MUSLIMS & MULTICULTURALISM IN CANADA

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Contents

A Note from RSS Journal Editor-in-Chief

The creation of the *Religious and Socio-Political Studies Journal* (RSS Journal) through the Institute for Religious and Socio-Political Studies (I-RSS) represents an important contribution to academic research, as well as Muslim religious communities across the country. Uplifting and amplifying scholarship *about* Muslims, *for* Muslims, and very often, *by* Muslims serves to aid the development of whole new discursive environments with community service and equity-building at their core. Our journal publishes research articles and book reviews that are relevant to the study of Muslims in Canada. The RSS Journal is interdisciplinary and accepts submissions from researchers working in the fields of sociology, education, religious studies, history, political science, psychology, media studies and others. It is no secret that narratives about Muslims and Islam the world over have been mired in stereotypes, biases and outright fabrications steeped not only in ignorance, but in discourses of power and control right through to the now "post-colonial" era. Academic writing and research, of course, have not been immune to these issues and while great strides continue to be made by the current generation of scholars in various disciplines of the social sciences and humanities in turning of the tide of Muslim narratives in academia, the RSS Journal also represents an important step forward in this regard.

Our editorial board is delighted to bring you this very first edition of the RSS Journal - a true testament to the uplifting place of the journal in that all of the articles for this copy are written by Canadian Muslim women researchers, and our board is comprised entirely of women, the majority of whom are also Muslim. The reclamation of academic space and academic voices here cannot be overstated. Further, the RSS Journal is committed to academic accessibility and is a diamond open access journal that provides immediate open access to its content on the principle that making research freely available to the public, supports the greater global exchange of knowledge.

Finally, the RSS Journal acknowledges that our work takes place on the traditional lands of Indigenous peoples - First Nations, Metis and Inuit - who have lived, gathered and passed through our respective locations for many thousands of years, and who remain here. We affirm their culture, their dignity, the truth of what happened to them at the hands of the colonial nation state. We affirm that they are the original stewards of this land, and we remain committed to the spirit and intention of friendship, mutual care, and respect with which Indigenous communities originally signed treaties here.

We pray that this first edition of the RSS Journal is a beacon of quality research, important conversations around topics that matter in the lives of everyday Muslims and brings forth space for critical discussions that have long yearned for their own space.

Nakita Valerio
RSS Journal, Editor-in-Chief, 2022

Muslims and Multiculturalism in Canada: Introduction

Dr. Sabreena Ghaffar-Siddiqui, Dr. Muna Saleh, Nakita Valerio
RSS Journal Editorial Board

In Canada, the year 2021 marked the 50th anniversary of the adoption of *multiculturalism* as a federal policy. Multiculturalism is often upheld as the pinnacle of Canadian culture and social achievement, and, in public education systems across the country, is celebrated as a primary point of difference between Canadian "mosaic" and American "melting pot" culture. Proponents of it argue that it encompasses "a range of notions of heritage, cultural diversity, recreation and entertainment activities, cultural centres, and as an entire way of life with fundamental institutional structures."[1]

Despite these performative public discourses about multiculturalism, which have been disseminated through public education and media in Canadian society since the policy's adoption and development, multiculturalism has rightfully been understood (and critiqued) as an ideology - a set of "ill-founded beliefs which are often uncritically held by those whose interests are furthered by" them.[2] The presuppositions of multiculturalism ideology about major human concepts such as culture, cultural interaction, acculturation, difference, and power dynamics are often accepted in an unreflexive manner by those who uphold and accept its myths about itself - a similar or identical process seen in adherents of secularism and a connection that will be elaborated on below.

Fittingly, those on the periphery of both multiculturalism as a project and secular ways of being and building societies, are among the first to offer critiques of them - those for whom the assumptions of these projects cannot be readily accepted as commonsensical, modern or progressive. As such, one sees authors examining Indigenous claims of place in the nation-state of Canada arguing that multiculturalism remains close to a racialist discourse, only permitting difference in very specific and circumscribed ways.[3] Others have noted that official statist multiculturalism privileges citizens and continues colonial attitudes towards race, particularly to justify the exclusion of temporary foreign workers in Canada.[4] It is our contention, in this trajectory of critique, that the project of multiculturalism is not without, at best, its drawbacks, and at worst, outright harm, especially when it comes to Muslims in the context of Canadian Islamophobia.

Background
Canada was the first country in the world to adopt multiculturalism as a policy under the Liberal

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[1] Kogila Moodley, "Canadian multiculturalism as ideology," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 6, no. 3 (July 1983): 320.

[2] Lance Roberts and Rodney Clifton, "Exploring the Ideology of Multiculturalism in Canada," *Canadian Public Policy* 8, no. 1 (Winter 1982): 88.

[3] Evelyn Legare, "Canadian Multiculturalism and Aboriginal People," *Global Studies in Culture and Power* 1, no. 4 (1995): 347-366, https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.1995.9962515.

[4] J. Adam Perry, "Barely legal: racism and migrant farm labour in the context of Canadian multiculturalism," *Citizenship Studies* 16, no. 2 (2012): 189-201, https://doi.org/10.1080/13621025.2012.667611.

government of Pierre Trudeau in 1971. The push for multiculturalism arose directly out of Quebec nationalism and the Commission on Bilingualism through the 1960s. This history of appeasing and accommodating Quebec interests at the federal level, as well as cultural and linguistic heritage preservation, is inextricable from the history of multiculturalism and how it has manifested in Canadian policies and implementation, despite Quebec being vocally opposed at the time of the adoption of multiculturalism as federal policy on the grounds of rejecting social integration and lamenting "a loss of cultural hegemony."[5] In other words, Canadian multiculturalism is rooted in, founded upon, developed in relation to, and ultimately immersed in Quebec nationalism, values, and secular identity. Indeed, in a 1971 spring speech in the House of Commons, then-Prime Minister Trudeau introduced "a policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework," a policy that was meant to enhance the Official Languages Act by facilitating the integration of new Canadians into one or both official language communities. This is hardly the multiculturalism that most Canadians understand and imagine today as it has evolved.

Initially, multicultural policy in the 1970s meant support (especially financial) for ethnocultural communities and what has been called their "folkloric" representations. Moodley notes that this push arose out of inherent anxieties in the dominant cultures: "the fear that ethnic groups in sustaining their respective cultures will undermine national unity is mitigated by a meek plea to share these cultures with the rest of Canadian society."[6] These superficial performances of ethnic identity and one's culture (very often reduced to flat heritage depictions) were (and often remain) prioritized over deep equitable changes in the legal-economic realms.

In 1976, the Immigration Act lifted many previous restrictions on immigration from non-European countries, forcing a discussion of multicultural policy into the public arena once more, with the federal government focusing on rights-based equality across cultural heritage, especially in the 1982 Constitution and accompanying Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms - which Quebec opted out of signing, instead negotiating with Prime Minister Brian Mulroney in 1987 under the Meech Lake Accord for recognition of Quebec's distinct character ("distinct society"). In the 1990s, increased division on the issue of multiculturalism coincided with Quebec separatism, culminating in the infamous 1995 Referendum which saw the province vote to remain as part of the larger nation state of Canada by an incredibly slim margin of 0.58% of the No (ie. don't leave) vote.

In the present moment, the ongoing discussion is of integration and multiculturalism; however, given what has been shown thus far, the reason this is the question is due to the conditioning forces of both secularism and multiculturalism, where diversity is tolerated as long as it only means the preservation of folkloric cultural caricatures or the removal of specific barriers for such groups without threatening the official, hegemonic, and colonial ways of being- specifically being Anglo or Francophone at a practical, legal level. The debates have centred specifically around Muslims

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[5] Moodley, "Canadian Multiculturalism," 320.
[6] Ibid.

in Canada and continue to involve and borrow from Quebec politics and policies in numerous ways. Besides the horrific massacre of Muslims at the Islamic Cultural Centre of Quebec City on January 29, 2017, Quebec has also been at the forefront of some of the most discriminatory policies affecting Muslims and other religious folks including Bill 21, which prohibits the wearing of religious garments by public service workers in a feigned attempt to "neutralize" the public sphere, extinguishing the dreams and hopes of countless Canadians from numerous religious backgrounds, including Muslims, and especially Muslim women. This incessant droning about "Quebec values" and who fits into those has been borrowed at the federal levels as well, most notably during the 2015 federal election when the Conservative Party drummed up anti-Muslim hatred with their niqab ban and barbaric cultural practices hotline. In other words, while, under multiculturalism, those "who so desire are susbsidized to bring cultural identities out of the private closet into the public sphere," this has its apparent limits with the line drawn in the sand at Islam and Islamic ways of being.

At the root of this problem is a distinction between culture as a comprehensive system of being in the world, and culture as an ethnic background and identity. Canadian multiculturalism reduces culture to the latter. Relatedly, the system of laïcité in Quebec, much like that in France, rests on very particular assumptions and definitions of not only religious expression but what constitutes a religion in itself. Without going too deeply into it, it is worth noting that contrary to claims that secularism (as an ideology) is religiously neutral (especially as articulated in the francophone model of laïcité), secularism can be understood as a religion of its own based on a premise that has elsewhere been called the Model T Principle. Early Ford Model T cars famously came "in any colour one wanted" – as long as it was black. By analogy, secularism posits that you can have any religion you like, as long as it looks and acts just like Christianity - in other words, it takes the form of privately held faith or set of beliefs, and practice may be conveniently relegated to the private sphere. Because these assumptions posit a public sphere that is (allegedly) empty of religion as inherently neutral, the genealogical roots of Canadian multiculturalism are diametrically opposed to religious equity for any practitioners of religious ways of life that are not what we can call Christianoform in nature - meaning they exclude not only Islam and Muslims, but all other praxis and legal-based ways of being. It begs the question not of whether multiculturalism as a policy in Canada is functioning poorly, but rather, given these unreflexive roots, if it is functioning exactly as intended.

While the structural and ideological underpinnings of Canadian multiculturalism inhibit cultural ways of being beyond those which can be flattened into identity markers and heritage caricatures, Muslims also contend with being marginalized and "othered" by narratives and discourses operating at the cultural level. Canadian media has played a significant role in constructing negative images of Muslims.[7] The media's coverage of issues related to Muslims is disproportionately extensive and has played a major role in shaping the relationship between

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[7] Shah, Saeeda, "Education of Muslim Students in Turbulent Times," in Muslim Students, Education and Neoliberalism, ed. Máirtín Mac an Ghaill and Chris Haywood (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 51-52.

Muslims and non-Muslims in Canada.[8] Harmful representations of Muslims have led to negative discourses that continue to fan the flames of an irrational fear. This Islamophobia has resulted in increased racism and discrimination against Muslims, alienation of Muslim communities in Canada[9], and it may well be exacerbating an identity crisis for some.

Muslim Canadians contend with backlash from debates, negative imagery, and incendiary news stories that make up a continuous anti-Muslim discourse driven by far-right groups and those in positions of political power. As noted by a leading Muslim advocacy organization in Canada, the National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), "every time a global incident of terrorism occurs, not only are Muslims experiencing the same shock and grief as any other person, they are also worried about the collective blame they will have to deal with if the perpetrator ends up being Muslim […] the first thing that comes to mind is 'please God, don't let it be a Muslim' and when it is a Muslim, they feel like they have to put on their armour as they leave their homes" .[10] The spike of Islamophobic incidences post 9/11 sparked scholarly interest;[11] however, Muslims in the West have been on the receiving end of anti-Muslim discrimination long before the 2001 terror attacks[12] , and it continues today.[13]

Anti-Muslim discrimination and stereotyping are prevalent in Canada.[14] According to an April 2019 Ipsos poll conducted on behalf of Global News, Muslims continue to be seen as the most likely targets of racism (59%) and over a quarter of Canadians (26%) believe it has become more acceptable to be prejudiced against Muslims/Arabs, while 15% say the same about Jews.[15] Though nearly 60% of Canadians agree that Islamophobia is a problem that needs to be addressed, 3 in 10

[8] Kazemipur, Abdolmohammad. *The Muslim Question in Canada: A Story of Segmented Integration (*Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2014), 88.

[9] Shah, "Education."

[10] National Council of Canadian Muslims (NCCM), High School Student Town Hall (University of Toronto Mississauga, 2017), 1.

[11] Christopher Allen and Jørgen S. Nielsen, Summary Report on Islamophobia Summary Report on Islamophobia in the EU after 11 September 2001, European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia, 2002; Wayne Hanniman, "Canadian Muslims, Islamophobia and national security," International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice 36, no.4 (December 2008); Denise Helly, "Are Muslims discriminated against in Canada since September 2001?" Canadian Ethnic Studies 36, no.1 (2004); Lorraine P. Sheridan and Raphael Gillett, "Major world events and discrimination," Asian Journal of Social Psychology 8, no.2 (2005).

[12] S. Conway, "The Reproduction of Exclusion and Disadvantage: Symbolic Violence and Social Class Inequalities in 'Parental Choice' of Secondary Education," Sociological Research Online 2, no.4 (1997); Fawaz A. Gerges, "Islam and Muslims in the Mind of America: Influences on the Making of U.S. Policy," Journal of Palestine Studies 26, no. 2 (Winter 1997); Fred Halliday, "'Islamophobia' reconsidered," Ethnic and Racial Studies 22, no.5 (1999); Scott Poynting and Victoria Mason, "The resistible rise of Islamophobia: Anti-Muslim racism in the UK and Australia before 11 September 2001," Journal of Sociology 43, no.1 (March 2007).

[13] Sarah Wilkins-Laflamme, "Islamophobia in Canada: Measuring the Realities of Negative Attitudes Toward Muslims and Religious Discrimination," Canadian Review of Sociology 55, no.1 (February 2018): 87, DOI: 10.1111/cars.12180.

[14] Environics Institute, Survey of Muslims in Canada 2016, (Environics Institute, 2016), https://www.environicsinstitute.org/docs/default-source/project-documents/survey-of-muslims-in-canada-2016/final-report.pdf?sfvrsn=fbb85533_2.

[15] Ipsos, "Racism," accessed July 30, 2022, https://www.ipsos.com/sites/default/files/ct/news/documents/2019-05/ipsos_global_news_-_racism_-_2019.pdf.

actually agree with a stereotype that Muslims in Canada follow Sharia law instead of Canadian law. While Ontario residents (65%) are more likely to agree that Islamophobia needs to be addressed, Quebec residents (39%) are more likely to show agreement with the stereotype concerning Sharia Law. In comparison, only 2 in 10 Canadians believe stereotypes about Jewish control of the media and finance. The results of this poll are sadly not surprising, but they underscore the difficulties faced by Muslims in Canada.

According to a survey conducted in 2016, "one in three Canadian Muslims reports having experienced discrimination in the past five years, due primarily to one's religion or ethnicity; this is well above the levels of mistreatment experienced by the population-at-large" .[16] The survey highlights a variety of settings where such discrimination occurs such as the workplace, in public spaces, in retail establishments, and in schools and universities. Further, irrespective of gender, age, and country of birth, one in four Muslims report having encountered difficulties crossing borders.[17] Poignantly, the study underscores the ways in which such experiences reflect on a person's hope for the future, with Muslim youth (those aged 18 to 34) found to be the "least optimistic about the next generation facing less discrimination than their own".[18] By way of mistaken association, those who are wrongly believed to be Muslim also become victims. The Sikh and Christian Arab communities are frequently targeted because people think they are Muslim. This, of course, is telling given that Islamophobia is also a form of racism that impacts anyone who "appears" to be Muslim.

The irrational fear and hate towards Muslims that is stoked by Islamophobic discourses manifests itself not only in various forms of discrimination, but also outright violence. This is reflected in the alarming rise in attacks against Muslims in Canada.[19] Although hate crimes were shown to have decreased overall, hate crimes against the Muslim community almost tripled from 2014 to 2015.[20] In fact, according to Statistics Canada data, the number of police-reported hate crimes, mainly incidents targeting Muslim, Jewish and Black people, have been steadily climbing since 2014 and shot up by some 47 per cent in 2017, reaching an all-time high at that time.[21] According to incident reports collected by NCCM, there are daily occurrences of hate propaganda, verbal and physical violence, threats, vandalism, and online comments targeting Muslims.

On June 6, 2021, in London, Ontario, four (intergenerational) members of the Afzaal/Salman family were murdered, and a nine-year-old child was left injured and orphaned as they were out for an evening stroll[22]. A white nationalist targeted them with his car simply for existing as visible

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[16] Environics Institute, "Survey," 38.
[17] Ibid, 39.
[18] Ibid, 37.
[19] NCCM, "High School."
[20] NCCM, "High School."
[21] Statistics Canada, Police-reported hate crime, 2017, November 29, 2018, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181129/dq181129a-eng.htm.
[22] Dalia Faheid, "Hate Wiped Away a Muslim Canadian Family. Here's How Friends Want Them Remembered," *NPR*, June 12, 2021, https://www.npr.org/2021/06/12/1005268914/hate-wiped-away-a-muslim-canadian-family-heres-how-friends-want-them-remembered

Muslims, killing husband and wife Salman Afzaal and Madiha Salman, their daughter Yumna Afzaal, and Yumna's grandmother, Talat Afzaal (Allah yirhamun). In Alberta, there have been over a dozen documented violent attacks on women in hijab, beginning with a racist and violent attack on a Somali Muslim mother and daughter wearing hijab in early December 2020. Most of the victims of these attacks are Black women who experience the intersections of pervasive systems of anti-Black racism and gendered Islamophobia[23].

In the aftermath of these and other events of racist violence, many ask variations of the question: "How could this happen in a 'tolerant,' 'liberal,' and 'multicultural' place like Canada?"

However, those who have experienced intersecting forms of interpersonal and systemic racism are not as shocked. They understand that the espoused liberal values of official multiculturalism are undergirded by inherently colonial and Othering[24] logics. As Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Nisha Nath argued, multiculturalism policies serve to "'manage diversity' by encouraging the expression of 'safe' forms of diversity as they attempt to construct national subjects"[25]. They noted:

> Others have described multiculturalism as serving a legitimation function,
> where the focus on culture and diversity masks historical and ongoing racism,
> inequity, and alienation …. state-sponsored multiculturalism encourages a
> narrow negotiation and understanding of racialised, gendered, and heteronormative
> identities[26].

Indeed, many scholars have highlighted how Canadians' relatively high support for multiculturalism works at both an abstract and selective level; this support drops when Muslims are involved and when policies that would concretely advance espoused 'inclusion' and 'diversity' (especially for Muslims) are proposed[27]. However, as Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos and Jameela Rasheed elucidated, this seeming contradiction of high support for multiculturalism alongside the proliferation of anti-Muslim sentiment is not necessarily contradictory when considering how the "intolerance of Islam is justified on behalf of protecting a secular, tolerant, liberal-democratic public ethos against a putatively premodern, intolerant and illiberal enemy. In a peculiar way, then, support for multiculturalism may inform opposition to Islam."[28]

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[23] Omar Mosleh, "As Muslim women are attacked in Alberta, a community asks: Can Canada face its Islamophobia problem?" *Toronto Star*, July 4, 2021, https://www.thestar.com/news/canada/2021/07/04/they-only-call-it-a-hate-crime-after-you-get-killed-as-muslim-women-are-attacked-in-alberta-a-community-asks-can-canada-face-its-islamopho

[24] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Random House, 1978)

[25] Yasmeen Abu-Laban, and Nisha Nath,"Citizenship, Multiculturalism, and Immigration: Mapping the Complexities of Inclusion and Exclusion Through Intersectionality," in *The Palgrave Handbook of Gender, Sexuality, and Canadian Politics*, eds. Manon Tremblay and Joanna Everitt (Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 2020), 518.

[26] Ibid,517.

[27] Will Kymlicka, "The Precarious Resilience of Multiculturalism in Canada," *American Review of Canadian Studies* 51 no. 1 (2021): 122–142. https://doi-org.ezproxy.aec.talonline.ca/10.1080/02722011.2021.1878544

[28] Triadafilos Triadafilopoulos, and Jameela Rasheed, "A Religion Like No Other: Islam and The Limits of Multiculturalism in Canada," Working paper, Ryerson Centre for Immigration and Settlement and the CERC in

This understanding of multiculturalism addresses why there is a lack of sustained outrage against the structural violence of Bill 21 in Quebec outside of Muslim and other minoritized communities. For many (neo)liberals, Muslim woman in hijab are seen as an inherent threat to liberal logics, and even as a form of intolerance to Canadian society and its espoused values[29]. Many practices of Islam are very visible (e.g., hijabs, beards, minarets, praying in public) and legislation (like Bill 21) and racist attacks have tried to render these practices (and the humans who embody them) invisible.

Despite many years of multicultural identity, Canada still struggles with who it is and its acceptance of diversity and tolerance of discrimination. Some have argued, that in Canadian multiculturalism there is a brazen, "ingrained and acknowledged privileging of the majority's history, values, and language".[30] Kymlicka goes as far to say that although appearing neutral on the surface, there is an evident favouring of the dominant groups.[31] According to Taylor and Yusuf, liberal multiculturalism adopts and universalizes a Christian perception of religion and so for Muslims, "religious freedom becomes merely the Islamic identity freedom to conform to another society's perception of what religion entails" .[32] Religious minorities like Muslims, who offer different worldviews on the purpose and place of religion in society, seemingly pose a challenge to Canadian multiculturalism.[33] As such, perhaps the multiculturalism system in Canada was never intended to facilitate the integration of the Muslim community, nor was multiculturalism meant to eliminate the challenges that Muslims and similar minority groups face.[34]

The mistreatment of Muslim communities in the post 9/11 era in particular brings to the forefront Canada's foundation as a racial state, which has been argued is something that has been hidden by multiculturalism.[35] Canadian racism originates from Canada's colonial identity [36]- "modern racism in Canada has deep colonial roots", in that contemporary racism *is* simply historical racism; it is just a continuation and adaptation in another form, another guise of policies, strategies, systems .[37]

Migration and Integration, 2020, 1, https://rshare.library.ryerson.ca/articles/journal_contribution/A_Religion_like_No_Other_Islam_and_the_Limits_of__Multiculturalism_in_Canada/14642073.

