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OTHER

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ABSTRACT

Contemporary debates on nationalism, ethnicity, race, identity, and citizenship are largely shaped by the trends of the twentieth century and now wrestle with new problems that do not easily fit older models. There is a need to adapt theories to understand emerging social dynamics and new sites of power. When this is done, normative models and non-dualistic understandings of identity and citizenship best account for group dynamics such as identity politics, populism and situational identities formed in moments of crisis. Normative models also help understand the shift from permanent immigration to temporary migration and how groups relate to one another. The Canadian case can and should be used to understand shifting social dynamics and the importance of normative theories as well as opportunities for theorizing new understandings of identity and citizenship.

Introduction

Contemporary academic debates on nationalism, ethnicity, race, identity, and citizenship are largely shaped by the trends of the twentieth century and now need to wrestle with new problems that do not easily fit these older models. Much of the literature on these issues focuses on tensions created at first with the transition from feudalism to modern states as well as the injustices stemming from colonization. The literature on these issues is also shaped by ethnic nationalism, which graphed group identities on to newly formed states, as well as mass migration from rural areas to cities, the rise of civic nationalism, and by consequence the power dynamics between insider-power-holder, "us," versus alien-outsider-excluded, "other" assemblages. The dynamics observed and later theorized are largely characterized as binaries or dualisms between group positions).[1] The problems of the twenty-first century, however, do not fit neatly into the assumptions and theories of the previous century, nor into simple dualistic positions, and in turn require adjustment. They require reconsideration of new social dynamics as well as emerging containers and sites of power.

Thinkers began to recognize and wrestle with more complex understandings of group dynamics in the late twentieth Century. This can be seen, for example, with Stuart Hall's[2] musings on the encoding/decoding of meaning in which he also identified negotiated readings as positions that fit outside the neat dichotomy of dominant and oppositional readings. The theorizing of increasingly complexity group identities and injustices can also be seen through Kimberlé Crenshaw's[3] notion of intersectionality which recognizes that they are experienced through compounding intersections of

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binary categories. She contends that simple insider/outsider understandings of race cannot capture the full experiences of those who are racialized. Yet another example, to name but one other, can be seen with Nancy Fraser's[4] move to first recognize that traditional Marxist redistribution also needed to consider recognition of identity and in more recent years she has likewise seen a need to consider the representation of those affected by power dynamics. Each of these examples begins to move social thought beyond binary understandings of identities, the meanings they invoke, and in turn the power and citizenship accrued to them. They begin to recognize that additional positions are needed to understand societies, and degrees of belonging to them, and they begin to recognize that group positions are multiple and situational rather than ascribed "facts" or entrenched.

More complex understandings of group dynamics, identity, and citizenship emerged with the rise of pluralism which now characterizes most societies. It can clearly be seen in the West with liberal democratic states that adopted cosmopolitanism and multicultural approaches to diversity.[5] It can likewise be seen in more authoritarian states that navigate rural to urban migration, internal ethnic minorities, and increasing transnational flows of information and people. Yet, at the very moment that plurality defines the lived experiences of most people in the world, it has led to a questioning of pluralism as a virtue and has been linked to the rise of nativism, populism, and neo-communitarianism.[6]

Understanding the push back against pluralism through simple "us" versus "other" dynamics would miss the increasing complexity of group dynamics, power, and citizenship that is produced. Unlike the ethnic nationalism of the past, neo-communitarianism is no longer simply defined by those who are native-born versus foreign or belonging to one ethno-racial group versus another. Unlike civic nationalism that is bound to states as containers of power, identities are increasingly shaped by social media and technologies that facilitate diasporas and transborder citizenship. Instead, bonds are formed situationally and fleetingly.[7] To be able to dissect such trends requires more nimble and adaptable models of understanding group differences and citizenship.

Drawing on a normative and "neo-Weberian" approach to identity and citizenship, Elke Winter[8] offers just such a model. By looking at the process of "social closure" as a continuum of relations set by *vergemeinschaftung* (community, ethnic group) and *vergesellschaftung* (nation, civic, society, socialization), she argues that social closure triggers different configurations of relationships among established social groups and newcomer groups. Instead of focusing on the position of who belongs and positions of exclusion, the model focuses on the types of configurations that exist within and among groups. This allows for the theorization of the distinctions between "us" and "others" but also allows researchers to situate degrees of belonging to, and among, ethnic and national groups—"we"—against challenging groups—"them."

