundamentalists and reactionaries"[53], and to act as pre-condition for running for elected office. Fourth, he recommends Senate reform through the institutionalization of "sortition,"[54] which would entail the random selection of Senators from the pool of all eligible Canadian

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46  *Ibid* at 302.
47  *Ibid*.
48  *Ibid* at 303 [emphasis in original].
49  *Ibid*.
50  *Ibid* at 304.
51  Forbes, *supra* note 15 at 201.
52  *Ibid* at 209.
53  *Ibid* at 214.
54  *Ibid* at 216.

citizens. He contends that sortition "would bring a new kind of popular and ethnoculturally balanced representation into political deliberations."[55] Finally, he advocates removing the "Britishness" from the office of Governor General, thus ensuring that it embodies "a universal source of higher authority that cannot be identified with any particular ethnocultural group."[56]

In "Going Forward: Future Imaginaries" (Chapter Ten), Forbes then highlights five additional "multicultural reform[s]."[57] However, it is not entirely clear whether these reforms are meant to complement those outlined in the preceding chapter or to reduce the "normative gap"[58] between the multicultural values outlined over the course of the book and current institutional practices in Canada.

Whatever the case may be, Forbes argues, first and foremost, that Canadian public education should be reformed to incorporate an Ethics and Religious Culture curriculum, already in place in Quebec, and that all denominational and non-denominational public schools should "be subject to the human rights code, including its prohibitions against discrimination in employment on religious grounds."[59] Second, he recommends instituting a "social harmony tax" on the media whereby contributing to the creation of a "noxious, polluted social atmosphere and overheated political debate"[60] would be penalized; violations of social harmony would be determined by a "bureau of media management and ethnic relations … using the latest AI technology and objective algorithms."[61] Third, he recommends expanding the scope of official language status to provide five Indigenous languages with "a modest official status"[62] and to promote "two European languages, two Asian languages, and an African language"[63] across Canada's five regions (one per region). Fourth, he recommends the development of a (multicultural) value-based Canadian foreign policy that would, among other possible objectives, "[advocate that] Israel and the occupied territories be combined to form a single civic nation, the diverse citizens of which would all enjoy the same equal rights."[64] Finally, Forbes recommends instituting values tests both for

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55  *Ibid* at 216.
56  *Ibid* at 218.
57  *Ibid* at 228.
58  *Ibid* at 227.
59  *Ibid* at 232.
60  *Ibid* at 234.
61  *Ibid*.
62  *Ibid* at 235.
63  *Ibid*.
64  *Ibid* at 239.

immigrants to Canada and for Canadian citizens. With regard to values tests for Canadian citizens, Forbes states that demonstrating "insensitivity, intolerance, and incipient hatred"[65] could require some kind of remedial training while more serious cases could entail "psychotherapy … isolation and remedial education in low-security correctional facilities … [l]ocated in attractive rural settings."[66]

To be absolutely clear: whether or not any of the abovementioned recommendations should actually be taken seriously, Forbes' irreverent and sardonic writing style sometimes makes it difficult for the reader to discern his true intentions. His declaration in reference to the changes he proposes in Chapter Nine that "I myself strongly reject most of them"[67] confuses matters further, as does his concluding assertion that Canadian multiculturalism is at best "*a model*" and at that, one that "is no more necessary, despite its attractions, than the inexorable march to freedom and equality that was the favourite theme, a century or two ago, of ambitious futurologists."[68]

## V. Obstacles to a new politics of diversity

While both books describe an idealized politics of diversity suited for the 21st century, neither book identifies the obstacles that may be in its way. Rita Chin argues that a "more productive engagement" with diversity in Europe rests in part on abandoning an originalist conceptualization of Enlightenment values and, concomitantly, on dropping "a blind, unreconstructed celebration of pluralism and cultural relativism."[69] This seems optimistic given, on the one hand, that right-wing populists continue to deploy a "civilizational" discourse based (in part) on an originalist conceptualization of Enlightenment values as a rallying cry and, on the other hand, in light of the common understanding (according to Hugh Donald Forbes) that multiculturalism *is* the celebration of diversity. In addition, evidence of *de*-democratization or democratic backsliding in Central and Eastern Europe[70] casts serious doubt on whether Europeans will in fact realize that there is "no longer room to pretend that European countries will return to some imagined, idealized state of ethnic and