[29] Abu-Laban and Nath, "Citizenship."

[30] Abdullah Omar, "Islamic Identity in the Canadian Multicultural Context," Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry 3, no. 2 (2011).

[31] Kymlicka, "Precarious Resilience."

[32] Charles Taylor, "The Politics of Recognition," in Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition, ed. Amy Gutmann (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994); Ahmad Yousif, "Islam, Minorities and Religious Freedom: A Challenge to Modern Theory of Pluralism," Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs 20, no. 1 (April 2000): 30.

[33] Nasar Meer, "Muslim Schools in Britain: Challenging Mobilisations or Logical Developments?" Asia Pacific Journal of Education 27, no.1 (March 2007); Tariq Modood, Multiculturalism (Cambridge: Polity, 2007); Taylor, "Politics."

[34] Omar, "Islamic Identity."

[35] Baljit Nagra and Paula Maurutto, "Crossing Borders and Managing Racialized Identities: Experiences of Security and Surveillance Among Young Canadian Muslims," Canadian Journal of Sociology 41, no.2 (2016).

[36] Camille A. Nelson and Charmaine A. Nelson, Racism Eh? A Critical interdisciplinary anthology of race and racism in Canada (Concord, ON: Captus Press, 2004)

[37] Charmaine A. Nelson, "Modern Racism In Canada Has Deep Colonial Roots," Huffington Post, February 20, 2017, http://www.huffingtonpost.ca/charmaine-nelson/modern-racismcanada_b_14821958.html.

As such, perhaps by the continuous "othering" of Muslims, Islamophobia has become yet another example of the ways in which colonial thinking can successfully co-exist in an optimistically egalitarian society. We need not look too far into Canada's history to see how racism from the past has transformed into racism of today. Ling Lei and Shibao Guo assert that:

> Multiculturalism has in effect, sustained a racist and unequal society of Canada with racism entrenched in its history and ingrained in every aspect of its social structure. Multiculturalism tolerates cultural difference but does not challenge an unjust society premised on white supremacy.[38]

The four articles contained in this issue begin to uncover the various ways in which Muslim communities and individuals are impacted by, and navigate Canadian multiculturalism as a policy and part of Canada's national identity. Each article addresses distinct topics and questions, but they can be grouped into two overarching themes: constructing identity in the context of colonialism, racism and multiculturalism; and filling the gaps where multiculturalism fails or does not meet the needs of Muslims.

In ""The way to someone's heart is through their stomach": Anti-Orientalism in the Cookbooks of Habeeb Salloum," Amani Khelifa examines the writings of Arab-Canadian cookbook writer Habeeb Salloum. Khelifa identifies three "decolonizing moves" by which Salloum constructed and expressed his Syrian heritage through food and in relation to both mainstream Canadian narratives and Indigenous cultures. While food is a characteristic aspect of the flattened "heritage caricatures" of Canadian multiculturalism, Salloum's writings and Khelifa's analysis - demonstrate how food is also an avenue for decolonization and navigating the tensions (both internal and external) between immigrant, Canada and place or culture of origin. Salloum's story also provides an interesting complement to this issue's critiques of multiculturalism from Muslim perspectives since Salloum was Arab Christian. Salloum therefore shared a religious identity with the Canadian majority, while being a cultural minority but, at the same time, a religious minority within the wider Arab culture. The lens of Orientalism in relation to Islamophobia and the racialization of Arabs and Arab Muslims becomes important here. The shifting, positional, and overlapping nature of identity reveals the impossibility of the "mosaic" image of multiculturalism, which conflates and calcifies ethnic-religious identities into interlocking cultural tiles.

Motahareh Nabavi delves further into the issue of identity formation in "Canadian Muslim Reactive Identity Formation in the Face of Discrimination: The Possibilities of Imagined Localities." Nabavi posits that Canadian Muslims form their identities as Muslims in reaction to their experiences of colonization, racism and multiculturalism, highlighting particular factors that impact Canadian Muslim identities such as negative media representation, discrimination and the experience of being a minority (versus being Muslim in a Muslim majority society). Far from a stifling Muslim identity, Nabavi argues that these forces have motivated a reclamation and

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[38] Ling Lei and Shibao Guo, "Beyond multiculturalism: Revisioning a model of pandemic anti-racism education in post-Covid-19 Canada," International Journal of Anthropology and Ethnology 6, no.1 (2022): 1. https://doi.org/10.1186/s41257-021-00060-7.

strengthening of Muslim identity. This reclamation does not come without a toll however, as Muslims have felt compelled to deepen their knowledge of Islam to defend their identities against Islamophobic discourse and young Muslims in particular struggle to create a unified sense of self as multiple binary identities are projected on to them. Nonetheless, as young Muslims actively engage in forming hybrid identities, they create a "third space" of cultural hybridity that confounds dichotomous narratives such as Muslim/Canadian, religious/secular and tradition/modernity.

Dr. Asma Ahmed also focuses on Muslim youth in "A Framework to Assess the Supports Provided for Muslim Students in a Public School." Ahmed identifies frequent challenges faced by Muslim youth - especially those who are practicing and are outwardly identifiable as Muslim - in public schools and provides a conceptual framework to guide educators in assessing the supports provided for Muslim students in their schools. Many of the challenges faced by Muslim students highlight the limitations of multiculturalism to incorporate practice- and legal-based religion. While Ahmed focuses on multicultural education, she makes the crucial distinction that while multicultural education can provide a basis for including and supporting Muslim students, anti-racist education is needed to create deeper, systemic equity.

Lastly, Fatima Chakroun provides a high-level overview of the history, development patterns, and scope of activities of Muslim organizations across Canada in an I-RSS report, "Muslim Organizations in Canada: A Composite Picture of Service and Diversity." This large-scale depiction identifies several patterns in Muslim organizations in Canada. Chakroun finds that Muslim organizations have consistently been created to meet the needs of Muslims that are not met by mainstream, multicultural Canadian society and institutions. Perhaps the most pertinent point for this journal issue is that these organizations provide services that go well beyond the scope of traditional "religious" activities, indicating that mainstream multicultural society does not automatically meet all the "non-religious" needs of all groups.

The diversity of these four articles demonstrates the myriad of ways in which multiculturalism informs and impacts Muslim life and ways of being in Canada. As a deeply fraught, yet central tenet of Canadian national narratives, multiculturalism requires close and critical attention from many vantage points. Muslim perspectives on multiculturalism are particularly telling, as Islam and Muslims so frequently find themselves at the margins or fractures of multiculturalism - sometimes with deeply harmful consequences. Yet it is not always so dire. As some of our authors demonstrate, Muslim ways of interacting with, participating in and resisting multiculturalism also show a way forward towards a more truly pluralistic society.

Abu-Laban, Yasmeen and Nisha Nath. "Citizenship, Multiculturalism, and Immigration: Mapping the Complexities of Inclusion and Exclusion Through Intersectionality," In *The Palgrave Handbook of Gender, Sexuality, and Canadian Politics*, edited by Manon Tremblay and Joanna Everitt, 507-527. Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan Cham, 2020.

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"The way to someone's heart is through their stomach":
Anti-Orientalism in the Cookbooks of Habeeb Salloum

Amani Khelifa

Abstract

Immigrant writing is a unique forum that provides insight into both immigrant and mainstream life, where authors serve as brokers between two cultures. This is especially true of the two most personal genres, cookbooks and memoirs, where culture and family history are directly discussed. The writing of Arab-Canadian author Habeeb Salloum (1924-2019) combined both genres. His cookbook-memoirs fostered intercultural dialogue and combatted Orientalist stereotypes. This article examines how he practiced decolonization using three techniques: first, by assimilating into stereotypes of 'Oriental' culture; then, by retrieving Orientalist tropes and recasting them into positive aspects of Middle Eastern culture; and, finally, by attempting to position Arab minorities as allies of Indigenous communities. By revealing how Salloum succeeded, and sometimes failed, to push an anti-Orientalist agenda in his cookbooks, this study reinforces the central role that food and memoirs play in shaping the identities and experiences of individuals, communities, and nations.

Keywords: Food history, Orientalism, Arab-Canadian identity, immigrant memoirs, cookbooks, prairie history, decolonization, Indigenous-minority relations

> To understand a people, acquaint yourself with their proverbs."
> *– Arab proverb[1]*
>
> "The more you eat, the more we know how much you love us."
> *– Arab proverb[2]*

The language of food is the most basic, universal language. It can also be the most political. As a medium for cross-cultural dialogue, its exchange can lead to the breakdown of barriers and a reconfiguration of power dynamics.[3] Food and the practices surrounding it function as markers of group, national and imperial identities, often carried and spread through cookbooks.[4] Habeeb

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[1] Habeeb Salloum, *Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead: Recipes and Recollections* (Regina: University of Regina Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2005), 1.

[2] Habeeb Salloum, *Bison Delights: Middle Eastern Cuisine, Western Style* (Regina: University of Regina Canadian Plains Research Centre, 2010), 89.

[3] Franca Iacvetta, Marlene Epp, and Valerie J. Korinek, *Edible Histories, Cultural Politics: Towards a Canadian Food History* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2012), 11.

[4] Ibid, 19.

Salloum (1924-2019) was an Arab-Canadian writer and author of several cookbooks that foster intercultural dialogue and test the boundaries between Arab and Canadian cooking. As an immigrant from the Middle East to Saskatchewan in the 1920s and 1930s, and as a writer, Salloum found himself uniquely positioned to be a cultural broker with the ability to "serve up [his] ethnic culture for Canadian consumption."[5] His recipes acted as vehicles for anti-Orientalism by bridging the gap in readers' minds between 'the Orient' and 'the Occident'. This article analyzes Salloum's cookbooks with the aim of uncovering how he practiced decolonization as a mechanism to create, share, and market Middle Eastern foods to Western audiences. After contrasting decolonization and anti-Orientalism as joint but distinct frameworks, especially as they relate to food history, I examine Salloum's cookbooks to uncover the decolonial techniques woven into the recipes. I argue his writing reveals three major decolonizing 'moves':

1. the assimilationist tendency, which highlights one's hyphenated identity (in this case Arab Canadian), selectively emphasizing, by turns, the right and left side of the hyphen;[6]

2. the reclamation move, or the retrieval of Orientalist representations from their Western provenance; and

3. the coalition tendency within social justice, where one attempts to ally with other disadvantaged groups, in this case with Indigenous communities.

Salloum's maturation and assimilation as a Canadian author is clearly traceable over the course of his three cookbooks. It tells the story of a newcomer carving out a shard for himself in the notoriously complex mosaic of Canadian identity and history.

At the Crossroads of Decolonization and Anti-Orientalism: The Incommensurability of the Intersectional

Before proceeding, it is necessary to clarify how I intend to use the term "decolonization". As Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang explain in their seminal article, decolonization is a term that has been overused, misused, and abused to the point that it has become a catch-all phrase which can simultaneously mean everything and nothing. To avoid the danger of decolonization becoming a "metaphor", they provide a definition of the term that centres land repatriation.[7] Any definition that ignores the element of land effectively recasts (whether directly or indirectly, consciously or unconsciously) settler colonial claims to land and resources – and all the concomitant power structures, systems of oppression, and imperial ways of seeing – in a new, more palatable guise.

This definition is key to any history of food. Food is inseparable from land. Food justice advocate Zoe Matties writes that Canada's "origin story" is ultimately one about, "land gained by settler

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[5] Ibid, 21.

[6] Sherman Jackson*, Islam and the Blackamerican: Looking toward the Third Resurrection* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), 17.

[7] Eve Tuck and K. Wayne Yang, "Decolonization is not a metaphor," *Decolonization, Indigeneity, Education & Society* 1, no. 1 (2012): 1.

people, and land lost to Indigenous peoples".[8] Because food production is inevitably tied to land access and management, the story of food mirrors the story of land: it is a story of foodways gained by settler people, and lost to Indigenous peoples. I say "foodways" and not "food" because the very assumption of food as a finite resource – nothing more than a by-product of an environment 'out there' to be managed in a zero-sum game of diminishing returns – reveals a Eurocentric bias that views food, like land, as a commodity. Yet, in my view, neither land nor its 'byproducts' can be individually 'owned' or parceled out; they are less products of a material world, and more the after-effects of relationships with living, interconnected beings.

This brings me to an important juncture where I must situate myself and reflect on why I am writing this piece. I am not indigenous to North America. I write as a relative newcomer and therefore settler to North America, even as I recognize and continue to bear my (doubly) colonized past from another continent. These experiences do not entitle me to insert myself into the decolonizing efforts of another context, or to comment on the struggle of others who have tried to do so before me. What pushes me to proceed is the intuition that decolonization is not something any one of us can 'opt out' of. We all exist and subsist on land, in land, and with land. Whether we choose to acknowledge or disregard that relationship does not make it any less real. Despite my discomfort with the task at hand, I hope that my background and thought on this topic have provided me with the sensitivity to make my observations, however tentative, in the spirit of inviting further conversation.

At the heart of this article is a question of solidarity, allyship, and intersectional social justice – indeed, the very viability of all of these is at stake. As both settler and immigrant, I find myself grappling with the many 'faces' of colonialism, as did Salloum a generation before me. Immigrants have the unique experience of being displaced by (neo)colonialism in one time and place, only to find themselves dispossessing other people in another time and place. Even though the benefits of being a settler are not distributed evenly or experienced similarly by people of colour, the result is the same – all "occupy and settle stolen Indigenous land".[9] As Tuck and Yang observe, "This tightly wound set of conditions and racialized, globalized relations exponentially complicates what is meant by decolonization, and by solidarity, against settler colonial forces".[10]

Sitting with these overlapping tensions and frictional identities is difficult, but if we accept that decolonization is supposed to be unsettling, then perhaps that is a sign that we are doing something right. Resisting the tendency to collapse all social justice work into a single, overarching umbrella of coalition politics is perhaps a first step to decolonizing the sphere for both academics and practitioners. It challenges the tendency to see ourselves in a single, non-normative category of 'Other'. This move, which Tuck and Yang call "colonial equivocation", is counterproductive in

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[8] Zoe Matties, "Unsettling Settler Food Movements: Food Sovereignty and Decolonization in Canada" Cuizine: The Journal of Canadian Food Cultures 7, no. 2 (2016): par. 2.
[9] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization," 7.
[10] Ibid, 7.

that it levels all social justice causes and erases the distinctions of each struggle.[11] It can also have the inadvertent effect of pitting different causes against each other. Comparing what are fundamentally incommensurate experiences perpetuates a kind of hierarchy of suffering and a case of 'who has it worse' of colonial violence. As such, for the purposes of this article, I bear in mind that decolonization on the one hand, and anti-Orientalism on the other, are related but ultimately separate projects. Each is discrete, unique, and must be assessed on its own terms. Connections can be made, parallels drawn and noted, but the root impulse remains to "attend to what is irreconcilable" and maintain "what is incommensurable",[12] rather than to collapse, conflate, or make a melting pot of colonial grievances. When in doubt, I will attempt to "unsettle [my own] innocence"[13] and recognize my privilege wherever and however much of it exists.

The struggles I face as an immigrant today are in many ways like those Salloum grappled with a generation or two ago, although he did not operate in the same "logosphere"[14] or use the same language to name and identify his experiences. This raises the question of the extent to which it is helpful or, indeed, even feasible, to label Salloum as a decolonizing or anti-Orientalist writer if he did not identify himself as such. While his cookbooks, published between 2005 and 2013, were released after these terms came to have their present-day significance (roughly in the 1960 and 1970s),[15] they represent a lifetime of reflecting on his experiences, from the 1930s to the 2010s. The question is: is doing so an anachronism?

At least for Edward Said, the answer can be found in the definition of Orientalist he himself provides: "Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient."[16] This "style of domination" existed long before it was recognized and named. His labeling of an ancient Greek play like Aeschylus's *The Persians*, for example, as "Orientalist" is a back-projection to understand what the phenomenon of Orientalism is. Does Said read Orientalism into the vast corpus of literary and political works he studies? Is it a genuine discovery within the texts or is it equally a creation imposed upon them from without? This is ultimately a line of inquiry that concerns hermeneutics, but for the purposes of this article, I resist taking an 'either/or' resolution of this question and opt instead for a 'both/and' approach. As I delve into his writing, I invite you to think of Salloum's cookbooks both

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[11] Ibid, 17.

[12] Ibid, 4.

[13] Ibid, 4.

[14] Mohammed Arkoun, *The Unthought in Contemporary Islamic Thought* (London: Saqi Books, 2002): 12.

[15] "Orientalism" was coined by Edward Said in 1978. "Decolonization" as a term is harder to date. I refer here not to the process of colonial governments 'granting' independence to ex-colonies, but rather the growing recognition of the need to decolonize language, literature, culture, even the mind. Globally, many scholars have marked the movement with the publication of Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth* in 1961. In the Canadian context, some commentators single out the 1972 policy paper "Indian Control of Indian Education" prepared by the Assembly of First Nations (then the National Indian Brotherhood) for the Ministry of Indian Affairs and Northern Development as a landmark work.

[16] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978): 11.

as prototypical anti-Orientalist works as well as a living repertoire that can be drawn from and built on today, in a 'post-Orientalism' context. The same can be said of decolonial strategies prior to the emergence of "decolonization" as a technical term in the social sciences.

Nevertheless, my suggested labeling should still be taken with a grain of salt. Consider it a method for experimenting with what might happen, should we read Salloum's cookbooks using this lens. One thing, however, should be clear. In identifying the ways in which Salloum's writing and thought is 'decolonial' or 'anti-Orientalist', the goal is not to impose modern sensibilities onto a different time and then proceed to critique him on that basis, but rather to explore how some of the earliest Arab immigrants to this country engaged with and navigated the colonial legacy they unwittingly inherited. That Salloum noted the "exponentially complicated" nature of colonial systems[17] before the language existed to name them both speaks to the thorough embeddedness of the colonial enterprise while at the same time foreshadowing his missteps.

Salloum's family emigrated during the interwar years, after a grueling journey from what was then Greater Syria. They were part of several waves of Arab immigration to Canada that took place from 1892 to the Second World War.[18] Most Arab immigrants settled in Ontario or Quebec, making Salloum's parents outliers who instead homesteaded in Saskatchewan and mostly worked as peddlers.[19] When they first set foot in the prairies in 1928, the Arab population in Canada was between 10,000 and 15,000.[20]

A decade before their arrival, in 1908, immigration policy restrictions had been relaxed to facilitate the wave of immigration that ultimately brought Salloum and his family. Prior to 1908, "immigrants belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of Canada," including Arabs who were then classified under the category of Asiatics,[21] were prevented from settling in Canada. Other measures designed to limit immigrants from the Middle East and especially South Asia included restrictions against those whose route to Canada included stopovers, a requirement to have a minimum of $200 upon arrival, and a broader, vaguely codified reluctance to admit people of "Asiatic" race.[22]

The following decades would witness a fight to lift restrictive immigration laws, in which Salloum played the part of intermediary in his role as editor of Arab journals and newsletters in the 1930s and as a participant in civic associations like the Canadian-Arab Friendship Society (CAFS) in the

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[17] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization," 7.

[18] Darcy Zabel, *Arabs in the Americas: Interdisciplinary Essays on the Arab Diaspora*, (New York: Peter Lang, Inc., 2006), 8.

[19] Baha Abu-Laban, "Economic Adaptation of Arab-Canadians," *Arab Studies Quarterly* 1, no. 3 (1979): 201.

[20] Houda Asal, "Transnationalism, State's Influence, and the Political Mobilizations of the Arab Minority in Canada," trans. Sarah Abel, *in A Century of Transnationalism: Immigrants and Their Homeland Connections*, eds. Nancy L. Green and Roger David Waldinger, (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2016), 164.

[21] Ibid, 164.

[22] Brian Aboud, "Re-Reading Arab World-New World Immigration History: Beyond the Prewar/Postwar Divide," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 26, no. 4 (2000): 653–73; Baha Abu-Laban, *An Olive Branch on the Family Tree: The Arabs in Canada* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1980), 65-7; Asal, "Transnationalism," 167.

1960s.[23] Their struggles came to fruition in the 1967 *Immigration Act* which stated that "the citizens of most Middle Eastern countries...be treated as Europeans rather than Asians."[24] The significance of the legal Europeanization of Arabs relates to their ongoing struggles to socially and culturally Canadianize, that is become (Euro-)Canadians, a topic Salloum engages with directly in his culinary decolonization agenda. His debut cookbook, *Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead*, demonstrates this assimilationist tendency most clearly.