The model helps understand many trends of the 2020s, which has seen seemingly opposing groups align, despite their long-standing differences against one another. Take for example evangelical Christians (us) that march with Muslims (others) against LGBTQ + activists (them) as one example.[9] Yet another is how Alt-Right Conservatives appeal to each of these groups in the name of rights and freedom of speech and against progressives and the boogeyman of "wokeness." With both examples the "we" or "us" is

situational and based on balancing group interests with wider interests against those who are perceived as threatening each.

The normative model offers tools for not only identifying power holders and challengers, which binary conceptualizations do, but also for investigating how a plurality of groups bond in given situations to pursue common interests. The articles compiled in this special issue of *Nationalism and Ethnic Politics* draw upon Winter's model and other normative theories to grapple with the complexity and contradictions of contemporary society missed by the dyadic and binary conceptualizations of thinkers who form the cannon of literature on nationalism, ethnicity, race, identity, and citizenship.

Contemporary societies are being reshaped by different temporalities and scales, something first identified with work on globalization (see Waters)[10] and later exacerbated with increased travel and new technologies such as the internet and social media. They are also being reshaped by new situational group alignments bound by critical events. Such junctures act as turning points (see Ramos and Young; Sewell)[11] that put pressures on inclusion and demand re-thinking citizenship and in turn the policy regimes that structure it. They also lead to new and fleeting configurations of belonging among groups.

Identity, ethnicity, nation, and citizenship were once binding, as seen with notions like "blood and belonging" invoked in the age of nationalism. Citizenship was likewise bound to ethnicity and later territory and was durable and meaningful. The reframing of citizenship as tied to states over ethno-racial heritage was the triumph of states and modernity over the tribalism of earlier eras. With neoliberalism, however, identity and citizenship became intertwined with human capital and the exchange of other forms of capital. This demanded that civic nationalism offer space for diverse multi-nation, multi-ethnic, multi-racial, cosmopolitan states and later world society. Yet, at the same time, identity and citizenship was abstracted, and like with all forms of capital they became exchangeable, and states aimed to make them more efficient. They also become less bounded and increasingly unsettled.[12]

As states pursued efficiency in citizenship, to offer it only to the most skilled and the least costly, policies became increasingly complex and citizenship -at least in the West- became decoupled from states. As Carlaw and Winter[13] show in their contribution to the special issue, in countries like Canada this occurred through constant tweaking of immigration policies and pathways of migration to the country. As perpetual updating occurred the immigration system was revolutionized. This led to new temporalities of migration and in turn new forms of citizenship. It led to a move from permanent immigration to, as Bélanger *et al* characterize it, "staggered inclusion," where migrants now enter the country on a temporary basis before navigating through a growing number pathways toward permanent residence that are based on "experience" within the country.[14] For many this has led to a "forever temporary" status as migrants move through temporary visas to remain legally in the country. It has led others to argue that there has been a rise of noncitizenship through assemblages linked to work conditionality.[15] Yet others find that critical junctures draw focus on migrants and in turn change how assemblages of inclusion are deployed. For example, Winter et al.[16] showed that during the Covid-19 pandemic healthcare workers, many of whom were temporary migrants, were heralded as "heroes" which may have increased social inclusion in the

heat of the moment but ultimately camouflaged the precariousness of their low pay and limited citizenship which was more durable.

The case of healthcare works shows how group alignments are increasingly situational. This occurs not only through critical events, but also through practices such as hailing which draws focus on specific groups. The practice shows how "us" and "others" get repositioned and how they can form a "we" that gets deployed against "them." As Lizotte[17] shows in his article, one cannot assume that excluded groups do not also exclude. He offers innovative and unique analysis of intolerance among the largest ethnic groups in Canada to see how they perceive one another. In doing so, he finds that even the excluded participate in the hierarchy of exclusion of others and the excluded hold similar preferences and distastes that the dominant group has toward external other groups. His work generally shows that diversity is still embraced in the country. At the same time, however, he observes intergroup antipathy among a small but robust minority. His analysis shows that the source of deep ethnic conflict and division is not necessarily based on ethnicity or culture, but rather is based on those who reify the conflict. Carlaw and Winter provide insight on what drives that minority: a combination of patriotism and fear.[18]

Complexity, and the contradiction it brings, is also exacerbated by the shift in scales of citizenship and the forms it takes as a result. That is, there have been shifts in how and where power is contested. White[19] illustrates this with his analysis of Quebec municipalities where he tracks how they engage with pluralism and promote diversity. He shows, as do other articles in the special issue, that citizenship is experienced transnationally, nationally, and sub-nationally all the way down to municipalities. Each political unit is equipped with different resources to manage expectations versus obligations to offer inclusion. Drawing on Bateson's[20] notion of "double bind" he illustrates the contradictions and paradoxes of pluralism in principle versus practice. He does this by discussing how cities wrestle with confusion between national policy on multiculturalism and provincial policy on interculturalism in promoting diversity, dialogue and wrestling against discrimination.