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65  *Ibid* at 241.
66  *Ibid*.
67  *Ibid* at 201.
68  *Ibid* at 274.
69  Chin, *supra* note 1 at 302.
70  See Matthijs Bogaards, "De-democratization in Hungary: Diffusely Defective Democracy" (2018) 25:8 Democratization 1481; Licia Cianetti, James Dawson & Seán Hanley, "Rethinking 'Democratic Backsliding' in Central and Eastern Europe: Looking Beyond Hungary and Poland" (2018) 34:3 East European Politics 243; Adam Szymański, "De-democratization: The Case of Hungary in a Comparative Perspective" (2019) 52:2 Political Science & Politics 272.

cultural sameness,"[71] and casts further doubt on whether diversity will be able to flourish in increasingly non-democratic contexts.

The vision of a 21st century politics of multiculturalism presented by Hugh Donald Forbes in MIC also seems out of reach. For one, the "culturally open governance" he describes would require citizens to willingly embrace an unprecedented level of electronic surveillance as well as the possibility of being sent to a re-education camp for failing a values test. In addition, it is unclear why Canada's federal government would now or in the future be able to reform the Senate and the electoral process according to Forbes' design when elected representatives have thus far proven remarkably hesitant to alter the institutional status quo.

A return to a *Trudeauist* vision of Canadian multiculturalism might also be difficult to achieve for one main reason: it is unclear whether the main condition that drove the Trudeau government to deploy multiculturalism as a "strategy of national unity" in the early 1970s — the rise of Quebec nationalism — is still as relevant as it once was. To be sure, Quebec's distinct identity seems deeply entrenched, now more than ever, yet Quebecers' appetite for sovereignty seems to have declined across generations[72] and the "new nationalism" embraced by Quebec's current majority government is rooted in state secularism, not sovereignty.[73] As a result, the current conditions may actually be more propitious for a deepening commitment to multinational federalism within the Canadian state[74] than they are for multiculturalism's redeployment as a countermeasure for nationalist mobilization.

## VI. Old wine in new bottles

Both books also tell stories that have *already* been told. In the last four decades, normative political theorists, empirical political scientists, sociologists, geographers, and other social scientists have contributed to the development of a

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71  Chin, *supra* note 1 at 303.

72  Mowat Center, *2019 Survey of Canadians: Canada: Pulling Together or Drifting Apart? Final Report* (Toronto, ON: Mowat Centre for Policy Innovation, University of Toronto, 2019), online: https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/confederation-of-tomorrow-2019-survey---report-1/confederation-of-tomorrow-survey-2019---report-1-pulling-together-or-drifting-apart---final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=9abc2e3e_2

73  Jonathan Montpetit, "An introduction to the new Quebec nationalism and the tricks it plays on federal leaders" (14 September 2019), online: *CBC* <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-bill-21-election-1.5283673>.

74  Alain-G Gagnon & Arjun Tremblay, eds, *Federalism and National Diversity in the 21st Century* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020).

rich and complex academic literature on multiculturalism. This literature can be divided into four main categories: "normative-critical," "empirical-retreat," "unlikely survival," and "theoretical."[75] The core chapters of Forbes' MIC are summaries of several of the key contributions to the "normative-theoretical" category of the literature on multiculturalism. In Chapter Four ("Culture and Equality"), Forbes provides extensive summaries of two classic critiques of multiculturalism: Brian Barry's *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism* (2001) and Susan Moller Okin's *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* (1999)[76]. Chapter Five ("Culture and Freedom") summarizes several of Will Kymlicka's key works, focusing on *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (1995)[77]. Forbes then summarizes Charles Taylor's *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (1992) in Chapter Six ("Cultural Recognition") and Taylor's *The Malaise of Modernity* (1991) in Chapter Seven ("Ethical Authenticity")[78]. To be sure, Forbes' summaries are excellent. But given the prominence of the abovementioned works in the scholarly literature on multiculturalism, it is quite likely that most students of multiculturalism will already have read them.