The Hyphenated Homesteader in *Arab Cooking*

Of Salloum's three cookbooks, *Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead* (2005) is the earliest. Salloum details his family history during the homesteading years with a different food item to set up each chapter, featuring titles like "Burghul: The Cornerstone of Our Diet in the Depression Years" and "The Joys of Saskatoons during our Farming Years". The preface makes clear that, for Salloum, the motivation behind writing the book was driven by a desire to establish and normalize the narrative of Arab settlement in Canada. The central message emphasized in the preface and repeated throughout the book is that the Arab "saga is no different from many other tales in [Western] Canada."[25] Salloum lamented that while "[m]uch has been written about the innumerable ethnic minorities that make up the Canadian mosaic...one must search almost in vain to find the Arab element in the picture."[26] In writing the microhistory of his own family, Salloum hoped to vocalize the missing experiences of Arab homesteaders in mainstream thought and illustrate that Arab experiences were, in fact, representative of the broader Canadian one.

To this end, Salloum describes his experience growing up in 1930s Saskatchewan in a way that stresses its Canadianness. For instance, he describes the trajectory of his childhood and adolescent years, taking readers through his humble prairie school days, to trapping as a teenager, to his eager excitement for visits to town. Likewise, his passage to manhood was duly marked by his first move to a big city, Moose Jaw, to attend the Technical Institute and his service with the Royal Canadian Air Force during the Second World War.[27] He describes his eagerness to permanently settle down in a metropolis and he and his siblings' successful relocation to urban centres from Vancouver to Toronto. In some ways, the broad themes of this story, from the fight of 'man against nature' to settlement and urbanization, are themselves reminiscent of a colonial trajectory.

While the broad strokes of his story read no differently from many boys and young men in Saskatchewan at the time, Salloum takes care to embellish and add enough detail to remind his readers that, as Canadian as his story was, it was nonetheless *Arab*-Canadian. For instance, as a child, his equivalent of Lewis Carroll's bedtime tales was listening to his parents' tell the story of their long journey from Qaraoun, their home village in mandate Syria-Lebanon, through France to

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[23] Ibid, 174.
[24] Zabel, *Arabs in the Americas*, 8.
[25] Salloum, *Arab Cooking*, vii.
[26] Ibid, vii.
[27] Ibid, 9.

Saskatchewan.[28] In the same vein, Salloum revisits memories of the lunches his mother would prepare, food he was embarrassed to eat in front of his peers with their "neat sandwiches."[29] While neighbours and visitors would look forward to exotic dishes his mother cooked like roasted rabbit, Salloum would crave bologna.[30] Even his descriptions of the weather were not excluded from this two-way treatment. Salloum poetically recalls, "As a youth in Saskatchewan I remember thinking, / Why did my parents come and bring us in tow, / From the far Syrian desert with sands blowing, / To the Saskatchewan desert of wind and snow?"[31] Similarly, in painting the scene of the Dust Bowl for his readers, Salloum writes "the soil blew back and forth like the deserts of Arabia,"[32] invoking the recurring image of an Arabian desert night, even as he used it to describe a Saskatchewan landscape.

Salloum's knack for drawing lines between 'East' and 'West' in clever, insightful ways extends beyond personal anecdotes and lyrical weather forecasts to the recipes themselves. In the blurbs before each recipe, we can find Salloum comparing English chips drizzled in vinegar and North American fries drenched in ketchup, to the Arab version of "fried potatoes with garlic and lemon."[33] He shares recipes for Christmas *baklawa*, and reminds farmers who are left with hundreds of pumpkins after Halloween that they can always turn to making pumpkin *kubba*.[34] He even compares *kubba* to Australian tartares and *tajines* to French *etouffe*.[35] Occasionally, his parallels between Western and Middle Eastern cuisines go so far as to declare the Arab version superior. As an example, "qawarma scrambled eggs makes [such] a fine breakfast dish...it puts bacon and eggs to shame."[36] According to Salloum, Arabs stews cannot compare to their Western counterparts because they "generate a delicate texture…which most Western stews fail to produce."[37] Meanwhile, Iraqi and Iranian *kufta* simply "puts the standard North American hamburger and all its relatives to shame."[38] Sometimes, Salloum uses Western figures to endorse the unmatched merits of a particular food, like when he tells us that Charlemagne loved fenugreek so much, he had it grown on his imperial farms.[39] Later, he recounts the story of an North African student and friend studying at the Sorbonne who found the couscous prepared in French restaurants to be better-tasting and more authentic than North African restaurants, proving that "couscous had become an integral part of the French kitchen."[40] With these constant references to Western traditions in his recipes for Middle Eastern food, Salloum balances the twin strategies of "domesticating and foreignizing," of making his food and anecdotes familiar as well as as making

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[28] Ibid, 2.
[29] Ibid, 41.
[30] Ibid, 273.
[31] Ibid, 1.
[32] Ibid, 5.
[33] Ibid, 210.
[34] Ibid, 38.
[35] Salloum, *Bison Delights*, 85.
[36] Salloum, *Arab Cooking*, 108.
[37] Ibid, 220.
[38] Ibid, 120.
[39] Salloum, *Bison Delights*, 99.
[40] Ibid, 126.

them exotic (enough).[41] This balancing act in itself indicates that to be the cultural translator he presents himself as, it was necessary for Salloum to indulge his readers in the new – Arabness – without losing sight of the bedrock of Saskatchewanness, Canadianness, or Westernness that they shared.

The 'East/West' juggling act applies just as much to trends in the narrative of each food staple Salloum weaves at the start of each chapter. Each section includes a brief history of the food, tracing how it moved from ancient times to the modern day, finally arriving in the Middle East and North America. Often, Middle Eastern foods were introduced to Europe via medieval Spain or carried to North America by immigrants or African slaves. After painting a rough historical image, Salloum follows up by sharing relevant family anecdotes of the dish, outlining its health benefits and almost always ending by redeeming the food from the days in his youth when he was too embarrassed to indulge in it. Each of these steps acknowledges the 'West' as a framework and standard, and in doing so, shortens the distance between 'East' and 'West' to make the Arab more accessible. As an example, Salloum points out that many words for foods and spices are Arabic in origin.[42] He describes the equivalent of Latin America's 'Three Sisters' subsistence food which, in an Arab kitchen, are chickpeas, lentils and burghul. He draws on Western biomedicine to explain the health benefits of Arab foods, like garlic, quoting the *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition*, studies done at American research centres, and historical figures of Western science like Louis Pasteur.[43] Salloum refers to the growing prevalence of Arab foods in supermarkets and health food stores in the West as if to indicate the value of these foods. In this twist of using Western biomedicine to validate age-old Middle Eastern knowledge, Salloum recognizes biomedicine as the standard and works within its parameters, using it as a measure of credibility and socio-political currency to further his goals of integrating Middle Eastern food – and people – into the existing structure. Whether it is French monarchs or Western biomedicine, Salloum consistently adopts accepted norms to situate himself squarely in Saskatchewan, Canadian, and European history.

Reclaiming the Mythical 'Orient' in *Sweet Delights* and *Scheherazade's Feasts*

Throughout his cookbooks, Salloum draws on stereotypical images of 'the Orient' to draw in a popular audience, even using "Orient" and "Middle East" interchangeably at times.[44] A reader has only to glance at the titles *Sweet Delights from One Thousand and One Nights* (2010) and *Scheherazade's Feasts* (2013) to see Salloum wielding these symbols. The former work is a compilation of Arab desserts dating back to the Middle Ages while the latter lists both sweet and savory recipes from medieval Arab centres in Iberia, Persia and the Near East, concluding with a menu of items fit for a caliph's table.

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[41] Waïl Hassan, *Immigrant Narratives: Orientalism and Cultural Translation in Arab American and Arab British Literature* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 29.

[42] James Peter and Habeeb Salloum, *Arabic Contributions to the English Vocabulary* (Selbstverl., 1973), viii; Salloum, *Bison Delights*, 88.

[43] Ibid, 116.

[44] Salloum, *Arab Cooking,* 123.

The most oft-repeated Orientalist trope Salloum's cookbooks refer to is Arab hypersexuality. An overwhelming number of foods and spices are associated with sex and fertility. Among them are nutmeg which, according to Salloum, "has always been regarded highly as an aphrodisiac…[that] the Yemenites consume in large amounts to increase fertility."[45] Another is chickpeas, "a cure for impotence and a first-rate sexual stimulant."[46] Speaking of the benefits of olive oil for complexion, he invokes the image of Cleopatra who "always had an olive oil massage before her trysts with Caesar and Anthony."[47] On numerous occasions, Salloum references a twelfth-century Arab sex manual called *The Perfumed Garden* to assert that one or another vegetable or spice has been used as a sexual stimulant since the ancient Arabs. Even visual depictions of dinners in Arab countries are steeped in this language, such as this vivid portrayal of a meal in Yemen: "When we arrived, it seemed that we had landed in one of the stories in *One Thousand and One Arabian Nights*. The mouth-watering aromas float[ed] around us…as we feasted on the foods of this ancient land from whence hailed the Queen of Sheba."[48] At times, Salloum is so bold as to promise that the pages of his cookbook "will titillate the palate."[49]

Salloum's application of these run-of-the-mill Orientalist tropes raises the question: to what extent is Orientalism performed by an 'Oriental' empowering? Waïl Hassan, scholar of Arab literature and intellectual history, explains the predicament of Arab writers who find themselves with no choice but to engage directly with Orientalism, the literary elephant in the room. They must "validate Orientalism or risk being ignored by publishers, reviewers or readers."[50] Operating in the space between two worlds, Salloum and others in his position find both a threat and opportunity in the prevailing stereotypes of Arab people. Even though Orientalism "condemn[s] them to an inferior position in the cultural hierarchy...it also afford[s] them an entry into the [Canadian] scene."[51] So long as he navigated these two spheres successfully, Salloum could use popular Orientalist symbols to gain enough credibility within the mainstream imperial structure before pursuing an opposite agenda.

The consequence of facing Orientalism head-on is a taking back of the stereotypical language and imagery of harems, hypersexualized Arabs, and sexual deviance from their Western origins and regaining control of Orientalist representations and their meanings. Salloum revisits with fresh eyes the same harems, orchids and caliphs' courts tainted by negative associations of Orientalism, and instead appreciates them for the extent of their medical knowledge, the ingenuity of their architecture, or the sophistication of their cuisines.[52] As such, ignoring dominant social views of

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[45] Ibid, 123.
[46] Ibid, 76.
[47] Ibid, 175.
[48] Salloum, *Bison Delights*, 66.
[49] Salloum*, Arab Cooking*, 237.
[50] Hassan, *Immigrant Narratives*, 13.
[51]Ibid, 21.
[52] Habeeb Salloum, Muna Salloum, and Leila Salloum Elias, *Sweet Delights from a Thousand and One Nights: The Story of Traditional Arab Sweets* (London: IBTauris, 2010), 6; Habeeb Salloum, Muna Salloum, and Leila Salloum Elias, introduction to *Scheherazade's Feasts: Foods of the Medieval Arab World* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2013).

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Arabs – as discriminatory as they may be – still leaves control of them with the same hegemonic forces that ushered in colonization. Meanwhile, bringing them back into Arab jurisdiction begins the lengthy, uncomfortable process of divesting them of their proclaimed power and disarming them as stereotypes.

Regaining power of long-standing prejudices is no easy feat, especially considering the longevity of physical and psychological imperialism that left its mark in the minds of colonized peoples. Grappling with this ingrained inferiority complex forms a consistent theme in Salloum's writing. According to Salloum, his parents were convinced that their culture was inferior,[53] preferring to "keep their dishes hidden away…well-concealed should an unexpected neighbour arrive" because "Arabic food was something to be ashamed of."[54] Like other immigrants, Salloum's mother "believed that [Arab] food was not good enough for the palate of non-Syrians," opting instead to serve European dishes to her non-Arab guests.[55] The feeling of inferiority passed to the children, who, in ensuing years, "tried desperately to become part of the Anglo-Saxon world."[56] Their family, however, was not alone; Salloum tells us that most Syrian immigrants "wanted to become white," to be "undeniably Canadians."[57] Considering the anti-Arab climate where Salloum grew up, a time when articles in *Popular Science Monthly* called Middle Eastern homesteaders "parasites from the Near East [who] do not compare favourably even with the Chinese,"[58] it is no wonder that Salloum and his siblings were instilled with a strong desire to "Canadianize." Anglicising their names, hiding their ethnic recipes, and shunning their Arabness was an unfortunate, though unsurprising consequence of the anti-Arab and broader anti-immigrant rhetoric of the day.

Interestingly, food is sometimes saved from this culturally devastating tendency. Salloum notes that even as "Arabic virtually disappears amongst the third generation...all that remains are a few mispronounced words for items of food"[59] and a collection of fond memories of Arab cooking.[60] He jokingly (and no less profoundly) asserts that "traditions, language, and the Arab way of life all may be forgotten, but not the various types of kubbas."[61] Research by sociologist Baha Abu-Laban corroborates this. Abu-Laban's study found that the aspect of culture most likely to be retained by descendants of Arab immigrants is cooking and eating Arab food.[62] For Salloum, it was exposure to urban life, travel, and education that brought him to treasure his roots once again: "The city and its educational institutions gave me the *dignity* that my homesteading years had erased" (emphasis added). A growing knowledge of Arab contributions and accomplishments

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[53] Salloum, *Arab Cooking*, vii.
[54] Ibid, 18-19.
[55] Ibid, 253.
[56] Ibid, 10.
[57] Ibid, 13.
[58] Ibid, 3.
[59] Ibid, 15.
[60] Ibid, 19.
[61] Ibid, 18.
[62] Abu-Laban, *An Olive Branch*, 213-14.

made Salloum proud "to tell the world about this renowned civilization"[63] and sparked a lifelong commitment to reviving his Arab heritage and writing these cookbooks in the process. Looking back, Salloum reflects on "how foolish [they] were" to conceal their Arab dishes and Arab identities instead of acquainting others with them.[64] Reasserting ownership over the recipes he now shares widely with non-Arab readers, the same recipes that he once shunned in favour of becoming more Euro-Canadian, brings Salloum full circle. This cycle of rejection followed by transformation is characteristic of the decolonizing process. Salloum takes back the same symbols, narratives, and foods that signified for him Arab inferiority and uses them as a means of elevation and revitalization.

"Colonial Equivocation" in *Bison Delights*

Combined with the strategies of, on one hand, adopting narratives of the 'West' in general and the Canadian West in particular, and on the other, recovering representations of the Orient, Salloum's final decolonizing move is the most complex – he attempts to create an affiliation between Arab struggles and the plight of Indigenous people. This is especially clear in *Bison Delights* (2010), a cookbook based entirely on this premise. The front jacket asserts that differences between 'East' and 'West' can perhaps be reconciled using the history of Indigenous communities as a 'case study' to draw parallels: "Middle East and Prairie West meet – deliciously – in this cookbook of over 100 bison recipes." In the recipes that follow, Salloum seems to make the gastronomical argument that, if something as Arab as *kubba* and as Western and North American as bison can come together to make a delicious culinary masterpiece, then perhaps also the meeting of 'East/West' does not have to entail a "clash of civilizations."[65]

To this end, Salloum retells history in such a way that connects the Arab minority in Canada with Indigenous Canadians in the minds of his readers. In providing the historical background of Arab nomads and Plains First Nations in his introduction to entrées, he concludes by stating, "The recipes that follow...arise out of and pay homage to the rich culinary histories of both the Middle East and the Prairie West, and they promise to delight the sophisticated, modern diner even as they nourished and sustained *our* ancestors in both hemispheres for hundreds of generations" (emphasis added).[66] He directly conflates the two histories and even the ancestral chains of Arab and Indigenous people. Salloum likewise echoes sentiments expressed in *Arab Cooking* in discussing the health benefits of Arab staples when he explains that Indigenous people, too, were aware of the nutritional value of bison meat, even though it has been recently 'discovered' in mainstream cooking.[67] In doing so, he suggests that both Arab and Indigenous communities share a history of

[63] Salloum, *Arab Cooking*, 16.
[64] Ibid, 88.
[65] Samuel P. Huntington, *The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998).
[66] Salloum, *Bison Delights*, 104.
[67] Ibid, 5.

culinary disenfranchisement that brings them together and is only beginning to be remedied in Western kitchens today.

Interestingly, *Bison Delights* seems to be missing a critical discussion or acknowledgement of the significance of buffalo to the Indigenous communities with whom Salloum attempts to ally. The decimation of bison populations in the prairies went together with the genocide of First Nations. James Daschuk, in an award-winning study of Indigenous health on the plains, goes further in stating the "disappearance of bison" was "the single greatest environmental catastrophe" to strike the region.[68] Not only was bison a key species in prairie ecology and bison meat a central subsistence food for Plains communities, but the buffalo is also sacred to the cosmologies of many First Nations, including the Lakota and Cree.[69] As interdisciplinary researcher Danielle Mamers observes, colonialism operates (and continues to operate) in the way in which relationships between humans and non-humans are characterized and ordered. The commodification of plants and animals and the refusal to see them as anything more than property is a form of intellectual colonialism that "[reproduces] settler colonial claims, institutions, and lifeways."[70] Arguably, Salloum's oversight in privileging a 'secular', non-spiritual, or disembodied view of bison perpetuates a settler worldview of human/non-human relations. This view places humans at the top of a pyramid of species and sees humans as transcendent 'masters' over the environment, instead of one species among many, all woven into it and acting within it as much as it acts on them.

Elsewhere, Salloum attempts to strike an Arab-Indigenous alliance by acknowledging his own prejudices and sharing his experience 'unlearning' much of what he internalized as a child. Part of the Canadianization discussed above involved reusing the same stereotypes and imitating the same racist thinking of those "[he] thought were real Canadians"[71] in his youth. Consider the two passages below:

> Feeling inferior, we [copied] everything our classmates said or did. This was especially true when it came to our attitudes of First Nations people. Even when we were by ourselves, we wanted to be accepted as real Canadians which, in our minds at that time, meant looking down on others, and who was better to bash than the Indians?[72]

> We never dreamed that the land we lived on had been taken away from its millennia-old inhabitants...In our minds, the people who left these remains *were not humans like*

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[68] James Daschuk, *Clearing the Plain: Disease, Politics of Starvation, and the Loss of Aboriginal Life* (University of Regina Press, Regina: 2013), 99.

[69] Ken, Zontek, "Sacred Symbiosis: The Native American Effort to Restore the Buffalo Nation," (PhD diss. University of Idaho, 2003), 4-5.

[70] Danielle Taschereau Mamers, "Human-Bison Relations as Sites of Settler Colonial Violence and Decolonial Resurgence," *Humanimalia* 10, no. 2 (2019): 10.

[71] Salloum, *Arab Cooking*, 7.

[72] Ibid, 6.

> *ourselves*. They were like fictitious characters in the tales from the *Arabian Nights* stories that our mother often related during the cold winter evenings. [73]

Once again, in the second passage, Salloum indicates an immanent sense of solidarity between Arab and Indigenous struggles, in this case by pointing out that both have been victims of Western dehumanization and mystification, giving rise to Orientalized Arabs as well as "Dead Indians"[74] as Thomas King terms them – in either case, fictionalized versions of the 'original'.

What is more, in the first passage, Salloum notes that in wanting to become 'Canadian,' he had to recycle the logic of supremacy and imitate imperial ways of seeing. By sharing this story, Salloum hoped to remedy the errors of his youth and dismantle Indigenous stereotypes in one stroke. Writing this cookbook was his way of coming to terms with the prejudices he grew up with and perhaps also compensating for them, while furthering his anti-Orientalist goals all along. His attempt to strike an Arab-Indigenous alliance of sorts is reminiscent of one of the "settler moves to innocence" discussed by Tuck and Yang, and cited above, called "colonial equivocation". They describe it as the tendency to group "all struggles against imperialism as 'decolonizing' [which] creates a convenient ambiguity between decolonization and social justice work, especially among people of color, queer people, and other groups minoritized by the settler nation-state."[75] Salloum attempts to gain currency and credibility for his own anti-Orientalist project by aligning himself with Indigenous decolonization efforts. The problem with this, however, is that by taking a "multicultural approach to oppressions", one must inevitably remain silent on the points of contention between the two – the points of "incommensurability"[76] – such as the continued settling and occupying of Indigenous land by immigrants or "arrivants" themselves.[77] As Tuck and Yang observe, a "'multicultural' approach to oppressions" remains "ambivalent about minority / people of colour / colonized Others *as settlers*"[78] (emphasis in original).

Aside from the theoretical issues with conflating anti-Orientalism and decolonization, even if we were to take Salloum's decolonizing strategy at face value, we would see that it still falls short. In fact, it is interesting to take note of when Salloum – perhaps unconsciously – fails to entirely reject imperial attitudes, retaining or reifying it in some way. For instance, in his depiction of 1930s Saskatchewan farm life, he re-perpetuates the empty land myth, an imperial creation that views the land as a blank slate ripe for the taking. Salloum repeatedly uses the descriptors of "virgin land," "barren land," "unbroken prairie" and "empty land."[79] Correspondingly, in his attempts to imply a shared experience between Arabs and Indigenous peoples and portray the latter in an

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[73] Ibid, 7, emphasis added.

[74] Thomas King, *The Inconvenient Indian: A Curious Account of Native People in North America* (Toronto: Penguin Random House Canada, 2012).

[75] Tuck and Yang, "Decolonization," 17.

[76] Ibid, 28.

[77] Jodi Byrd, The Transit of Empire: Indigenous Critiques of Colonialism (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2011): xix.

[78] Tuck and Yang, 17.