Another added layer for scholars to consider is citizenship that transcends borders as seen with Chinese conceptualization of it and the country's use of social media[21] to monitor citizens abroad and China's use of informal police stations to do the same.[22] Social media and the transnational spread of information have re-shaped diaspora communities who are no longer typified by groups of isolated newcomers but rather are now constellations of transitional migrants who travel back and forth and maintain ongoing connections with their family and homelands.

Adding new scales to new temporalities means and situational identities stresses the need for new models that are nimble and can work through complexity and contradiction. This can already be seen, as noted above, with shifting policy regimes that have moved from permanent migration and full citizenship to temporary and on-going migration.[23] It can also be seen with the downloading of responsibilities to lower and lower scales of society and the confusion that governments at different scales face when trying to promote pluralism.[24] To this end, Canada is a valuable case to examine. As it has been in the past, Canada is a country on the vanguard of many changing patterns and it can speak to many of the obstacles other countries are face now and in the years to come.

The collection of articles in this special issue show that Canada is an important, and too often taken for granted, case for understanding not only pluralism but nativism and populism. It was among the first countries to embrace multiculturalism and interculturalism as models of welcoming newcomers and navigating diverse populations.[25] It did so decades before the rest of the world embraced pluralism with the fall of the Soviet Union in the 1990s. At the same time, as Carlaw and Winter[26] show, years before nativist and populist forces emerged in Europe, with likes of Victor Orban or Giorgia Meloni, or the United States with Donald Trump, these trends were witnessed in Canada. The country offers unique insight into how they emerged at the very time that some declared the "end of history" and the triumph of cosmopolitanism.[27] Decades of neoliberal immigration and citizenship policy, focused on economic migration that benefited the dominant population led to pursuing greater efficiencies and segmentation. This moved Canada's immigration policy away from an ethnic national policy to a civic nationalist policy with the introduction of a points-based system of immigration. The country then moved further to a just-in-time model that created staggered forms of inclusion and citizenship.[28] Patriotism and insecurities were used to justify perpetual tweaks to the immigration and citizenship systems and led to limiting citizenship rights to an increasing number of temporary migrants.[29] These forces also fostered a coherence in the structure of tolerance across ethnic groups. That is, there is now little difference in how different ethno-racial groups perceive who is most and least tolerated in the country. The good news, as Lizotte[30] shows, is that Canadians on the whole have high levels of openness to all groups.

The basis of that openness is tied to the largely unwavering support that Canadians, irrespective of political orientation, have toward immigration. It has led some to question if immigration has become a third rail in Canadian politics[31] and is perceived as a solution to the country's problems while much of the world sees immigration as a problem to be solved. During the 2020s Canada has moved to admit half a million permanent residents a year[32] and eliminated the cap on the number temporary residents admitted in a given year. A report to Parliament shows that the country admitted almost a million temporary residents in 2021.[33] The increase in the number of newcomers is tied to solving the problems associated with a low birth rate and an aging population. The move to admit so many newcomers has meant that the Justin Trudeau regime has far outpaced earlier Conservative governments in the move to temporary migration. The regime is likewise a proponent of the Century Initiative which aims to more than double the country's population to 100 million people by the end of the century.[34]

At the same time, a small but persistent group of Canadians is intolerant. In 2023 about one in seven Canadians formed an unequivocal intolerant minority that impedes ethnic pluralism.[35] This has led a growing number of observers to caution that the country is seeing a rise of polarization (e.g., Ling).[36] They cite the 2022 Freedom Convoy which occupied the country's Parliament Hill and downtown of the country's capital as an example. They also cite the rise of cancel culture. Both are influenced by the spread of ideas across borders. During the same period the country also saw the rise of anti-racism as an added component of multicultural policy (e.g., Trudeau).[37] The reframing of the policy in this way challenges it as a framework and may even

eventually lead to its demise. Such reframing moves from civic nationalism to more micro and situational citizenship where the "we" is negatively framed rather than positively framed. Both trends are linked to the dynamics noted by Carlaw and Winter,[38] of patriotism and fear, and both are elucidated with a normative and situational model for understanding identity and citizenship.

A normative model, using Canada as a case, offers important insights for understanding dynamics of the public sphere which is the bedrock of civic nationalism and modern states. Much of the literature on identity and citizenship, and the policy practice that stems from it, have been shaped by understandings of positive or negative inclusion which focus on how the "us," "others," "we," and "them" are either including or excluding people. Both positive and negative formulations, however, largely ignore the neutral option. That is, the option to ignore one another or to be indifferent.