Rita Chin's CME tells the "story" of multiculturalism's "failure" in Europe, one that has already been told by contributors[79] to the "empirical-retreat" category of the literature on multiculturalism. In retelling this "story," Chin also overlooks evidence that a range of multiculturalism policies have persisted in Britain, France, the Netherlands, and Germany despite the emergence of anti-multicultural rhetoric and the development of alternative models of immigrant integration.[80] Consequently, Chin's story, like those told in the "empirical-retreat" category, also overstates multiculturalism's fall. The "master narrative"[81]

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75  Arjun Tremblay, *Diversity in Decline? The Rise of the Political Right and the Fate of Multiculturalism* (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018) at 15-18.

76  See Brian Barry, *Culture and Equality: An Egalitarian Critique of Multiculturalism* (Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press, 2001) and Susan Moller Okin, *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women?* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1999).

77  See Will Kymlicka, *Multicultural Citizenship: A Liberal Theory of Minority Rights* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995).

78  See Charles Taylor et al, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*, ed by Amy Gutmann (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992); Charles Taylor, *The Malaise of Modernity* (Toronto: House of Anansi Press, 1991)

79  See Arun Kundnani, "The Death of Multiculturalism" (2002) 43:4 Race & Class 67; Steven Vertovec & Susanne Wessendorf, eds, *The Multiculturalism Backlash: European Discourses, Policies and Practices* (London, UK: Routledge, 2010); and Christian Joppke "The Retreat is Real: But What is the Alternative? Multiculturalism, Muscular Liberalism, and Islam" (2014) 21:2 Constellations 286.

80  Keith Banting & Will Kymlicka, "Is There Really a Retreat From Multiculturalism Policies? New Evidence From the Multiculturalism Policy Index" (2013) 11:5 Comparative European Politics 577.

81  Will Kymlicka, "The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism? New Debates on Inclusion and Accommodation in Diverse Societies" (2010) 61:199 Intl Soc Science J 97.

of multiculturalism's decline or fall has been challenged by contributors to the "unlikely survival" category of the literature on multiculturalism, who provide descriptive accounts of the persistence of multiculturalism policies in Europe and North America, and by contributors to "theoretical" categories of the literature on multiculturalism, who provide explanations of international and intranational variance in multiculturalism policies. In other words, "reports of multiculturalism's death are very much exaggerated."[82]

## VII. Conclusion

The retelling of longstanding multicultural "stories" raises the possibility that perhaps the discussion on multiculturalism has run its course, with all that can be said about recognizing and accommodating diversity already having been said. Does this mean we should stop talking about multiculturalism? To be absolutely clear, ending the discussion on multiculturalism now would risk delegitimizing a historically important facet of the politics of diversity at a time when immigrants and other minorities already face the unrelenting threats of right-wing populism, mono-cultural social movements, and anti-immigrant political factions. Can the multiculturalism research programme be reimagined and revitalized? This is the critical question facing students of multiculturalism. Hugh Donald Forbes suggests that the study of multiculturalism could be narrowed to focus on religious diversity.[83] But if this is indeed what happens, students of multiculturalism run the risk of overlooking a contemporary discourse of diversity that encompasses other identities and different political projects. In brief, for multiculturalism to have a future it must fully engage with the discussions on decolonization and systemic racism. In so doing, it can better contribute to identifying the obstacles to, and opportunities for, the realization of a politics of diversity in the 21st century.

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82  *Ibid* at 104.
83  Forbes, *supra* note 15 at 271.