[79] Salloum, *Arab Cooking*, 4.

empowering way, he paints an overly romantic and simplistic picture of their history. The preface of *Bison Delights* opens with these lines:

> For eons herds of bison roamed, lords of the prairie space,
> Their life and actions barely hindered by the human race,
> Then strangers with fire-spitting weapons came
> To conquer the land and the majestic herds erase...
> These few lines tell the sad tale of the North American bison.[80]

Salloum makes similar remarks in *Arab Cooking*:

> Following the migrating herds of buffalo from whom they derived almost all the necessities of life, they lived in a relatively secure world with their own laws, languages and religions. The culture in which they were immersed satisfied all their earthly and afterlife needs. However, since they left no records, by the time my parents and other newcomers had inherited their lands, it was as if they had never existed... [Comparing the decimation of Indigenous groups in the U.S. and Canada:] Canadian settlers were much more humane; they destroyed them unwittingly.[81]

Indigenous scholars, researchers, and activists could rightly take issue with the notion that their predecessors left no records. Salloum seems to presume that oral history is not a 'valid' method of preserving history, implicitly buying into the Eurocentric bias of favouring written and textual records over other, more embodied forms of memory. Likewise, he evokes the trope of the primitive, noble, peaceful Native (King's "Dead Indians"), and even fatalistic views of European conquest. Unfortunately, Salloum's take on Indigenous resistance is just as problematic: "After the defeat of the Riel Rebellion...the spirit of the proud Western Indian was broken…[he] lingered on the fringes of society." According to Salloum, Plains First Nations were doomed to be "ensnared by the white man's laws...never allow[ed] to climb out of the abyss in which they have fallen."[82] Such deterministic views – views that assume the inevitability of history, as well-intentioned as they may have been – demonstrate that even as Salloum wished to ally with Indigenous 'victims,' he inadvertently disempowered them by re-assigning them passive roles in the style of the very colonizers he sought to disarm. The imperial evidently runs far deeper than one might at first think and cannot be undone by the solitary efforts of one person.

Conclusion

As a cultural broker, Salloum has much in common with many minority restaurant owners across Canada today who offer their patrons hybrid food items[83] from butter chicken poutine to tex mex perogies. Salloum wielded this powerful ability to "reinvent [Middle Eastern food] for the white Canadian palate and serv[e] up exotic versions of the Orient."[84] He used it to tackle the stereotypes

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[80] Salloum, *Bison Delights*, ix.
[81] Salloum, *Arab Cooking,* 7.
[82] Ibid, 7-8.
[83] Iacovetta, Epp, and Korinek, *Edible Histories*, 165.
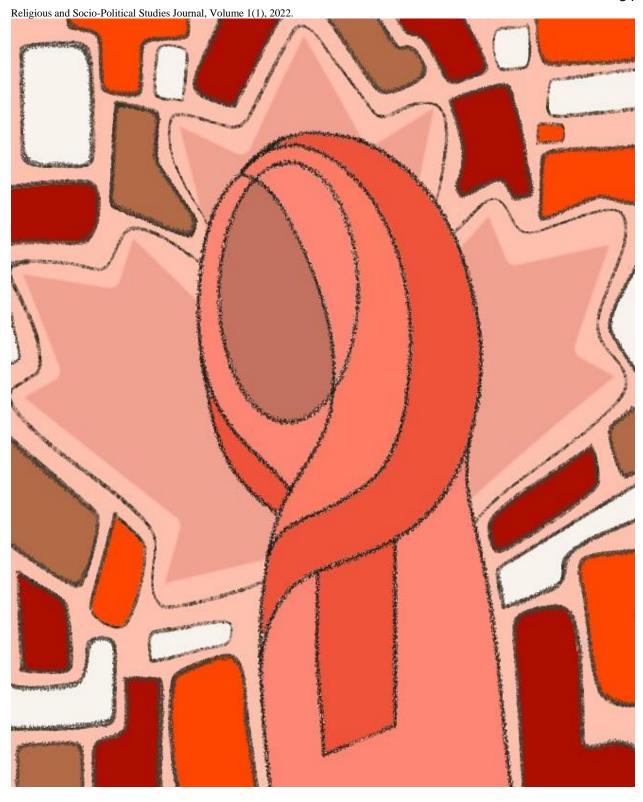[84] Ibid, 161.

that drew in his readership to begin with. His earliest work, *Arab Cooking on a Saskatchewan Homestead*, is concerned primarily with highlighting the ordinary Canadian quality of his family's homesteading experience from the difficult early days to successful harvests and from the Great Depression to urbanization. In later cookbooks including *Sweet Delights* and *Scheherazade's Feasts,* Salloum's attempts shift to turning Orientalist symbolism on its head by taking back ownership of iconic works like *One Thousand and One Nights* and representing them in new ways. Finally, Salloum links Arab and Indigenous experiences of colonization, exemplified in *Bison Delights*, to underscore the global nature of decolonizing efforts and the solidarity they require. Though it is questionable how far he succeeded in doing so, it nonetheless confirms the magnitude and ongoing, imperfect nature of the decolonizing task at hand.

The cookbook-memoirs of Habeeb Salloum illustrate that food is undoubtedly powerful. Immigrants, newcomers, and refugees to Canada continue to discover the value of food in breaking barriers, bridging gaps, and remembering the human side of ourselves in cases where it has been forgotten. Media coverage of pop-up Syrian restaurants is as a case in point. Take the caption of this *Globe and Mail* news article which reads "A couple of new Toronto businesses offering culinary delights from Aleppo and Damascus marks newcomers' entrance into Canadian society – and stomachs."[85] Salloum's writing has made similar findings: decolonizing kitchens is perhaps the humble first step to decolonizing societies, and decolonizing stomachs might just as surely lead to decolonizing minds and hearts.

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[85] Eleanor Davidson, "Syrian Newcomers Using Food to Tell the Story of Home, Find Their Way in Canada." *The Globe and Mail,* July 31, 2017, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/food-and-wine/food-trends/syrian-newcomers-add-another-layer-to-canadian-foodidentity/article35842744/.

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Daniyah Ali, *A Mosaic of Cultures,* 2021

Canadian Muslim Reactive Identity Formation in the Face of Discrimination: The Possibilities of Imagined Localities

Motahareh Nabavi

Abstract

This article looks at the reactive identity formation of Muslim Canadians amidst discrimination and othering. I probe into Canada's history of colonization and racism and the creation of the multicultural policy and explore how immigrant Muslims have formed their identity in reaction to this. I give attention to second-generation Muslims who have been understudied, but whose production of hybridized identities is crucial in this process. Finally, I reflect on circumstances of reactive identity formation of Canadian Muslims who strengthen their identity in the face of discrimination, and the new possibilities they create for Canada's multicultural society.

Keywords: reactive identity formation, multiculturalism, Muslims in Canada, second-generation Muslims, hybridized identities

Canada prides itself in being a multicultural nation, while most of its history holds instances of violence and discrimination against ethnic minorities, most recently in the form of anti-Muslim sentiment. In this article, I will look at the identity formation of Muslims in Canada amidst these narratives. Firstly, I briefly give an overview of Canada's history of colonization and multiculturalism. Then, I discuss different frameworks of identity development, and the importance of studying the geographies of Muslim identity formation. I go on to explore how Muslim identity forms in Canada amidst Islamophobic narratives and instances of discrimination. I then focus on the second-generation Canadian Muslims' identity formation and how it differs from the first generation, demonstrating their creative interaction within their sociocultural space. Finally, I reflect once again on Canada's multiculturalism considering Muslim Canadian identity formation.

Canada's History of Multiculturalism

Canada is a white settler colonial nation built on the elimination of, and discrimination against Indigenous communities. Settler colonialism is the forced occupation and establishment of systems of power and policy, to remove and eradicate the native Indigenous peoples of a land. White settler conceptions of colonial domination were strengthened by Enlightenment philosophy's belief in

western universalism.[1] Enlightenment philosophy, by placing logic and rationality above the intuitive, spiritual, and religious, created a supremacy complex for the Western world: "the belief that they were rational, progressive, civilized, and modern, while others were irrational, backwards, savage, and traditional."[2] These categorizations were "an equally political-ethnic act,"[3] - since this use of rationality created "security in and of thought," which is "deeply related to the security of selfhood and land: political security."[4] The West used rationality to secure their ethnic identity and power "through calls to expel and terminate that which is classified as the foreign, strange, and outlandish."[5]

This "nation building through controlling the other " is historically entrenched in Canada's sociopolitical culture, passed down from Western colonialism and orientalism.[6] Orientalism is the academic lens through which Western scholars subjugated and defined all "others." Orientalism is "colonialism's ideological arm," which essentializes, divides, and breaks down the beliefs and experiences of the other "to facilitate its colonial inscription."[7] Since the Enlightenment, race has been used as a political ideology by Western white nations to position themselves as superior over non-white communities, which are seen as backwards and savage. This narrative seeped into Canada's founding, as the white settlers positioned themselves as paternal caretakers of the Indigenous communities, justifying colonialism and genocide as civilizing tactics.

The idea that Canada is a progressive country is "Canada's Big Lie."[8] Métis author Chelsea Vowel calls this the "colonial imaginary," stating, "Canada has created an image of itself not so much on historical fact but on ideological interpretation… the idea that Canadian society is evolving and progressing is part of the colonial imaginary."[9] She argues that everything we learned about Canadian history is a lie, and says, "how can we possibly learn from the past when this country is so invested in whitewashing it?"[10]

Canada continued to explicitly "other" many immigrant populations through policy and discourse until a radical shift in the 1960s and 1970s when Canada established multiculturalism as a state policy. Under this narrative, Canada attempted to distance itself from its history of racism by

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[1] Avril Bell, "Recognition or Ethics? De/Centering and the Legacy of Settler Colonialism," *Cultural Studies* 22, no. 6 (2008).

[2] Motahareh Nabavi, "Creative Becoming(s): The Spiritual Development of Young Muslims in the West,*"* Master's thesis, (University of Ottawa, 2022), 26.

[3] Irfan Ahmad, *Religion as Critique: Islamic Critical Thinking from Mecca to the Marketplace* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2017), 45.

[4] Nabavi, "Creative Becoming(s)," 27.

[5] Ahmad, *Religion as Critique*, 37.

[6] Baljit Nagra, *Securitized Citizens: Canadian Muslims' Experiences of Race Relations and Identity Formation Post-9/11* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2017), 10.

[7] Hamid Dabashi, *Being a Muslim in the World* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Pivot, 2016), 29.

[8] Maxwell Sucharov, "The Ugly Truth to Canada's Big Lie: A Tale of Ongoing Settler Colonial Genocide of Canada's Indigenous Peoples and the Creation of an Apartheid State," *Psychoanalysis, Self and Context* 12, no. 2 (2022), 199.

[9] Chelsea Vowel, *Indigenous Writes: A Guide to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit Issues in Canada* (Brantford, ON: W. Ross MacDonald School Resource Services Library, 2018), 119.

[10] Ibid, 122.

positioning itself as a liberal democratic nation providing equal treatment and opportunity to all its citizens. Many scholars have critiqued this multicultural policy, however, arguing it is "a story Canada tells about itself" - that it's merely a façade to hide the country's colonial roots.[11] Hansen argues that "if Canada and Canadians had any particular talent for coping with diversity, then the country's oldest "minority"- Aboriginal Canadians- would be well incorporated into Canadian society and the Canadian economy."[12]

Bhabha stresses that we must not see colonialism as an event in the past, but rather as something ongoing that continues to function, hidden under liberal policies that support systems of oppression.[13] Canada's policy of multiculturalism, for example, is nothing but rhetorical, and the success of Canada's immigration policy "has nothing to do with multiculturalism and everything to do with admitting large numbers of highly skilled and highly educated immigrants."[14] Many academics argue that multiculturalism's focus on cultural diversity is a political tactic used to hide the marginalization of, and discrimination towards immigrants, while keeping them ignorant of Canada's racist history. In fact, multiculturalism's popularity is not due to the benefits of immigration, but to the national identity it provides Canadians as an ostensibly progressive and open society.[15] Thus, the development of Canada's multicultural policy functions more as a political tool of divergence, rather than a "genuine concern for equality."[16]

The contradiction of multiculturalism lies in its ideological ideals, versus its practical application. Though values of diversity, tolerance, and respect in a pluralistic society are highlighted, there is often a gap "between what multiculturalism promises and what it actually delivers."[17] While multiculturalism promotes diversity, differences are allowed only in a limited capacity and in conformity to the "Western project of nation building"—maintaining a façade of purity and superiority while hiding the history and ongoing impacts of colonialism.[18] With this brief introduction to Canada's history of multiculturalism, I turn to the main topic of this article: the study of Muslim identity formation in Canada, and the importance of studying identity development within sociocultural contexts.

Identity Development Frameworks

With the advent of modernity in the western world, the individual tended to become their own site of reason and meaning-making. No longer subject to a "dominant natural order," the individual

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[11] Nagra, *Securitized Citizens*, 46.
[12] Randall Hansen, "Why Both the Left and the Right Are Wrong: Immigration and Multiculturalism in Canada,"
PS: Political Science & Politics 50, no. 03 (July 2017), 712.
[13] Homi Bhabha, The Location of Culture (London: Routledge, 2004).
[14] Hansen, "Why Both," 714.
[15] Ibid.
[16] Nagra, Securitized Citizens, 46.
[17] Ibid, 47.
[18] Ibid, 48.

became "responsible for creating coherence and meaning herself."[19] Classical modern social theory and philosophy promoted a notion of an authentic self which existed inherently, waiting to be uncovered through the "existential search for personal meaning"[20] of the individual separate from dominant society. This individual notion of self was "substantial, essential, and unchanging, as implied by Cartesian, Kantian, and other Enlightenment conceptions of a rational and "'knowing' ego."[21] This modern identity presented a notion of a singular unified self motivated by an inner purpose towards an outer goal, based on the certainty of objective reason.

In the past six decades, we have moved from capitalist modernity demanding production to consumerist postmodernity necessitating consumption. Postmodernity comprises new frameworks of thinking in direct oppositions to the narratives of modernity. Opposing the essentialist, singular, certain, and individualist notions of modern identity, postmodernism posits identity as multiple, plural, uncertain, ever shifting, and deeply social. Postmodern theories of identity highlight the "fluidity and fragmented nature of personal identities"[22] against the essentialist modernist narratives that produced "strong individual/society dichotomy."[23] This non-essentialist postmodern notion of identity decenters the individual, highlighting the relational, multiple, and hybridized nature of identity, and is constantly in the process of being (re)created. While modernity chose to break the individual from the society, postmodernity sees identity as socioculturally contextualized.[24]

Both the modern and postmodern conceptions of identity provide only limited lenses, and the distinction between the two is not clear cut. The period of transition from modernity to postmodernity did not discard modernity, but rather expanded "the range of modernities."[25] Like Hadzantonis, I advocate for "a reality which does not confine us to one cultural worldview, but encourages us to include multiple cultural views," leading to a "pluralistic representation."[26] Following theorists who discuss multiple modernities and successive modernities, I agree that "stages of modernity are ideal types" which "should not be seen as progressive stages of an evolutionary path leading to the replacement of old models with new ones," since elements of previous types survive and different modernities "can overlap."[27] Jung points out that while

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[19] Kirstine Sinclair, "An Islamic University in the West and the Question of Modern Authenticity," in Muslim Subjectivities in Global Modernity: Islamic Traditions and the Construction of Modern Muslim Identities (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020), 150.

[20] Robert G. Dunn, "Modernity and Postmodernity Transformations in Identity Formation," in Identity Crises: A Social Critique of Postmodernity (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998), 55.

[21] Ibid, 55.

[22] Justin Gest, "Reluctant Pluralists: European Muslims and Essentialist Identities," Ethnic and Racial Studies 38, no. 11 (2014), 1874.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Larysa Zahrai, "Narrative Identity: Formation Mechanism," Journal of Vasyl Stefanyk Precarpathian National University 7, no. 2 (2020).

[25] Michael Hadzantonis, English Language Pedagogies for A Northeast Asian Context: Developing and contextually framing the transition theory (Taylor & Francis, 2017), 251.

[26] Ibid, 2.

[27] Fabio Vicini, "'Worship Is Not Everything:' Volunteering and Muslim Life in Modern Turkey," in Muslim Subjectivities in Global Modernity, ed. Dietrich Jung and Kirstine Sinclair (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020), 116.

modernity was meant to discard religion and tradition, not only did they not disappear, but "they determine to a large extent the ways in which modernization in historically concrete forms appears."[28] Therefore, we find that traditional, modern, and postmodern notions of identity persist to this day, along with other interpretations and frameworks.

For the purpose of this article, I largely, but not solely, adopt the postmodern framework, especially the notions of "hybridity, intermediacy, contingency, and multiple engagements" as opposed to monolithic and binary categorizations.[29] This "third space of negotiation promotes a creative becoming that is fluid, evolving, and encompassing, rather than static, bound, and exclusionary."[30] This development is socioculturally contextualized, highlighting the "emergence of identity through discourse and discursive action."[31] Identity is constructed through "intersubjective relations,"[32] in a dialogue between the self and the world, creating the self in the world. Hence, identity is socioculturally situated, contingent on an often-imagined locality.[33]

Identity Development and Geography

Prior to modernity, Muslims largely defined themselves and each other by their ethnic or cultural backgrounds. This changed in reaction to Western Enlightenment thought, where "Muslims" were identified as the savage "other," over which Western men were superior. Orientalist narratives depicted Muslim men as savage barbarians and Muslim women as oppressed victims of patriarchal culture. Since then, especially with increased immigration to the West and the aftermath of 9/11, "Muslim" became a significant marker of identity. Immigrant Muslims in diaspora, many of whom might not have identified with Islam previously, "rediscovered a new solidarity with their community," creating a newly deepened religious identity.[34]

Aitchison, Hopkins, & Kwan explore the importance and impact of time and place on Muslim identity construction by examining the geographies of Muslim identities.[35] They believe that like class and race, religion should be contextualized in time and space to be understood, as the context impacts "their intersections with gender, diaspora and belongings."[36] Since identity and development are place-based and impacted by the sociocultural environment, the development of Muslim identity is deeply tied to the political and social developments of their respective geographies.[37] Especially now that Muslims are spread all over the world, it becomes more

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[28] Dietrich Jung, "Modern Muslim Subjectivities: Theories, Concepts, and First Findings," in Muslim Subjectivities in Global Modernity: Islamic Traditions and the Construction of Modern Muslim Identities (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2020), 14.

[29] Hadzantonis, English Language, 3.

[30] Nabavi, "Creative Becoming(s)," 39.

[31] Ibid.

[32] Hadzantonis, English Language, 52.

[33] Ibid, 54.

[34] Zijad Delic, *Islam in the West: Beyond Integration* (Ottawa, Ontario: University of Ottawa Press, 2018), 16.

[35] Cara Aitchison, Peter Hopkins, and Mei-Po Kwan, "Introduction: Geographies of Muslim Identities" in Geographies of Muslim identities: diaspora, gender and belonging (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008).

[36] Ibid, 7.

[37] Safet Bectovic, "Studying Muslims and constructing Islamic identity," Ethnic and Racial Studies 34, no. 7 (2011).

imperative to study Muslim identity formation in different contexts. So far, very little work has been done on theorizing the processes of identity formation on Canadian Muslims, especially among second generation immigrants.[38]

Overview of Muslim Identity Formation in Canada

Since Muslim identity is tied to a specific time and place, I will now turn to the unique experiences of Muslim identity formation in Canada. I begin by exploring the media representation of Muslims and its impact. I then look at the immigration experience as naturally making individuals more religious, and finally at the reactive identity formation that has occurred amongst Muslims in Canada.

Media's Negative Portrayal of Muslims

Places hold multiple meanings, but the media is a key player "in attempts to fix the meaning of places."[39] The influence of mass media on the negative portrayal of Islam as a violent and regressive religion is undeniable.[40] Though this reductionist representation of Islam is deeply political, it is presented as value-free and objective journalism, which reproduces "dominant power relations where 'balance' equates to 'white (male) values."[41] These mainstream media narratives have serious impacts on the identity formation of immigrant Muslims.

Gendered depiction of Muslims continues to negatively impact both men and women in Canada, who fight these stereotypes daily. Muslim men are portrayed as dangerous, and Muslim women are deeply misrepresented as being repressed and passive victims of an oppressive culture.[42] Muslim women resist this notion, and those who wear the hijab proudly don it as an act of individual agency, similar to those who do not wear the hijab but still claim their rightful position as free Muslim women. Those who wear hijab do face the most discrimination, however, as "the hijab is seen as a direct challenge to Western notions of modernity, gender equality, and the Western model of cultural behaviour."[43] Furthermore, because Muslim women are seen as "weak and less likely to retaliate," they face more physical harassment than non-visible Muslims.[44]

Immigration as a Theologizing Experience

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[38] Delic, Islam in the West.

[39] Cameron McAuliffe, "Visible Minorities: Constructing and Deconstructing the Muslim Iranian Diaspora." in Geographies of Muslim Identities: Diaspora, Gender and Belonging (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2008), 51.

[40] Nagra, Securitized Citizens; Safet Bectovic, "Studying Muslims and Constructing Islamic Identity," Ethnic and Racial Studies 34, no. 7 (2011). https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2010.528782; Sahar Khelifa, "A Delicate Mosaic: The Future of Muslims in Canada," USURJ: University of Saskatchewan Undergraduate Research Journal 3, no. 2 (2017). https://doi.org/10.32396/usurj.v3i2.186.