In many ways Canada was built upon that option as seen with Hugh MacLennan's[39] famous analogy of "two solitudes" and his novel bearing the analogy as its title. In the novel, set in Québec, Anglophone and Francophone Quebecers live side by side with parallel but separate interactions and lives. His novel offers an exploration of the cultural and linguistic divide during inter-war Canada and delves into the complex relationship between the two groups. Like almost all works of the time, little is said about the country's First Nations and Indigenous peoples. The analogy of two solitudes alludes to the isolation experienced by the two linguistic communities, reflecting the challenges of communication and understanding between them and it offers commentary on the intricate balance between individual identity and national unity. It emphasizes the importance of striving for common ground. Although the book shows the need for recognition and understanding between the groups, in many ways balance, although unequal, was achieved through largely being indifferent to one another.

One might contend that the initial formulation of Canada's multicultural policies was based upon a similar notion of solitude and that is why they were tied with civic nationalism and neoliberalism. In practice Canadian immigration and multiculturalism was based on economic principles and the benchmark for integration was landing a job, any job - and too often below one's human capital and skills. In exchange, differences would be largely ignored and the promise of a better future for one's children and grandchildren was offered. This framing of multiculturalism and civic nationalism facilitated unprecedent levels of immigration to the country from the 1990s onward.

The policy in practice, however, is often criticized for its symbolic recognition of difference and culture instead of a focus on systemic intersections among identity, ethnicity, race, and other social dimensions. The children of the newcomers who accepted the initial solitude of multiculturalism demand more. They are Canadian born but face systemic barriers. They demand not only entry into the labor market and citizenship, but also full recognition, equity, and success. Too many second and third generation Canadians, especially those who are racialized, face discrimination and obstacles.[40] At the same time, the country now competes for newcomers with a growing number of countries facing aging populations and labor force needs. It also finds that newcomers

in the 2020s arrive to a country facing an affordability, housing, and health system crisis.[41] This means that the value proposition of moving to the Canada has changed and full inclusion is no longer guaranteed.

Multicultural policy in practice has been unable to navigate the complexity of inclusion of minorities that are increasingly different from the country's Charter groups. Take for example Muslims in Canada, as racialized religious minorities, whose values are often perceived as a challenge to the ethos of liberalism and civic nationalism. This can be seen through debates over Sharia law, concerns over women's rights and the wearing of burqas and niqabs (see Winter; Carlaw and Winter).[42] In practice multicultural policies are also ill equipped to deal with intolerance among newcomer groups. This can, for instance, be seen with tensions in diaspora communities. Take as an example tension among mainland Chinese and Honk Kongese and Taiwanese newcomer communities, or with Hindu nationalists and Muslim and Sikh communities. Multicultural policy is not suited for navigating competing claims to injustice as also found with tensions between for example Muslim communities and LGBTQ + communities.

Patriotism and fear have been reactions to the weaknesses of multicultural policy and has sparked intolerance among a robust minority of Canadians. Multiculturalism was unable to prevent the rise of Alt-Right activists and xenophobia witnessed through the rise of hate crime in the country.[43] It offered space for the hardening of anti-racists advocacy that pursues increasingly stringent demands. Missing is a space for solitude where groups can be neutral or indifferent to one another. The challenge then is how to have positive solitude which is a necessity for civic nationalism and inclusive citizenship. How to create a solitude that allows groups to have space to ignore each other peacefully, and at will, while living side by side. That is, a space that allows ignoring each other and knowing that there is room to be different. Rather than being entrenched segregation, positive solitude is one that is pursued by those who seek neutral space.

Finding that space, however, means recognizing that identity and citizenship is not dualistic or binary. It means recognizing triangular or multi-positional spaces. It also means looking at continuums and fields as coordinates that meet at critical junctures, that adjust to different temporalities and scales, and embrace the complexities and contradictions of the new century rather than force identity and citizenship into models of the previous one. It likewise means recognizing that the social relations, identities and citizenship of the coming years will be shaped by new problems facing the world such as climate change, generative Artificial Intelligence, and an unprecedented aging of the world's population. To gain that space social thinkers and policy makers will also need to grapple with the populist forces that have mobilized previously divergent groups against the values of pluralism, openness, and equity. Each will have a profound impact on societies and will change how people relate to one another. Normative and multi-configurational models offer powerful tools for understanding these shifts. They allow for the understanding of new configurations of identity, power and citizenship that do not fit neatly into older models. Embracing such models will allow scholars of nationalism and ethnic politics to navigate new configurations of identity, power and belonging.

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