[41] McAuliffe, "Visible Minorities," 31.

[42] Aitchison et al., "Introduction."

[43] Nagra, Securitized Citizens, 80.

[44] Ibid, 90.

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In recent decades, Islam moved "from being a homogenous majority religion to that of a heterogeneous minority," which necessitates the study of the different processes and contexts of Muslim identity formation.[45] Immigrant Muslims are a minority in Canada, and thus must actively construct the interpretation and practice of their religious identity. Since "immigration itself is often a theologizing experience," immigrants seek comfort in religious beliefs and practices in the face of alienation in a new land.[46] Religious community centres are built to create a familiar space, making religious narratives "the building blocks of individual and social identity."[47] This Muslim minority identity for immigrants can be vastly different from their identity in Muslim majority countries, "where religion may have been taken for granted."[48] Not only are immigrant Muslims internally driven to create this safe space in a foreign land for themselves, but they also feel externally pressured to become organized as a Muslim minority.[49]

Reactive Identity Formation

This external pressure became especially dominant after 9/11. Exploring the identity formation of Muslims in post-9/11 Canada, Nagra found that it was a complex and multifaceted social process "involving both societal and self-ascription."[50] She coined the term reactive identity formation as the social process of identity affirmation in the face of discrimination. The aftermath of 9/11 brought an onslaught of social discrimination towards Muslims fueled by the negative and violent portrayal of Islam in the media. In response to this discrimination and misrepresentation, many Muslims actively affirmed their Muslim identity by learning more about Islam and resisting mainstream ideologies. By using their individual agency to reclaim Islam, Muslims started giving precedence to their Muslim identity over other aspects of their identity, as well as "trying to be a positive example of a Muslim in interactions with other Canadians."[51] Many were forced to become more educated about Islam because of questions from others. Many felt they were stereotyped as being a one-dimensional member of a monolithic identity. By asserting their Muslim identity in the face of such discrimination, their affirmation became resistance, and their identity became emboldened. Resistance is thus an important part of reactive identity formation, as it allows Muslims to resist the abuse of Islam and reclaim their religion, which in turn strengthens their religious identity. Hence Nagra recognizes the complex social process of reactive identity formation, which involves both social forces and individual agency.[52]

The impacts of this reactive identity formation present themselves in the 2016 Environics study on Canadian Muslims, as 72% of Canadian Muslims consider Islam an important part of their identity, and 42% state that living in Canada positively affected their relationship with Islam, opposed to

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[45] Delic, Islam in the West, 22.
[46] Ibid, 20.
[47] Ibid.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Bectovic, "Studying Muslims."
[50] Baljit Nagra, "'Our Faith Was Also Hijacked by Those People': Reclaiming Muslim Identity in Canada in a Post-9/11 Era," Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies 37, no.3, (2011), 438.
[51] Ibid, 434.
[52] Ibid, 438.

5% who stated it had weakened it.[53] Hence, it appears that while Muslims are a minority who must claim their space and identity against negative sociopolitical narratives, this has in fact solidified their religious identity, which they proudly represent in Canadian society. While Muslims strengthened their Muslim identity in Canada, that does not deny that it occurred against negative narratives of Islam, especially within the media. In fact, 30% of Muslims reported having experienced discrimination in the past five years, which has not changed since the 2006 Environics report on Muslims. Muslims, especially women, reported that their primary concern was instances of discrimination by the broader community.[54] In spite of, or perhaps as a result of such discrimination and fear of it, Muslims have strongly claimed both their Muslim and Canadian identities proudly.

Identity Development of Young Muslims in Canada

Identity is actively grappled with during adolescence, and the ability for youth to come out with a well-developed sense of self creates a positive impact on both the individual and society. During this process, community recognition and acceptance is a big indicator of healthy identity formation. Since "the self is situated in culture" and the culture in the self, one's identity is formed within the cultural communities one is situated in.[55] Lack of approval and appreciation from one's cultural communities distorts an individual's self-image, creates a fragmented psyche, and denies the chance to function meaningfully in one's society.[56]

There have been very few studies that explore how religious identity is "constructed, developed, and enacted," especially by second-generation Muslims.[57] In this section, I look at the tensions that underlie young Muslims' identity formation in Canada, and how they overcome these obstacles. Muslim youth growing up in Canada struggle to create a holistic and unified sense of self while resisting binary identities projected onto them because of dichotomous narratives which essentialize and reduce both their Muslim and Canadian identities.[58] These narratives, utilized by both Western and Muslim officials and scholars, include East vs. West, religion vs. secularism, and tradition vs modernity; they play out politically and socioculturally, in the media and in mosques, in schools and in homes. Belonging, community, and acceptance play a crucial part in adolescent identity formation, but these clashing narratives create a distorted sense of belonging, community, and acceptance—if any at all. These narratives compel young Muslims to choose between abandoning Islam since it is at odds with their current context or withdrawing from their

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[53] Delic, Islam in the West.
[54] Khelifa, "Delicate Mosaic."
[55] Dianne Watt, "From the Streets of Peshawar to the Cover of Maclean's Magazine," Journal of Curriculum Theorizing 27, no. 1 (2011), 65.
[56] Abdullah A. Omar, "Islamic Identity in the Canadian Multicultural Context," Cultural and Pedagogical Inquiry 3, no. 2 (2012).
[57] Delic, Islam in the West, 28.
[58] Mona Abo-Zena, Barbara Sahli, and Christina Tobias-Nahi, "Testing the courage of their convictions: Muslim youth respond to stereotyping, hostility, and discrimination," in Muslim Voices in School: Narratives of Identity and Pluralism (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2009)

current context because it is at odds with Islam.[59] Thus, Muslim youth can face psychological distress, identity fragmentation, and a sense of alienation within their Canadian context and their Muslim communities.

Since 9/11, Islam has been seen as "inherently incompatible with Western cultures."[60] This tension can be felt everywhere by young Muslims. Within the school system and popular media, the Muslim identity is seen as homogeneous and myopic, which has caused many Muslim students to experience "alienation, marginalization, and a sense of 'othering.'"[61] The North American school curriculum has an orientalist view of Islam, Muslims, and the Middle East, deepening the sense of othering within the school environment. School curriculums largely depict Muslims and the Middle East as backwards, with oppressive males and oppressed females.[62] Sensoy and Marshall found that the books and stories studied about this region upheld colonial discourses, especially in their depictions of gender. These stories depict the colonizer as the paternalistic saviour figure, especially coming to the aid of oppressed Muslim women. This saving effort does not seek to "participate in the self-actualization of Muslim girls," but rather functions to "universalise a particular Western girlhood."[63] These stories essentially serve as soft weapons "in an ongoing imperial project."[64] These representations of Muslims, and especially Muslim women "rooted in the colonial discourse of patriarchal care in a Western gaze"[65] create deep-rooted negative consequences in the education of, and about, Muslims in the West. Muslims, or simply those from the Middle East and South Asia see themselves misrepresented through these narratives. Non-Muslims begin to understand the Muslim identity as represented through their education and Western media. These narratives, however, ignore the ways in which Western colonialism and domination has negatively impacted the lives of Muslims in the Middle East and contributed to their current sociopolitical conditions. They also ignore the patriarchal institutions that dominate the lives of girls in the West, and how Western liberal feminism "upholds colonial interest and conditions"[66] in which White women are seen as the saviour of helpless Muslim/Brown women.

Within their Muslim communities, youth are also frustrated due to the "lack of culturally relevant, age-appropriate, religious, and social programs."[67] At home, their parents place social restrictions on them due to their lack of acceptance of Western culture, and the fear that their children will lose

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[59] Marcia Hermansen, "Cultural worlds/culture wars: Contemporary American Muslim perspectives on the role of culture," Journal of Islamic Law and Culture 11, no. 3 (2009).

[60] Shaza Khan, "Integrating identities: Muslim American youth confronting challenges and creating change" in Muslim Voices in School: Narratives of Identity and Pluralism (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2009) 27.

[61] Ibid, 28.

[62] James A. Banks and Özlem Sensoy, "Middle Eastern Americans, Education Of," Essay. In Encyclopedia of Diversity in Education 3, 3:1498–1503. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc, 2012.

[63] Özlem Sensoy and Elizabeth Marshall, "Missionary Girl Power: Saving the 'Third World' One Girl at a Time," Gender and Education 22, no. 3 (2010), 301.

[64] Ibid, 302.

[65] Ibid, 308.

[66] Ibid.

[67] Sameera Ahmed, "Religiosity and Presence of Character Strengths in American Muslim Youth," Journal of Muslim Mental Health 4, no. 2 (2009), 106.

their religious identity through social participation in the West.[68] This forces Muslim youth to either reject their Western environment or renounce their religious identity due to its seemingly incompatibility with the West.[69]

Hybridity and Third Space

In the quest for the construction of a Muslim identity in a Canadian context, meanings and practices are reconstructed and renegotiated with every emerging generation, leading to "a multiplicity of normative expressions in Islam."[70] Thus, the biggest concern for young Canadian Muslims amidst creating their holistic identity is "the challenge of carrying many identities without feeling fragmented or in crisis."[71] Dichotomous narratives, on the other hand, create psychological distress and fragmentation for young Muslims due to the seeming incompatibility of their various identities. Muslim youth have the challenging task of resisting the weight of these narratives while having to simultaneously defend or explain both narratives, or choose one over the other to be relieved of the psychological burden.

Muslim youth, however, are not the passive victims of a "cultural clash and/or trapped in an identity crisis."[72] Despite these popular binary narratives, Muslim youth positively construct their identity as "active agents of their own cultural environment."[73] As they navigate through their challenges, they are engaged in "a constant (re)construction, (re)interpretation, and expression of their identities."[74] By destabilizing binary ways of thinking, they open a "third space" which is the fluid space of cultural hybridity.[75] This third space of cultural hybridity gives rise "to something different… a new area of negotiation of meaning and representation."[76] This in-between space is marked by "shifting psychic, cultural, and territorial boundaries."[77] Within this third space, Muslim youth gain newfound historical agency. Muslim identity can come out of its confines, not being controlled by traditionalist Muslims, who "contrast a romanticized past (tradition) against a demonized present (modernity),"[78] or vilified by Western orientalists. This hybridized Muslim identity can become "a productive tension filled with possibility."[79]

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[68] Ibid.
[69] Hermansen, "Cultural worlds/culture wars."
[70] Delic, Islam in the West, 23.
[71] Ibid, 26.
[72] Thijl Sunier, "Styles of Religious Practice: Muslim Youth Cultures in Europe," in Muslim Diaspora in the West: Negotiating Gender, Home and Belonging, (London: Routledge, 2016), 129.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Khan, "Integrating identities," 32.
[75] Homi Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity and Cultural Differences," in The Post-Colonial Studies Reader (London: Routledge, 1998).
[76] Homi Bhabha, "The Third Space," in Identity: Community, Culture, Difference (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990).
[77] Shahnaz Khan, Aversion and desire negotiating Muslim female identity in the diaspora (Toronto: Women's Press, 2002) 2.
[78] Nabavi, "Creative Becoming(s)," 29.
[79] Khan, Aversion, xvi.

Within this sociocultural third space, dichotomous narratives are contested and resisted, allowing for the emergence of a new Canadian Muslim identity. When young Canadians claim their Muslim identity and participate in Muslim communities, they do not do so quietly and submissively. Rather, they critique their Muslim communities and the older generations who maintain practices that are not aligned with young Muslims. They critique segregation within Muslim communities, popular interpretations of Islam, and instances of gender discrimination in their communities.[80] As such, the Muslim identity is continuously evolving and expanding to meet each new generation's needs, with outdated practices being interrogated and discarded.

A Reflection on Reactive Identity Formation and Multiculturalism

Since 9/11, Muslims have increasingly become the target of hate crimes and discrimination in Canada, fueled largely by the Canadian media's negative portrayal of Muslims, as well as government inaction, as they "failed to protect Muslim communities from the backlash that followed."[81] Canada had always been suspicious of the "other," and after 9/11, Muslims became the central figure that threatened an "already weak national Canadian identity."[82] These narratives have recently resulted in the tragic killing of a Muslim family in London in 2021, and the devastating Quebec Mosque shooting in 2017. Muslims still face discrimination in Canadian society; they are treated as second-class citizens, told to go back home, called terrorists, and worst of all, fear for their life.

Despite these facts, Muslim identity has been strengthened in Canada for several interconnected reasons: immigration and living in diaspora strengthens Muslim identity and religious affiliation as minorities in their new country; negative media portrayal of Muslims and hostility towards Muslims brings together diverse Muslim communities in solidarity; and in turn, Muslims identify more strongly with their religious identity and attempt to present a positive face of Islam to the larger Canadian public. Furthermore, second-generation Muslims go one step further to critically reflect on both their Muslim and Canadian identities, discarding what does not fit with their hybrid identities. As such, Muslims continue to proudly claim both their Muslim and Canadian identities, despite hostility from the larger public and negative media coverage. Kazemipur argues that it is the "emotional attachment" that Muslims have to Canada which ensures their loyalty to their new country.[83] This creates a "win-win scenario for both Muslim Canadians and Canadian society."[84]

Nagra finds that this "continued attachment to Canada" has many complex reasons. For one, many feel that Canada is more tolerant than other Western countries towards Muslim communities.[85] Further, they view the symbol of multiculturalism as a deep part of their identity, and use it to

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[80] Nagra, Securitized Citizens.
[81] Ibid, 96.
[82] Ibid, 55.
[83] Abdolmohammad Kazemipur, *The Muslim Question in Canada: A Story of Segmented Integration* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2014).
[84] Khelifa, "Delicate Mosaic," 8.
[85] Nagra, Securitized Citizens, 204.

resist discrimination, believing the discrimination to be "anti-Canadian."[86] By claiming Canadian as their identity and using multiculturalism to deny and resist Canada's discriminatory practices, Muslim Canadians reject Canada's history and continued practice of colonization, and instead live and act their way into a Canada that is truly inclusive, welcoming, and multicultural.

Conclusion

We began with Canada's dark founding and history of colonization and ended with Muslims' practice of Canadian-ness which resists Canada's racist foundations. The reactive identity formation that Muslims undergo in Canada against its negative presentation of and discrimination against Muslims interestingly turns out to be the very thing that strengthens both their Muslim and Canadian identities.

Through their reactive identity formation against discrimination, Muslims in Canada take up the post-modern project of identity formation; they resist the dominant narrative and instead create coherence and meaning within their situated environment for themselves. They resist monolithic categorizations and instead embrace hybridity within a third space where their multiple identities can be renegotiated. As such, they represent a creative becoming[87]- deeply situated in their imagined locality. In doing so, they face Canada and their future within this country positively and proactively.

This deeply socioculturally situated identity demonstrates the relational interaction between Muslims and the negative Muslim narrative in their immediate environment, which gives rise to a strengthened Muslim identity that resists and exists beyond limited depictions. Only through their exposure to, and awareness of their environment which propagated these narratives, do Muslim Canadians positively stand against them, claiming their newly strengthened Muslim and Canadian identity. Through their belief in, and practice of Canadian multiculturalism, they take their rightful place within Canadian society and slowly create a reality out of their imagined locality.

However, we must not be fooled to ignore Canada's Big Lie. It is necessary for Muslims to not only resist negative representations of Muslims, but also all negative representations in favour of a truly multicultural Canada. Muslims must become aware of Canada's past and present colonial practices against Indigenous peoples, and stand firmly against the narratives, policies, and actions that allow this continued colonization. It is only through awareness, and subsequent productive action, that the newly strengthened Canadian Muslims can move forward in a way that ensures the multicultural Canada that they believe in can become a reality for all—especially for its rightful Indigenous populations.
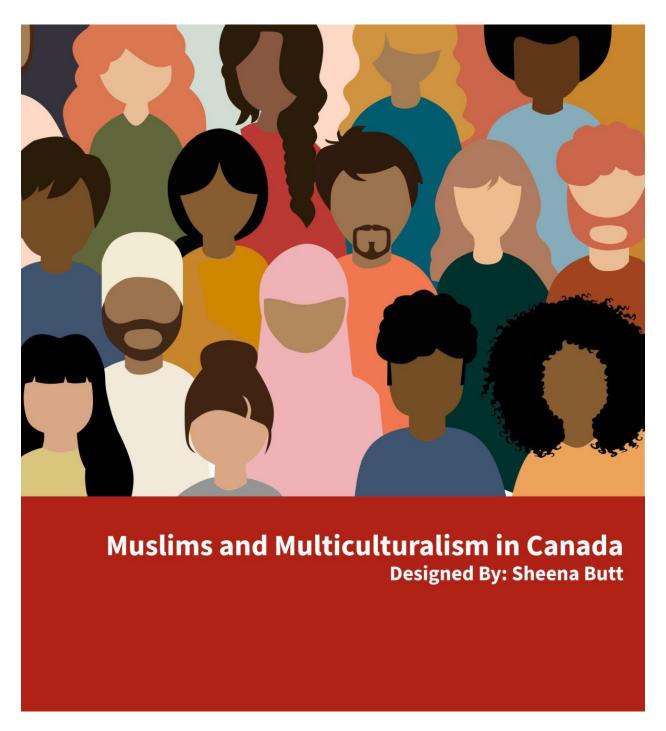
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[86] Ibid, 204.
[87] Nabavi, "Creative Becoming(s)."

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Sheena Butt, *Muslims and Multiculturalism in Canada,* 2021

A Framework to Assess the Supports Provided for Muslim Students in a Public School

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Abstract

Many studies and surveys show that Islam is a misunderstood religion in many areas of the world. Therefore, Muslims in the West are a "poorly understood" minority group (Environics Institute, 2016). While other ethnic or racial minorities feel moderately comfortable defending themselves, their groups, and asserting their identities, Muslim youth "face qualitatively different identity tasks than do many of their peers," largely due to feelings of "being under attack or scrutiny because of their religion" (Stonebanks & Sensoy, 2009). The purpose of this article is to present a framework that educators and administrators can use to identify the current supports provided for Muslim students and the gaps in what is available to help Muslim students feel welcomed in their schools. The framework is a two-dimensional matrix with six major challenges that Muslim students experience and the corresponding supports utilizing Banks' Five Multicultural Dimensions (Content Integration, Knowledge Construction, Equity Pedagogy, Prejudice Reduction, Empowering School Culture and School Structures). The six challenges most prominently faced by Muslim youth, as articulated in the literature review and documents provided by school boards on the guidelines for different faith-groups are: religious practices, dress code, sexual ethics, stereotypes and biases, Islamophobia, and curriculum-related challenges.

Keywords: Muslim, Students, Public School, Supports, Well-being, Sense of Belonging, Banks' Multiculturalism Dimension, Islamophobia

Muslims, in general, worry about visually and verbally self-identifying out of fear of facing discrimination, assault, prejudice, and disrespect.[1] Muslims, including students who outwardly identify as Muslims or who adhere to Islamic guidelines and practices, face specific challenges for

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[1] D. Helly, "Are Muslims discriminated against in Canada since September 2001", *Journal of Canadian Studies,* 36 no. 1 (2004), 24-47; CAIR-CAN, *Life for Canadian Muslims the morning after: A 9/11 wake-up call*, (Ottawa: Canadian Council on American-Islamic Relations, 2002); A. Hildebrandt, "Aboriginal people, Muslims face discrimination most: poll", *CBC News*, March 15, 2010, http://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/story/2010/03/15/discrimination-poll-2010.html; A. Chung, "Canadians less tolerant after 9/11: Poll", *Vancouver Sun*, September 7, 2011, http://www.vancouversun.com/news/9-11-anniversary/Canadians+less+tolerant+after+Poll/5366720/story.html; D. Mehta, " 'She was punched all over and kicked': Police say 'no doubt' attack on Muslim woman 'hate-motivated'", *National Post,* 2015, http://news.nationalpost.com/toronto/police-treating-alleged-assault-robbery-of-muslim-woman-near-school-on-monday-as-hate-crime; S. Fine, "Muslim convert attacked while wearing niqab in Toronto", *Globe and Mail*, October 4, 2015, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/muslim-convert-attacked-while-wearing-niqab-in-toronto/article26646425/; A. Miller, "Woman Wearing Hijab Attacked in Hate Crime", *Global News*, December 4, 2015, http://globalnews.ca/news/2381216/woman-wearing-hijab-attacked-in-hate-crime-related-assault-in-mississauga/; K. Hammer, 2011). "Toronto District School Board defends hosting Muslim prayer sessions". *Globe and Mail,* 2016, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/toronto/toronto-district-school-board defends-hosting-muslim-prayer-sessions/article585899/.

which they may require support from their schools.[2] Islam and Muslims are perceived as strange and different by over 50% of the population.[3] Nonetheless, Muslims continue to observe their religious practices and identify as Muslims despite facing unique challenges:

> Muslims are one of the most religiously observant groups in Canada, and their religious identities and practices appear to be strengthening rather than weakening as their lives evolve in Canada. Being Muslim is a very important part of the identity for most followers of Islam.[4]

Muslim youth who want to practice their faith in schools (e.g., wear Hijab, pray five times a day, wear looser clothes during gym classes, etc.) face numerous challenges directly from administrators and teachers, but also indirectly from their peers.[5] Misconceptions about Islam held by teachers exacerbate Muslim youths' anxiety about practicing their faith and identifying outwardly as Muslims.[6] The obvious "difference" visible to others observing Muslims in prayer or other forms of worship contributes to Muslim students' feelings of alienation and self-consciousness.[7] Researchers maintain that those defined as "different" usually find it difficult to gain access to opportunities and resources available to the majority.[8] For the purposes of this article, I will be using Ontario as an example and the documents of the Ontario Ministry of Education. Policies and procedures in Ontario public schools require school administrators and teachers to "ensure equity" for all of their students.[9] Equity, according to Ontario's Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy is "a condition or state of fair, inclusive, and respectful treatment of all people,"[10] meaning that everyone has fair access to knowledge and learning. In order for Muslim students to have "fair, inclusive and respectful treatment," they need supports. The purpose of this article is to present a framework as a tool for educators and administrators to

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[2] G. Rezai-Rashti, "The dilemma of working with minority female students in Canadian high schools", *Canadian Woman Studies*, 14 no. 2, (1994)76-82; M. Sisak, "Hateful backlash stokes Muslim children's anxiety", *Globe and Mail*, 2015, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/world/hateful-backlash-stokes-muslim-childrens-anxiety/article27755201/; J. Nuttall, "New Guide created to combat Islamophobia in schools", *The Tyee*, 2016, http://thetyee.ca/News/2016/08/26/Islamophobia-School-Resources/; J. Zine, "Muslim youth in Canadian schools: Education and the politics of religious identity", *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 32, no.4 (2001): 399–423.

[3] Environics Institute, *Survey of Muslims in Canada 2016*, (Environics Institute, 2016).

[4] *Ibid*, 3.

[5] Sisak, "Hateful Backlash; Nutall, "New Guide".

[6] S. Niyozov & G. Pluim, "Teachers' perspectives on the education of Muslim students: A missing voice in Muslim education research", *Curriculum Inquiry,* 39 no. 5 (2009), 637-677; A. Kassam, "Locating identity and gender construction in a post 9/11 world: The case of the hijabi girl", *Intercultural Education*, 18 no. 4 (2007), 355–359.

[7] J. Zine, *Canadian Islamic Schools: Unraveling the politics of faith, gender, knowledge, and identity* (Toronto, CA: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

[8] J. Ryan, "Promoting inclusive school-community relationships: Administrator strategies for empowering and enabling parents in diverse contexts", *Journal of Teaching and Learning*, 2 no. 1 (2002), 1-20; J. Ryan, *Inclusive Leadership* (Indianapolis, Indiana: Jossey-Bass, 2006); G. S. Dei, I James, L. Karumanchery, S James-Wilson & J. Zine, *Inclusive schooling: A teacher's companion to removing the margins* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2002); D. Byrne, *Social Exclusion* (Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1999).

[9] Province of Ontario, Ministry of Education, *Achieving Excellence: A Renewed Vision for Education in Ontario*, (2014).

[10] Province of Ontario, Ministry of Education, *Equity and Inclusion Strategy* (2009), 4.

identify the current supports provided for Muslim students and the gaps for what is needed to help Muslim students feel welcomed in their respective schools.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework (Table 1) is a two-dimensional matrix representing the five dimensions of Banks' multicultural education[11] and the common struggles and challenges that Muslim students face in schools, adapted from the literature.[12]

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[11] James A. Banks, "Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice" in J.A. Banks & C.A.M. Banks (Ed.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (New York: Macmillan, 1995), 3-29.

[12] J. Esposito, *What everyone needs to know about Islam?* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2002); J. Esposito, *Oxford Dictionary of Islam*, (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2004); Y. Emerick, *What Islam is all about* (Lebanon: Noorat Inc., 2007); S. Shah, "Leading multiethnic schools: A new understanding of Muslim youth identity", *Educational Management & Leadership,* 34 no. 2 (2006), 215–237; E. Chan & C. Schlein, "Supporting Muslim students in secular public schools", *Diaspora, Indigenous, and Minority Education*, 4 no. 4 (2010), 253-267; C.D. Stonebanks & Ö. Sensoy, *Muslim voices in school: narratives of identity & pluralism* (Boston: Sense Publishing, 2009).

	Dimensions of Multicultural Education				
	Content Integration	Knowledge Construction	Equity Pedagogy	Prejudice Reduction	Empowering School Culture and Social Structure
Islamophobia					
Religious Practices					
Dress Code					
Sexual Ethics					
Myths and Stereotypes and Biases					
Curriculum-related issues					

Common Challenges (row label for the left column)

Table 1. Two-Dimensional Matrix Outlining Supports for Muslim Students Using Banks' Multicultural Education.

I often hear teachers and administrators wondering how they can support Muslim students and genuinely exploring ways to provide a sense of belonging for their Muslim students. In my research, as well as my conversations with principals, when I ask about schools' current supports for Muslim students, I am always directed to the board's religious accommodation procedures and the Ontario Human Rights Commissions' (OHRC) Policy Statements on religious accommodations in schools. Only two of the challenges identified in the matrix (religious practice and dress code) align with the accommodation procedures used by the boards. Furthermore, the procedures do not provide a description, an explanation, or even a context to the challenges, and, therefore, it becomes a mechanical and logistical procedure that is checked off on principals' annual reports regarding religious accommodations under equity and inclusive practices. This article provides some depth and insight into the challenges faced by Muslim students and corresponding supports. I also elaborate briefly on the issues with the word "accommodations" under the section defining "supports."

The conceptual framework shown in Table 1 offers a "graphic organizer," a term used in education for a visual tool that educators use to organize ideas, to help administrators and teachers assess the supports, or lack thereof, for Muslim students, specifically with respect to their unique challenges. Each cell in the table provides space to record observations, conversations, or artifacts as evidence of the supports in the school. In the segment below, I will briefly provide an example of how this conceptual framework can be used as a tool for educators to identify and provide supports for Muslim students.

An Example of How to Use the Conceptual Framework

The framework can be used as a tool to identify the supports that are in place in a school setting, as well as a way to conduct a systematic needs assessment to identify gaps. Educators who choose to use this tool can interview teachers, parents, and students to get a broad overview of supports and gaps. For example, some questions that they can ask the Muslim students in their schools are:

- Can you tell me about your experiences as a student in this school?
- What do you think the challenges are for Muslim youth/students today?
- How do you feel about attending this school? (This question relates specifically to the school culture.)
- Why do you feel the way you feel in your school? Do you see yourself represented in the curriculum of specific classes? Do you relate to the curriculum?

Some examples of probing questions:

- Do you feel supported and understood in the school?
- Are there special programs or practices in this school that you feel are supporting (or not supporting) you? Why or why not? Are you aware of any supports, affordances or constraints provided by the programs?

Other ways to carry out a needs assessment is to ask direct questions related to Islamophobia or curriculum related challenges students might be having due to being Muslim. In the next segment, I first define the concepts "Muslim," and "challenge," and then explore what is meant by the word "support" in the context of education and Ontario Ministry of Education documents. Discussion of the main support systems follows, and finally, a representation of how these are connected is shown within the conceptual framework.

Defining Muslim

I start with answering the question "who is a Muslim?" This is important so that administrators can support their Muslim students. This discussion could easily get very complex, but for the purposes of this article, I define some basic criteria as a foundation of knowledge by which we can avoid confusion.

Defining 'Muslim' and 'Visible Muslim'

The legal definition of a Muslim, according to Islamic jurisprudence, is anyone who believes that "there is no God but God, and Muhammad is his final prophet." This belief in Islam is called the *Shahada* or the declaration of faith. However, for the purposes of this article, anyone who identifies himself or herself as Muslim is considered to be a Muslim. This may include, but is not limited to, Muslims who are born to Muslim parents and believe in the declaration of faith but choose not to practice some or all the five pillars and Muslims who are born to Muslim parents and do not believe in the declaration of faith or practice the five pillars, or individuals who are not born to Muslim families but identify as Muslims. Therefore, just like in any faith group, a Muslim is someone who identifies as one, and there is a wide range of ways of expressing Muslim-ness.

Muslim students are not all the same. The inherent universality of Islam necessitates diversity across its practitioners, meaning that Muslims are not expected to look, dress, behave, eat, and conduct their lives like one another; that would be unrealistic and absurd. Just because one is a Muslim does not mean anything is known about them. In this changing world, with varying climates, terrains, agriculture, histories, and cultures, how one lives requires a variety of interpretations and consideration of the "plurality of cultures." Even though almost a quarter of the world's population identify as Muslim, Islam is a religion comprised of a variety of cultures and civilizations.[13]

"Visible" Muslims are those who can be identified as Muslims because of their dress (wearing the Hijab, *kufi,* niqab, *thawb)[14]*, by the way they wear their beard with a trimmed moustache, or how

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[13] Asma Ahmed, *Exploring the Experiences of Muslim Students in an Urban Ontario Public School* (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 2016).

[14] A kufi is a kind of a hat Muslim males choose to wear. A thawb is a kind of long male dress that men wear. A shilwar kamez is a long shirt (or man-dress) and loose pants that men wear mostly from South Asian countries. A niqab is a veil Muslim women choose to wear to cover their face.

they overtly practice their faith (e.g., they pray anywhere - in malls, on the street, in public parks, in restaurants; they let others know they are fasting).

Defining Challenge

The word "challenge" is used in this article frequently. The definition of "challenge" varies depending on how it is used in a sentence. In this article, and in Ontario Ministry of Education documents, the word "challenge" and "challenges" as nouns usually refer to "difficulty/difficulties." The reason why the word "difficulty" is not used in ministry documents is because of its negative connotation. "Challenge," on the other hand, connotes a difficulty or a problem that can be overcome. When I present the challenges faced by Muslim students in the conceptual framework, I mainly use the word to mean the difficulties that Muslim students face in their respective public schools—as adopted from literature in the field—which is mainly experienced by those who adhere to the Islamic faith. I explain those difficulties in detail toward the end of this chapter.

Defining Support

Before I explore the concept of "support" in this article and how it is used in Ministry of Education documents, I would like to briefly discuss equity and inclusion. Initially, I chose the term "accommodate" instead of "support" when I initiated this research proposal. Over time, however, I realized the limitations of the word "accommodate." Specifically, "accommodation" in the curriculum documents refers to assessment accommodations that allow pupils "to participate in the curriculum and to demonstrate achievement of expectations.[15] These accommodations may include "visual supports to clarify verbal instructions, assistive technology, or some form of human support."[16] The Ontario Human Rights Code (OHRC) provides the "duty to accommodate," which refers to "changing a rule or making an exception to all or part of it for the person concerned."[17] Muslim students in the public school system may need accommodations for prayers, for instance, which is one form of support (see the conceptual framework). But the distinct challenges of Muslim youth necessitate more than accommodations. Furthermore, some Muslim students may experience a "compounding impact"[18] due to additional barriers and intersecting factors such as race, gender, and class. I therefore carefully selected the word "support" rather than "accommodation" because modification of a rule does not "promote [a] sense of belonging" in a population, as mentioned in the seven guiding principles of the *Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* above. Furthermore, "accommodation" also does not "promote well-being,"[19] it merely

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[15] Province of Ontario, Ministry of Education, *Growing Success: Assessment, Evaluation, Reporting in Ontario Schools* (2010), 72.
[16] *Ibid.*
[17] Province of Ontario, Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Policy on creed and the accommodation of religious observances* (1996).
[18] Province of Ontario, Ministry of Education, *Policy/Program Memorandum No. 119: Developing and implementing equity and inclusive education policies in Ontario schools* (2009), 2.
[19] Province of Ontario, *Achieving Excellence.*

provides a quick fix to a problem. "Support," on the other hand, is a commonly used term in Ontario Ministry of Education documents; the motto in each ministry document states, "support every student." Therefore, "support" seems like a more fitting word when it comes to helping Muslim students feel safe, included, and connected.

I define "supports" in this article as actions or modifications that assist development of a positive sense of self, well-being, and belonging. Examples of supports are clubs, such as the Muslims Students Association, having a teacher or a paraprofessional (e.g., Support worker or a counsellor) who is Muslim, policies that provide prayer rooms and fasting accommodations during exams or lunch times, Eid announcements or Eid songs played in certain spaces in the schools for specific periods of time, etc.

While "supports" can refer to those actions or modifications that were intentionally created for Muslim students, they also include those that serve the Muslim population at the school but were not exclusively created for them, such as diversity clubs that showcase different Muslim cultures and traditions. The support criteria that I will be using for this framework is from Banks' "Multicultural Education."[20] Below, I elaborate on the criteria and further highlight the distinct challenges of Muslim students.

The Five Dimensions of Banks' Multicultural Education

Banks is considered the founding father of multicultural education. Multicultural education in Canada focuses on equivalency in achievement, intergroup harmony, and cultural heritage and pride.[21] However, other scholars purport that multicultural education is an umbrella term that means different things to different people. Supporters advocate a "greater equality of opportunity"[22] for academic excellence through countering discrimination against individuals and institutions.[23] The Ontario Ministry of Education speaks to intergroup harmony in that students should be equipped "with the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviours needed to live and work effectively in an increasingly diverse world, and encourage them to appreciate diversity and reject discrimination attitudes and behaviours."[24] For this article, I chose the working definition of multicultural education encapsulated by Banks and Banks:

> An idea, an educational reform movement, and a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional

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[20] Banks, "Multicultural Education".

[21] Earl Mansfield and John Kehoe, "A critical examination of anti-racist education," *Canadian Journal of Education* 19, no.4 (1994).

[22] *Ibid*, 419.

[23] James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks, *Multicultural education: issues and perspectives* (New York: Wiley, 2001); Eleanor W. Lynch and Marci J. Hanson, "Community Developing Health Cross-cultural Nursing," in *Developing cross-cultural competence: A guide for working with young children and their families* (Baltimore: Brookes Publishing, 1992); Geoffrey Short and Bruce Carrington, "The Development of Children's Understanding of Jewish Identity and Culture," *School Psychology International* 13, no. 1 (1992).

[24] Province of Ontario, Ministry of Education and Training, *Antiracism and ethnocultural equity in school boards: Guidelines for policy development and implementation* (1993), 5.

students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school.[25]

Some of the terms associated with multicultural education are also associated with multiethnic education, antiracist education, and culturally responsive education. Mostly the differences seem to be a matter of emphasis as mentioned above.[26] Banks developed a model to assist educators and school leaders based on his work in the field, his research, and his observations since the 1960s.[27] There are many different theories, typologies, and models of multicultural education, such as those referenced by Sleeter and Grant, and Burnett.[28] All of those would fit into one or more of Banks's multidimensional frameworks. Banks outlined five dimensions of multicultural education: (a) content integration; (b) knowledge construction; (c) equity pedagogy; (d) prejudice reduction; and (e) empowering school culture and social structure.[29] Banks suggests that all the above dimensions have to be espoused to create and implement a comprehensive multicultural educational program. These dimensions are distinct, but they are interrelated and part of a whole. Each plays a role to level the playing field for students; however, none of them are sufficient on their own.[30]

(a) Content Integration

Content integration refers to the extent to which teachers use symbols and examples from an array of cultures. The Ontario curriculum is viewed as having a Eurocentric lens and colonial contexts,[31] thus students navigating the dominant school culture may face normative expectations that may differ from those that they hold for themselves, rooted in their faith, family beliefs, and cultural practices. The diversity of the student population is not reflected in the curriculum. "Students who do not belong to the dominant group have a hard time finding themselves and their communities in the curriculum … when they see themselves it will be through the distorted lens of the dominant

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[25] Banks & Banks, *Multicultural education*, 1.

[26] Mansfield and Kehoe, "Critical Examination"; Darren Lund and Paul Carr, "Antiracist Education," in E.F. Provenzo (ed.), *Encyclopedia of the Social and Cultural Foundations of Education*, (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 2008).

[27] James A. Banks, *An introduction to multicultural education* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1994); James A. Banks, "Teaching for social justice, diversity, and citizenship in a global world," *The Educational Forum* 68, no. 4 (2004).

[28] Christine E. Sleeter and Carl A. Grant, *Making Choices for Multicultural Education: Five Approaches to Race, Class and Gender* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill, 1999); Gary Burnett, *Varieties of multicultural education: An introduction* (New York, NY: Eric Clearinghouse on Urban Education, 1994).

[29] J.E. Adams, *Taking charge of the curriculum: Teacher networks and curriculum implementation* (New York ed.) (New York: Teachers College Press, 2000); Banks, *Multicultural Education*; James A. Banks, "Citizenship education and diversity implications for teacher education", *Journal of teacher education,* 52 no. 1 (2001), 5-16; James A. Banks & Cherry A. McGee Banks, *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (2nd ed.) (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2004); M.R. Olneck, "Immigrants and education" in J. A. Banks, & C. A. M. Banks (Eds.), *Handbook of research on multicultural education* (New York: Macmillan, 1995), 310-327.

[30] Banks, "An Introduction."

[31] L. Cherubini, J. Hodson, M. Manley-Casimir & C. Muir, "'Closing the gap' at the peril of widening the void: Implications of the Ontario Ministry of Education's policy for Aboriginal education", *Canadian Journal of Education*, 33 no.2 (2010), 329-355; N. N. Wane, A. Kempf & M. Simmons, *The politics of cultural knowledge* (Rotterdam: Sense, 2011); Y. Guo, *Diversity in public education: acknowledging immigration parent knowledge* (Edmonton, AB: Prairie Metropolis Centre, 2012); R. Hopson, *'People like me' Racialized teachers and a call for community* (Ph.D. thesis, University of Toronto, 2013).

group.[32] The *Ontario Equity and Inclusive Education Strategy* mentions "when students see themselves reflected in their studies, they are more likely to stay engaged and find school relevant."[33] By drawing on students' experiences and backgrounds, teachers seize opportunities to help students feel connected to their learning.[34]

(b) Knowledge Construction

The knowledge construction process moves a step further, whereby teachers help students to understand and investigate implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, and perspectives of the specific topic they explore. Asking questions like, whose frame of reference are we using? What are the assumptions used in this research? Whose knowledge? And what is knowledge? For example, Muslims believe that revelation from God (the Quran and the Sunnah) is the highest level of knowledge that is indisputable. Standardized curriculums in most English-speaking countries omit the study of the history and philosophy of science, which hampers the means to understand science as knowledge. Natural sciences are usually attributed with objectivity and neutrality. Learning about the nature of science provides grounds for students and teachers to discuss conflicting arguments between science and religion.

(c) Equity Pedagogy

Equity pedagogy refers to teachers changing their teaching approach to match students' learning styles. Fullan states that student achievement can be improved by "a sustained and deliberate focus on individual students' strengths and needs."[35] For example, Islam is considered a collectivist religion, therefore those who have adopted that worldview may find cooperative teaching more helpful than the competitive and individualistic way of teaching experienced in some classrooms.

(d) Prejudice Reduction

Prejudice reduction focuses on reducing racist attitudes and finding ways to use teaching approaches and materials to develop positive attitudes.[36] Research shows that "adolescent

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[32] Sonia Nieto, *Affirming Diversity: The Sociopolitical Context of Multicultural Education* (New York: Longman, 2000), 97.

[33] Province of Ontario, *Equity and Inclusion*, 15.

[34] A.M. Villegas & T. Lucas, "Preparing culturally responsive teachers: Rethinking the curriculum", *Journal of Teacher Education*. 53 no. 1 (2002), 20–32; J. Ryan, K. Pollack & F. Antonelli, "Teacher Diversity in Canada: Leaky Pipelines, Bottlenecks, and Glass Ceilings", *Canadian Journal of Education* 32 no. 3 (2009), 591-617; J. Kugler & N. West-Burns, "The CUS Framework for Culturally Responsive and Relevant Pedagogy", *Our Schools, Our Selves*, 19 no. 3 (2010); P. Toulouse, "Fostering literacy success for First Nations, Métis and Inuit students. What Works?", *Research into Practice*, 45 (2013).

[35] Michael Fullan, *Great to Excellent: Launching the next stage of Ontario's education Agenda* (2012); Province of Ontario, Ministry of Education, Learning for all (2011),10.

[36] S.R. Levy, L. Rosenthal & A. Herrera-Alcazar, "Racial and Ethnic prejudice among children", in J.L. Chin (ed.) *The psychology of prejudice and discrimination* (Westport, Connecticut: Praeger, 2010).

prejudice is very real, and that kids come to school with prejudices toward different groups."[37] Delving deeper and asking questions like, "How is it that Islam is the fastest growing religion in the world and in Canada, yet there is negativity surrounding those who adhere to this religion?" can help students question racist and prejudicial attitudes.

(e) Empowering School Culture and Social Structure

Empowering school culture refers to grouping and labeling practices outside the classroom, as well as sports participation and interaction among staff members. It focuses on the culture, policies, practices, and procedures of the school. Multicultural education is founded on the belief that all students, irrespective of their backgrounds (ethnicity, race, religious affiliation, gender, cultural orientation, language, social class, or exceptionality) should be provided with equal opportunities to access school knowledge.[38]

The conceptual framework in Table 1 is intended to be interrelated, complex, and dynamic. The five dimensions of multicultural education, and the possible challenges of Muslim students are interconnected. By filling the cells in Table 1, it will become apparent where the supports are concentrated and where they are lacking, and which of the challenges faced by Muslim students need more support.

Pros and Cons of Using Multicultural Education as Criteria for Support for Muslim Students

I selected "multicultural education," as opposed to "anti-racist education," as a framework through which to assess the supports for Muslims students in a school. *The Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education* defines "multicultural education" as "a field of study designed to increase educational equity for all students that incorporates for this purpose content concepts, principles, theories, and paradigms from history, the social and behavioural sciences, and ethnic studies and women's studies."[39] Whereas anti-racist education is defined by the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate as "the practice of identifying, challenging, and changing the values, structures and behaviors that perpetuate systemic racism."[40]

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[37] James A. Banks, "Approaches to multicultural curricular reform" in E. Lee, D. Menkart & M. Okazawa-Rey (eds.) *Beyond Heroes and Holidays: A Practical Guide to K-12 Antiracist, Multicultural Education and Staff Development* (Washington, DC: Network of Educators on the Americas, 1998

[38] Banks, *Multicultural Education*; Banks, "Citizenship education"; C.I. Bennet, *Comprehensive multicultural education: Theory and practice* (5th ed.) (New York: Allyn and Bacon, 2002); M. Basadur, "Leading others to think innovatively together: Creative leadership", *The Leadership Quarterly*, 15 (2004), 103-121; S.P. Chamberlain, "Recognizing and responding to cultural differences in the education of culturally and linguistically diverse learners", *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 40, no. 4 (2005), 195-211; G. Ernst-Slavit & D. Slavit, "Educational reform, mathematics & diverse learners", *Multicultural Education*, 14, no. 4 (2007), 20-27; C. Tomlinson & J. Jarvis, "Teaching beyond the book", *Educational Leadership*, 64, no. 1(2006), 16-21.

[39] Banks & Banks, *Handbook of research*, xii.

[40] Dei, George J. Sefa "Chapter One: Critical Issues in Anti-Racist Research Methodologies: An Introduction," in *Counterpoints* 252 (2005): p.4.

Multicultural and anti-racist education have different focuses. For example, multicultural educators emphasize "educational underachievement,"[41] whereas anti-racist educators focus on "educational disadvantage."[42] Anti-racist education explores a deeper layer of discrimination or inequity. There are also many similarities between the two approaches: both deem their initiatives a mandatory application to the entire curriculum[43] as opposed to being optional or requiring partial integration in the curriculum. Multicultural and anti-racist educators also work diligently against any bias or ethnocentrism in the curriculum.[44] Furthermore, both promote working in small groups and dialoguing to increase interaction between students,[45] and building stronger connections between the home and school environments.[46]

The main goal for this conceptual framework is to explore the supports provided in a public school for Muslim students. The framework will not discuss past and present racism and discrimination in schools[47] or help students find examples of institutional racism and confront them.[48] I believe the reality on the ground, unfortunately, is that schools are interested in the goals and focuses of multicultural education: identifying culturally-relevant teaching strategies[49] and curricula[50] for Muslim students, providing basic knowledge of (Muslim) students' own backgrounds,[51] and providing a positive sense of self for Muslim students.[52] Multicultural education does not look at systemic barriers in the school.[53] Exploring institutional racism, or looking deeply at assessment inequalities,[54] is the focus of anti-racist education. Granted, the question arises, can authentic and long-term supports actually be assembled without any assessment of the structural and discursive barriers? I compiled this framework in 2014 based on my preliminary observation and conversation with teachers and administrators. Digging deep into institutional racism and systemic

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[41] Banks & Banks, *Multicultural Education*.

[42] Cecile Wright, "Black students, white teachers, "in Barry Troyna (ed.) *Race inequality in education* (London, UK: Tavistock, 1987).

[43] S. Fillipoff, "Just what is multicultural education?" *The B.C. Teacher*, (January- February, 1983), 119-120; B. Troyna & B. Carrington, *Education, racism and reform* (London, UK: Routledge, 1990).

[44] K. Moodley, "The predicament of racial affirmative action: A critical review of Equality Now", *Queen's Quarterly*, 91 (1984), 795-806; B. Thomas, "Principles of Anti-racist Education", *Currents: Readings in Race Relations,* 2 (1984), 20-24.

[45] Troyna & Carrington, *Education, racism and reform*.

[46] A. Darder, *Culture and power in the classroom: A critical foundation for bicultural education* (New York: Bergin & Garvey, 1991).

[47] J. McGregor, "The effect of role playing and anti-racist teaching on student racial prejudice: A meta-analysis of research", paper presented at CSSE (1990).

[48] Thomas, "Principles of Anti-racist Education".

[49] G. Gay, "Changing Conceptions of Multicultural Education" in H. Baptiste & M. Baptiste (eds.) *Developing Multicultural Process in Classroom Instructions: Competencies for Teachers* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1979), 18-30.

[50] A. Fleras & J. Leonard-Elliot, *Multiculturalism in Canada* (Toronto, ON: Nelson, 1992).

[51] D. Hoopes & M. Pusch, "Definition of TErms" in M. Pusch (ed.) *Multicultural education: A cross-cultural training approach* (Chicago, IL: Intercultural Network Inc, 1979).

[52] Fleras & Leonard-Elliot, *Multiculturalism in Canada.*

[53] B. Troyna, "Can you see the join? A historical analysis of multicultural and antiracist education policies" in D. Gill, B. Mayor & M. Blair (eds) *Racism and Education: Structures and Strategies* (London, UK: Sage Publication, 1992).

[54] Thomas, "Principles of Anti-racist Education".

inequalities of schools or district school boards towards Muslims requires the commitment to deep equity from those higher in the system, such as directors of education, superintendents, and principals. Therefore, the conceptual framework, although limited in depth, looks mainly at the reality on the ground: How are Muslim students being supported at their school, using the framework and language that was in place in schools at the time?

General Potential Challenges of Muslim Students

Muslims in the West face many challenges due to anti-Muslim sentiment towards their religious practices, their creed, and their identification as Muslims, especially with the media's negative portrayal of Muslims. This is not limited to immigrant Muslims, but also to those who were born and raised in Canada and are now, more than ever, afraid to practice their religious beliefs and adhere to a certain dress code.[55] There are numerous reasons why this article focuses on Muslim students, specifically high school students, instead of the rest of the Muslim population. First, for Muslims, high school is a time when they are mandated by their religion to practice their beliefs. Once a Muslim reaches puberty, he or she is obliged to consistently pray five times a day, fast the month of Ramadan, perform the pilgrimage (if physically and financially capable), and give alms. The Arabic word *baligh* in Islam refers to the time when a person reaches puberty and therefore signals a time of greater responsibility toward observing the religious practices of Islam. Second, research has shown that the adolescent years are a difficult time for youth, given the multitude of pressures from society, home, and school. "Navigating puberty is one of the major challenges faced by adolescents."[56] Adolescents are known for experimenting and also for establishing boundaries:

> Adolescence represents a crucial period in preventing health compromising and problem behaviors. Many of these critical health-damaging behaviours—such as substance use and abuse, unsafe sexual practices, and dating violence—begin largely during adolescence and can form the basis of lasting behavioral patterns.[57]

In addition to the pressures and challenges that come with practicing their beliefs, Muslims also feel the challenges that all other adolescents feel. Third, Muslim students may feel more vulnerable during this stage because they are not well versed in their religion and its corresponding practices.[58] Therefore, navigating not being able to articulate complex reasoning from their faith to use as

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[55] Helly, "Are Muslims discriminated against"; CAIR-CAN, *Life for Canadian Muslims*; Stonebanks & Sensoy, *Muslim Voices*; Hildebrandt, "Aboriginal people, Muslims"; Chung, "Canadian less tolerant"; Environics Institute, *Survey of Muslims*.

[56] R. K. Silbereisen & B. Kracke, "Self-reported maturational timing and adaptation in adolescence" in J. Schulenberg, J. L. Maggs & K. Hurrelmann (eds.) *Health risks and developmental transitions during adolescence* (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 75.

[57] D. A. Wolfe, P. G. Jaffe & C. V. Crooks, *Adolescent risk behaviors: Why teens experiment and strategies to keep them safe* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006), 46–47.

[58] K. Ghanea Bassirri, *Competing visions of Islam in the United States: A study of Los Angeles* (London: Greenwood, 1997); M. Mohamad, "The Misunderstood Religion", The Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies Oxford, April 16, 1996. https://s3.amazonaws.com/berkley-center/960416MohamadIslamMisunderstoodReligion.pdf

evidence when asking for a prayer room, or time off for Eid, or to dismantle the stereotypes about Muslims in a class discussion, are difficult challenges. Fourth, adolescents are known to stay under the radar and avoid unnecessary attention during this time of life when they are trying to "table things out," and while their bodies are undergoing "rapid physical, cognitive and emotional maturation."[59] Asking for accommodations and support to practice their faith can be a daunting and draining task. Fifth, Muslim students feel that they are "different" from their counterparts. Adolescence is when children most want to "fit in," and Muslim students feel that if they practice their faith or are identified as Muslim, they will be seen as "different." Adolescent years are known to be a vulnerable and anxious time; when coupled with additional pressures to practice a faith that has been stereotyped and demonized (specifically by the media, and perhaps perpetuated by their teachers and peers), Muslim youth are faced with challenges many adults would struggle with.

Reviewing the literature and the *Guidelines and Procedures: For the Accommodation of Religious Requirements, Practices, and Observances*,[60] I have categorized the potential challenges that Muslim students face in their schools in six categories: religious practice, dress code, sexual ethics, myths and stereotypes, Islamophobia, and curriculum-related issues.[61] These challenges are all intertwined; they are all interrelated. Muslim students may or may not feel all/some/none of those challenges. The horizontal rows of the conceptual framework (Table 1), show the overt differences that demarcate the additional potential challenges that face Muslims versus their peers. I have focused on the general overt practices and challenges that distinguish Muslim students from their non-Muslim peers. These potential challenges are directly related to Muslims' adherence to their faith and their outward visibility as "Muslims." There are other case-by-case differences that may emerge on a day-to-day basis. For example, Sabry recalls when her then sixth-grade daughter came home from school and asked for a Christmas stocking.[62] When Sabry refused on the grounds that Muslims have different celebrations, the daughter was distraught. Because she did not bring a Christmas stocking to school, she did not receive any candy.

Research on Muslim students shows that Muslims tend to highlight their religious identity, unlike other faith groups,[63] albeit the "highlighting" of Muslim students' identity could simply be a direct effect of the school's exclusion of Muslim students in explicit and implicit curricula. In other words, when Muslim students are not included in the overall and specific culture of their

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[59] Wolfe, Jaffe & Crooks, *Adolescent risk behaviors*, 47.

[60] Toronto District School Board, *Guidelines & procedures for the accommodation of religious requirements, practices, and observances* (Toronto: Toronto District School Board, 2000).

[61] Esposito, *What everyone needs to know*; Esposito, *Oxford Dictionary*; Emerick, *What Islam is all about*; S. Shah, "Leading multiethnic schools: A new understanding of Muslim youth identity", *Educational Management & Leadership*, 34, no. 2 (2006), 215-237; Chan & Schlein, "Supporting Muslim students"; Stonebanks & Sensoy, *Muslim voices*.

[62] Sabry, 2007

[63] A. Brah, *Cartographies of diaspora: contesting identities* (London: Routledge, 1996); J. Jacobson, *Islam in transition: religion and identity among British Pakistani youth* (London: Routledge, 1998); T. Modood, "Ethnicity and intergenerational identities and adaptations in Britain: the socio-political context", in M. Rutter & M. Tienda (eds.) *Ethnicity and causal mechanisms* (New York; Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Shah, "Leading multiethnic schools".

classrooms and their respective schools, then naturally they will appear "highlighted" and they will stand out as the "other." Therefore, it is difficult for a Muslim who is in continuous contact with other non-Muslim individuals (e.g., at work, in school, in residence) to practice his or her religion without being a "visible" Muslim; someone who is identified and seen as a "Muslim." However, the research specifically shows that Muslim students generally, compared to other faith groups and irrespective of the surrounding culture, showcase their Islamic identity.[64] For example, the Environics Institute survey shows that Muslims are more likely to place a higher importance on their religious identity over their Canadian identity.[65] This is often characterized as Muslims' division of loyalties, but the Islamophobic milieu of 2016 perhaps pushed Muslims to choose between continuing to wear their Hijab (their Islamic identity) and taking it off to "fit in" with the dominant culture and feel safe. Muslims may have attributed feeling unsafe, targeted, and losing their freedom to their practicing of their religion freely. However, such association is flawed because the socio-political climate was Islamophobic, and therefore such sentiments reflected and were encouraged by the social fabric of society. Many researchers in this field have challenged the clash of civilization theory, demonstrating that one can be both Muslim and a Westerner, even though with so many cultures, languages, and social differences, the Western hemisphere and those who are Muslims are hardly homogeneous.[66]

Regarding the potential challenges of Muslim students in schools, a guideline surfaced in the early 2000s and was adapted by the district school Boards in Ontario entitled *Guidelines and Procedures: For the Accommodation of Religious Requirements, Practices, and Observances*[67] geared toward all faiths. The guideline is divided into two sections. One section gives general guidelines and procedures on multiple topics, such as religious holidays, dietary requirements, religious attire, and so on. The second section gives a description of each religion and the corresponding challenges that students may face, along with suggestions for accommodations. The section on Islam has about 13 pages detailing challenges and corresponding accommodations that Muslims may face with respect to their everyday school activities. This guideline is a resource used by principals and administrators when a student asks for an accommodation. I looked at all the potential challenges to Muslims listed in the guideline, and the potential challenges listed in the conceptual framework of this chapter captures the challenges categorically. The challenges listed in the conceptual framework also include "myths, stereotypes and biases," and Islamophobia, which the guideline does not mention. I have listed, in detail, a breakdown of the six challenges that Muslim students may face in their schools. All the challenges are related to one another; one challenge does not stand alone without the others. For example, the challenges of the Islamic dress code and Islamic sexual ethics are interrelated with curriculum-related issues.

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[64] *Ibid.*

[65] Environics Institute, *Survey of Muslims in Canada.*

[66] B. Nagra & I. Peng, "Has multiculturalism really failed? A Canadian Muslim perspective", *Religions*, 4 no. 4 (2013), 603-620; N. Kibra, *Young British Muslims: Identity, Culture, Politics and the Media* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2010); S. Sirin & M. Fine, *Muslim American Youth: Understanding Hyphenated Identities through Multiple Methods* (New York: New York University Press, 2008).

[67] Toronto District School Board, *Guidelines & procedures.*

However, I have discussed each challenge below separately for clarity purposes. These challenges are mainly associated with students in a public school in the West because of their adherence, in varying degrees, to their faith. Other faith groups may face one or more of these challenges; however, they are more specific and relevant to those who adhere to the Islamic faith—Muslims.

Religious Practice

Religious practices refer to the five pillars of Islam with the three mainly relevant pillars of Islam in relation to schools being prayers, fasting, and perhaps performing the pilgrimage.

With respect to prayers, Muslim students may face the challenge of where and when to pray. The two main prayers that fall during the school hours are the afternoon (*dhuhr*) and the evening (*'Asr*) prayers. Prayers can be performed anywhere. Students may pray in a corner in their cafeteria, in their classrooms, in the school yard, in the school parking lot, and so on. However, students may not feel comfortable performing their prayers unless there is a specific space designated to do so. Muslim prayer takes five to ten minutes, and students may feel distracted, anxious, self-conscious, or they may be interrupted if they pray in a space that is not specifically designated for prayers. Therefore, students may require a quiet space to pray during the allocated prayer times. Also, prior to performing their prayers, students are required to do a ceremonial wash called *wudu*, or an ablution, and they may not feel comfortable performing that in the regular school washrooms. This wash includes the washing of the face, hands, and feet.

Because of the fasting requirement, students may need extensions on assignments, exams postponed, or a physical education class cut short. Ramadan is the month when Muslims, who have reached puberty and are physically able, are mandated to fast 29 or 30 days from everything (food, drink, and sexual activity) from dawn to dusk. Islam follows the lunar calendar. For example, in 2016, Ramadan fell in June. In 2017, it will fall in May. In summer, which is a stretch of 18 to 19 hours from dawn to dusk, it may be difficult for some students who choose to fast to focus during class or exams. The sick, pregnant, breastfeeding and lactating mothers, menstruating women, and travelers are exempt from fasting, if needed.

The pilgrimage (*Hajj*) is mandated for anyone who is physically and financially able to participate. It takes place in Mecca, Saudi Arabia, once a year. Students who go with their families to perform this ritual require two or more weeks off from school. This is only mandated once in the lifetime of a Muslim.

Islamic Dress Code

There are 1.7 billion Muslims in the world and subsequently dress code will vary from person to person, family to family, city to city, and country to country. There is diversity of individual interpretations on dress code and sexual ethics. In the following paragraphs, I will be specifically discussing the guidelines from the major two sects of Islam, the Sunni (mainly the 4 schools of thoughts: Hanafi, Hanbali, Shaafi, and Maliki) and Shi'a, which are derived from the Quran and

the Sunnah (the prophet's sayings and doings), regarding dress code and the conduct of men and women. Exploring the following topics briefly here will help teachers and administrators to some degree understand the Muslim students who adhere to all, most, or some of these guidelines.

Dress code is part of the emblematic character of Islam. Men and women's Islamic dress codes are different based on what constitutes the private areas of the body (*'Awra*). For a man, the private area of his body, according to Islamic jurisprudence, is from the navel to the knee. For a woman, it is the same area when she is in the presence of other women. Breasts are not considered private in the company of other women in order to make it easier for lactating mothers to breastfeed in front of female friends and family members without any restrictions. In the presence of men who are not family members, women cover all their body parts except for their hands and face. Some Muslim women choose to cover their hands and face as well, because they adhere to different schools of thought. Men and women are also required to dress modestly by wearing loose and non-transparent clothes. Although not mandatory, some Muslim males choose to wear a kufi, or a thawb, and Muslim women choose to wear a niqab.

Even when swimming at public beaches or public pools, Muslim women cover. Muslim women are also required to cover their head with a veil called Hijab, which means "a cover." Research shows that the wearing of Hijab in a non-accepting environment may lead to low self-esteem, and not conforming to dominant social rules of dressing can compromise one's academic achievement.[68]

It is important in this section to briefly outline and mention the media's increasing attention regarding the dress of Muslim females. In 2015, a controversy brewed over a woman wearing niqab during a Canadian citizenship ceremony.[69] Furthermore, the news reported the introduction of a Burkini ban in France. Muslim women who wanted to go to the beach were not allowed to wear a special kind of swimsuit (Burkini) that covered them from head to ankle.[70] Recently, Quebec introduced the Laïcité Law, or secularism bill, Bill 21, prohibiting the wearing of religious symbols (e.g., Hijab, Karpan, etc) by public servants, such as teachers.

Islamic Sexual Ethics

Islam, according to the four major schools of thought in the Sunni tradition and the major schools of thought in the Shi'a tradition, is a gender-specific religion. The challenges of Islamic sexual

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[68] J. W. Berry & R. C. Annis, "Acculturative stress: The role of ecology, culture and differentiation", *Journal of cross-cultural psychology*, 5 no. 4 (1974), 382-406; S. Fordham & J. U. Ogbu, "Black students' school success: Coping with the "burden of 'acting White'", *The Urban Review*, 18 no. 3 (1986), 176-206; S. Fordham, "Racelessness as a factor in Black students' school success: Pragmatic strategy or pyrrhic victory?" *Harvard Educational Review*, 58 no. 1 (1998), 54-85; J. d'Amato, "Resistance and compliance in minority classrooms", in E. Jacob & C. Jordan (eds.) *Minority education: Anthropological perspectives* (Norwood, NJ: Ablex, 1993).

[69] S. Chase, "Niqabs 'rooted in a culture that is anti-women,' Harper says", *Globe and Mail*, March 10, 2015, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/politics/niqabs-rooted-in-a-culture-that-is-anti-women-harper-says/article23395242/

[70] K. Yakbuski, "With burkini bans, France buries its head in the sand", *Globe and Mail*, August 22, 2016, http://www.theglobeandmail.com/opinion/with-birkini-bans-france-buries-its-head-in-the-sand/article31470392/

ethics mainly revolve around cross-gender relations and modesty in clothing, as well as the issue of modesty in behaviour. I use the word "modesty" here, but the correct term in Arabic and Islam—Hayaa—does not have an equivalent word in English. There are a few issues in sexual ethics that apply within a high school context, after reaching puberty:

- The rules of cross-gender relations in Islam stipulate that men and women try not to engage in any body contact, such as playing tag, high fives, pats on the back, shaking hands, and so on.
- Islam prohibits any intimate relations before marriage; therefore, having a boyfriend or a girlfriend is not allowed in Islam.
- Muslim males and females who adhere to Islamic sexual ethics do not change their clothes in front of one another, because their body from the navel to the knees is considered private (Awra).

Granted, not all Muslims follow these guidelines. Some Muslims follow more restrictive rules, while others are more lenient, and others do not follow nor believe in this aspect of Islam. When it comes to Muslim youth in high school and perhaps beyond, the youth who choose to follow the restrictive rules face specific challenges surrounding sexual ethics as those rules are the most difficult to adhere to. The challenge with sexual ethics is that the dominant culture in the West has a different view of sexual ethics, which conflicts with the Islamic view, upheld by both Shi'a and the Sunni schools of thoughts mentioned above. The dominant view of sexual ethics in the West also views the Islamic worldview of sexual ethics (which includes dress code) as oppressive and inferior, and hence makes it difficult to seek understanding and accommodation.

Myths, Stereotypes, and Personal Biases

The negative portrayal of Muslims in the media may lead individuals to believe negative myths and stereotypes about Muslims. A stereotype is when one perceives another person based on a specific category; thereby, squeezing him or her into a limited definition.[71] Human beings stereotype all the time; making a general statement about something is to stereotype. This kind of stereotyping helps to reduce the complexity of the information we receive.[72] However, stereotyping becomes problematic when one stereotypes other people because of their membership of a certain group. For example, a common stereotype about Muslims is that men dominate women.[73] Myths, on the other hand, are beliefs held about other people that are untrue.[74] For example, people may believe that all Muslims are Arabs, whereas in reality only 24% of Muslims

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[71] T. K. Gamble & M. Gamble, *Communication works* (7th ed.) (Boston: McGraw Hill, 2002).

[72] M. Hewston & H. Giles, "Social groups and social stereotypes: A review and model of intergroup communication" in M. Hewstone & H. Giles (eds.) *Sociolinguistics* (London: Edward Arnold, 1986).

[73] A. Sultana, "Patriarchy and Women's Subordination: A Theoretical Analysis", *The Arts Faculty Journal* 4 no. 1 (2012), 18.

[74] W. G. Stephan & C. W. Stephan, "The role of ignorance in intergroup relations" in M.B. Brewer & N. Miller (eds.) *Groups in contact: The psychology of desegregation* (Orlando: Academic Press, 1984), 229-225.

are Arabs. Lack of correct information leads to both stereotyping and the developing of myths.[75] Those stereotypes and myths become a personal bias, which may lead one to treat or think of another person unfairly. Even people who have strong egalitarian values and believe that they are not biased may unconsciously behave in discriminatory ways.[76] It is difficult to rid oneself of personal bias. However, research shows that when one group interacts with a member of another group, one may deconstruct their personal biases. This kind of contact between a marginalized and non-marginalized group is summed up by the intergroup contact theory,[77] which states that the more contact an in-group (non-Muslims, in this case) has with an out-group (Muslims), the greater improvement in attitudes and fewer biases are held against them. However, this is not the case all the time. Further, research suggests that when there are preconceived notions or negative stereotypes of an out-group, then there is increased public anxiety, which reduces the beneficial effects of contact with the out-group[78], as well as increasing the in-group's reliance on negative stereotypes. Personal biases do not just cause anxiety; some researchers even suggest increased hostility occurring against the out-group.[79] Nonetheless, the idea that "familiarity breeds liking," or what social psychologists call the "mere exposure effect",[80] and the intergroup contact theory explained above, seem to be evident in today's emerging surveys regarding Muslims.[81] Interestingly, Chalabi states that her survey demonstrated that younger non-Muslims who are in continuous contact with Muslims tend to have a more positive view of the Muslim population than older non-Muslims.[82] The age that separates the young from the old was not specified in the aforementioned survey.

When it comes to schools, studies have been conducted on teachers' attitudes toward Muslims. Results of the studies show that some teachers in public schools hold negative attitudes toward Muslims.[83] Teachers' preconceived notions, attitudes, and biases affect curricula and their

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[75] S.T. Fisk & S.L. Neuberg, "A continuum of impression formation, from category-based to individuating processes: Influences of information and motivation on attention and interpretation", *Advances in Experimental Social Psychology* 23 (1990), 1-74.

[76] J. F. Dovidio, "On the nature of contemporary prejudice: The third wave", *Journal of Social Issues* 21 no. 2 (2001), 170-86.

[77] Gordon W. Allport, *The nature of prejudice* (Cambridge, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1954).

[78] Stephan & Stephan, "The role of ignorance"; W.G. Stephan & C.L. Renfro, "The role of the threat in intergroup relations" in D.M. Mackie & E.R. Smith (eds.) *From prejudice to intergroup emotions: Differentiated reactions to social groups* (Psychology Press, 2002)

[79] E.A. Plant & P.G. Devine, "The antecedents and implications of interracial anxiety", *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin* 29 no. 6 (2003), 790-801.

[80] R.F. Bornstein, "Exposure and affect: Overview and meta-analysis of research 1968-1987" *Psychological bulletin* 106 no. 2 (1989), 265.

[81] M. Chalabi, "Americans are more likely to like a Muslim if they know one" *FiveThirtyEight*, February 13, 2015, https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/americans-are-more-likely-to-like-muslims-if-they-know-one/; T.F. Pettigrew & L.R. Tropp, "A meta-analytic test of intergroup contact theory" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 90 no. 5 (2006), 751.

[82] Chalabi, "Americans are more likely to like a Muslim".

[83] E.g., M.S. Merry, "Social exclusion of Muslim youth in Flemish and French speaking Belgian schools" *Comparative Education Review* 49 no. 1 (2005), 1-23; R. Richardson, *Curriculum, ethos, and leadership: Confronting Islamophobia in UK education* (Staffordshire, UK: Trentham, 2004); Jasmin Zine, "Muslim youth in Canadian schools: Education and the politics of religious identity" *Anthropology & Education Quarterly* 32 no.4 (2001), 399-423.

relationships with their Muslim students at both conscious and subconscious levels.[84] Teacher attitudes and worldviews are considered to be part of the hidden or deep curriculum of the school.[85] The Ontario Royal Commission on Education spoke highly of the importance of teachers in students' lives: "the teacher is the keystone of the educational arch: in the final analysis, the fulfillment of educational aims rest with him/her".[86] Teachers are an integral part of the education system. The way they perceive and interact with their students manifests in the pupil's emotional and academic well-being. Furthermore, studies have shown that positive relationships lead to better academic outcomes.[87] However, conflict in this relationship also leads to antisocial behaviour and aggression from the students.[88] Teachers' personal biases may result in unfair treatment or prejudgment of students and cause tension in student-teacher relations. Amjad suggests that teachers' lack of understanding of the experiences of their Muslim students, as well as the students' cultural and religious backgrounds, led to their annoyance and impatience when it came to helping their Muslim students.[89] For example, "Often, teachers made comments in front of other students without realizing how hurtful they might be for their young students, who have a natural need for respect among their peers."[90] Another pertinent study by Niyozov and Pluim extensively reviews comparative and international literature on teachers' views of Muslim students in public schools, and acknowledges that there are negative biases held by teachers. However, the researchers also conclude that the teachers in public schools in Canada and in the West are trying "to understand and accommodate the needs of Muslim students…it is important to acknowledge the progress and the system's willingness to accommodate."[91]

Islamophobia

Recent polls have shown that there is an epidemic of Islamophobia in Ontario. Islamophobia is defined as "the dread, hatred, and hostility toward Islam and Muslims perpetrated by a series of closed views that imply and attribute negative and derogatory stereotypes and beliefs to

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[84] Niyozov & Pluim, "Teacher's perspectives".

[85] A. Mukherjee & B. Thomas, *A glossary of terms* (Toronto: Toronto Board of Education, n.d.), 7; A. Bhyat, "Bias in the curriculum: A comparative look at two boards of education" Unpublished paper, Department of Sociology, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1993.

[86] Ontario Royal Commission on Education & Hope, J.A. *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, 1950* (Baptist Joohnston, Printer to the King, 1950), 564.

[87] J.N. Hughes, W. Luo, O.M. Kwok, & L.K. Loyd, "Teacher-student support, effortful engagement, and achievement: A 3-year longitudinal study" *Journal of educational psychology* 100 no. 1 (2008), 1; G.W. Ladd, S.H. Birch, & E.S. Buhs, "Children's social and scholastic lives in kindergarten: Related spheres of influence?" *Child Development* 70 no. 6 (1999), 1373-1400; R.C. Pianta, B. Hamre, & M. Stuhlman, "Relationships between teachers and children" in W. Reynolds & G. Miller (eds.) *Comprehensive handbook of psychology (vol. 7): Educational psychology* (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley & Sons, Inc, 2003), 199-234.

[88] Ladd et al., "Children's social and scholastic lives"; B.T. Meehan, J.N. Hughes, & T.A. Cavell, "Teacher-student relationships as compensatory resources for aggressive children" *Child Development* 74 no. 4 (2003), 1145-1157.

[89] A. Amjad, "Muslim students' experiences and perspectives on current teaching practices in Canadian schools" *Power and Education* 10 no.3 (2018), 315-332.

[90] *Ibid.*, 322.

[91] Niyozov & Pluim, "Teachers' perspectives", 660.

Muslims."[92] According to the survey published by Ontario Council of Agencies Serving Immigrants, half of Ontarians in 2016 feel that Islam promotes violence.[93] One in three Canadian Muslims have experienced discrimination.[94] Muslim women and Muslim youth are the main recipients of this discrimination.[95] Visible Muslims are immediately identified due to their appearance, and, therefore, are at a higher risk for being victims of hate crimes. Individuals who choose to adhere to the Islamic dress code can be easily identified as Muslims. Such a choice may come with risks and challenges—risks of discrimination and of being the target of hate crimes—in addition to the internal and social challenges of feeling accepted, respected, and having an "equal status" to the majority, as suggested by Banks.[96] Just to mention a few examples, in Toronto—a city that is considered the most diverse in Canada—multiple hate crimes were committed against women wearing Hijab.[97] A woman was punched and had her Hijab removed from her head when she was picking up her child from school. Another woman wearing Hijab was pushed and called a terrorist on a Toronto bus. Yet another woman, who was not Muslim, was assaulted because she wore a scarf similar to a Hijab.[98] The negative portrayal of Islam in the media feeds these hate crimes and the pre-existing stereotypes and myths about Muslims.

In schools, Islamophobia can manifest in different ways. Systemic Islamophobia refers to a system whereby Islam and Muslims are disadvantaged in the policies, procedures, and practices of an institution that may appear to be neutral. Such forms of discrimination are manifested in the lack of hiring of Muslim teachers and of not promoting Muslim teachers into positions of leadership. The background of Ontario teachers does not reflect the background of the students in their respective schools. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) identified this as one of the contributing factors to the disproportionate suspension and expulsion of racialized students as a lack of teacher representation.[99] Despite the increasing number of diverse students in Ontario public schools, the majority of teachers continue to be from white, middle class, monolingual backgrounds.[100] Another way that systemic Islamophobia is demonstrated is through the perpetuation of Eurocentric ideology and maintaining a subhuman narrative of Muslims in class and school materials.[101] A specific example of systemic Islamophobia is in the dispute that arose

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[92] Runnymede Trust Commission, *Islamophobia: A challenge for us all* (London, England: the Runnymede Trust, 1997).

[93] N. Keung, "Ontario facing 'epidemic of Islamophobia' survey finds" *The Star*, April 7, 2016, https://www.thestar.com/news/immigration/2016/07/04/ontario-facing-epidemic-of-islamophobia-survey-finds.html.

[94] Environics Institute, *Survey of Muslims*.

[95] *Ibid.*

[96] Banks, "Teaching for social justice".

[97] Mehta, "She was punched all over"; Fine, "Muslim convert attacked".

[98] Miller, "Woman Wearing Hijab Attacked".

[99] Ontario Human Rights Commission, *Terms of Settlement [between OHRC and the Ministry of Education],* April 10, 2007, http://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/resources/news/edsettlementen.

[100] R. Childs, K. Broad, K. Gallagher-Mackay, Y. Sher, K.A. Escayg & C. McGrath, *The teachers Ontario needs: Pursuing equity in teacher education program admissions* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, 2010); G. Cho & D. DeCastro-Ambrosetti, "Is ignorance bliss? Pre-service teachers' attitudes towards multicultural education" *The High School Journal* 89 no. 2 (2005), 24-28.

[101] Irfan Toor, "Edi Blog - Ramadan Ready" *Ontario Principals Council,* March 31, 2022, https://www.principals.ca/en/who-we-are/ramadan-ready.aspx.

when Valley Park Middle School's principal allowed 400 Muslim students to perform their Friday prayers in the cafeteria in March of 2012. The majority of students in Valley Park, which is in Markham, Ontario, were Muslims—over 800 students. The controversy around this erupted when some members of the community feared that having Muslim prayers in the cafeteria could "spread their (Islamic) ideology" and open doors to the other more than "50 different ethnicities and religions asking for different accommodations."[102] Though holding Friday prayers in schools has become common practice for most schools in Ontario, increased scrutiny and negative stereotyping and discrimination are experiences that Muslims still feel within their communities. Students are reporting that every year they have to re-establish with the school administration the rationale and re-negotiate the space for Friday prayers and their daily prayers as opposed to having those supports as given affordances according to the Ontario Human Rights Commission.[103]

Curriculum-Related Issues

There are two types of curricula in schools: the explicit curriculum and the implicit or deep curriculum. Curriculum is defined in many different ways.[104] In simple terms, a curriculum is everything a student experiences in a school.[105] The explicit curriculum is what is observed in ministry documents and teachers' plans. The educational environment in which the actual, or explicit, curriculum is taught is referred to as the implicit curriculum,[106] the deep curriculum,[107] or the hidden curriculum.[108]

The explicit curriculum identifies the colonial and Eurocentric narrative that exists in class materials and textbooks. Abukhattala searched Canadian textbooks and found that "their portrayal of Islam contains erroneous factual claims, questionable assertions and omissions that reinforce negative stereotypes."[109] Muslims are "depicted as fanatical terrorists, sexually enticing, and/or

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[102] Hammer, "Toronto District School Board".

[103] Toor, "Edi Blog".

[104] R. Barrow & G. Milburn, *A critical dictionary of educational concepts* (New York: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 1990); G. Beauchamp, "Basic components of a curriculum theory" in A. Bellack & H. Kliebard (eds.) *Curriculum and evaluation* (Berkley: McCutchan, 1977), 22; I.F. Goodson, *Studying Curriculum* (New York: Teachers College Press, 1994); W.S. Longstreet & H.G. Shane, *Curriculum for a new millennium* (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 1993); C.J. Marsh (ed), *Perspectives: Key concepts for understanding curriculum* (London; Washington, DC: The Falmer Press, 1997); L. Wood & B.G. Davis, "Designing and evaluating higher education curricula" *AAHE-ERIC/Higher Education Research Report No. 8* (Washington, DC: The American Association for Higher Education, 1978).

[105] A.W. Foshay, "Curriculum", in R.I. Ebel (ed.) *Encyclopedia of educational research: a project of the American Educational Research Association* (4th ed.) (New York: Macmillan, 1969), 5-119; D. Tanner & L. Tanner, *Curriculum development: Theory into practice* (New York: Macmillan, 1975).

[106] H. Goldstein, *Experiential learning: A foundation for social work education and practice* (Alexandria, VA: Council on Social Work Education, 2001).

[107] G.S. Dei, "The role of Afrocentricity in the inclusive curriculum in Canadian schools", *Canadian Journal of Education* 21 no. 2 (1996), 177.

[108] P.W. Jackson, *Life in Classrooms* (New York: Hold, Rinehart & Winston, 1968).

[109] I. Abukhattala, "The new bogeyman under the bed: Image formation of Islam in the Western school curriculum and media" in J.L. Kincheloe & S.R. Steinberg (eds.) *The Miseducation of the West: How Schools and Media Distort Our Understanding of the Islamic World* (Praeger, 2004), 164

the despotic other."[110] Similarly, with respect to the implicit curriculum, intentionally or unintentionally neglecting to represent other communities' societal and historical contributions in both the curriculum and the classroom affects the learning environment for students of those communities.[111] Some examples of implicit curriculum are representation and recognition of Muslims and Muslim contribution to knowledge production. Language and practices, such as celebration of holidays, are other examples of the implicit curriculum that is imparted in schools. In Canada, Eurocentric knowledge continues to be the starting point for all sciences, social sciences, and literature in the curriculum,[112] which can be alienating for Muslim students.[113] Research has shown the negative impacts of a Eurocentric curriculum on those who do not identify as European or "white."[114] Gay suggests that classrooms be more consistent with students' cultural orientation. Classrooms should be more reflective of the students and their identities so that students can self-identify with their learning and in their classrooms.[115]

Integrating Muslim knowledge and contributions, and representing them in the "mainstream" curriculum, is part of inclusive education and is one of the tenets of multicultural education. The integration process does not just involve celebrating Ramadan and Eid, accommodating daily prayers, and celebrating a Diversity Day; rather, it should go beyond superficial and sentimental efforts, and involve a more meaningful discussion.[116] By including Muslim perspectives, teachers can help engage Muslims in the learning process by providing them with content relevant to their experiences and culture, which would increase their sense of belonging and improve their self-esteem. Other students can benefit from Muslim knowledge, contributions, and symbols by being introduced to intercultural knowledge and experience, and also by sparking meaningful dialogues among different cultural groups, as well as among teachers and students. Such knowledge can also challenge the dominant Western paradigm and expand a learner's horizons beyond that which is

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[110] A. Ahmed, "Yearning for 'Normal' Lives" *Annals of Social Studies Education Research for Teachers* 2 no.1 (2021), 34.

[111] Dei, "The role of Afrocentricity".

[112] G. Rezai-Rashti, "Introduction" *Canadian and International Education* 33 no.1 (2004), 1-5; D. Zinga, *Navigating Multiculturalism: Negotiating change* (Newcastle, UK: Cambridge Scholars Press, 2006); G.S. Dei, I. James, L. Karumanchery, S. James-Wilson, & J. Zine, *Inclusive schooling: A teacher's companion to removing the margins* (Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2002); Hopson, "People like me".

[113] M. Anwar, *Young Muslims in a Multi-Cultural Society* (London: Islamic Foundation, 1986); K. Murad, *Muslim Youth in the West* (London: Islamic Foundation, 1986); M. Parker-Jenkins, *Children of Islam: A teacher's guide to meeting the needs of Muslim pupils* (Stoke-on-Trent, UK: Trentham, 1995); Rezai-Rashti, "Introduction"; A. Yousif, *Muslims in Canada: A Question of Identity* (Ottawa, ON: Legas Press, 1993); J. Zine, *Muslim students in public schools: education and the politics of religious identity* (MA thesis, University of Toronto, 1997); L. Sweet, *God in the Classroom: The Controversial Issue of Religion in Canada's Schools* (McClelland & Stewart, 1997); R. Berns McGown, *Muslims in the Diaspora* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); R. Shamma, "Muslim Youth of North America: Issues and Concerns" in A. Haque (ed) *Muslims and Islamization in North America: Problems and Prospects* (Beltsville, MD: Amana Publications, 1999), 323-330.

[114] Cherubini, et al., "Closing the gap"; Guo, "Diversity in public education"; Hopson, "People like me".

[115] G. Gay, *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice* (New York: Teachers College Press, 2000.

[116] G.S. Dei, I. James, L. Karumanchery, S. James-Wilson, & J. Zine, *Removing the margins: The challenges and possibilities of inclusive schooling* (Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press, 2000); J. Donald & A.T. Rattansi, (eds.) *"Race," culture and difference* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992).

familiar to them.[117] Furthermore, "the inclusion of Muslim history and Muslim contributions in Western public school curricula is surely legitimate, not only for affirming Muslim students' self-esteem and identity, but also because it is part of the antihegemonic discourse."[118] This is not intended to exclude other knowledge —other non-Western knowledge would also challenge the current discourse— "but to contribute to a plurality of perspectives and knowledge about schooling in the Euro-Canadian context."[119] Especially in light of the negative portrayals of Muslims so prominent in the media, knowledge of Muslims and their contributions may act as a healthy barrier against fear, racism, and discrimination.

An Example of What the Conceptual Framework Can Look Like

Having now defined each of Banks' Five Dimensions of Multiculturalism and identified the challenges most prominently faced by Muslim youth, as articulated in the literature review and the documents provided by Ontario school boards, I would like to refer back to the framework and demonstrate how the matrix can look by providing an example for each of the categories (Table 2). The idea is not to fill out each cell with an example of support, but to use the framework as a graphic organizer to ensure that each of the six common challenges that Muslim students face are alleviated so that no matter who they are and how they identify, each student feels supported and can have a sense of belonging and a positive sense of self. There is an understanding in equity studies that by sharing other people's ways of knowing and doing, everyone benefits.

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[117] J. Kincheloe & S. Steinberg, *Changing multiculturalism* (Buckingham, UK; Philadelphia, US: Open University Press, 1998).
[118] Niyozov & Pluim, "Teachers' perspectives".
[119] Dei, "The role of Afrocentricity", 177.

		Dimensions of Multicultural Education				
		Content Integration	Knowledge Construction	Equity Pedagogy	Prejudice Reduction	Empowering School Culture and Social Structure
Common Challenges	Islamophobia	Showcasing Islamic history, Muslim intellectuals, Muslim inventions, and regular Muslims from the local neighbourhood community and wider Canadian community contributing to society (e.g., Khaled Sultan, Canada's top wealth advisors).	Asking students if Islamophobia is manufactured, and who would benefit from its construction.	Meeting Muslim intellectuals or regular Muslims in the school community (e.g., a Muslim teacher or a Muslim parent or a Muslim doctor as guest speakers). Showing that Muslims are not monolithic, and Muslims are not a race.	Confronting Prejudice	Involving the schoolteachers, principals and administrators in the conversations on the manufacturing of Islamophobia and recognizing that the climate of Islamophobia in the Canadian context.
	Religious Practices	In certain subjects such as arts, social studies or physical education show religious practices of Muslims (e.g., for healthy and physical education show prayers as a de-stressing and wellness mechanism for Muslims)	Asking students whose religious practices is dominant, normative and accepted in policy and practice. And why is that so? Why aren't other religious practices included in our policies and practices in schools and in society?	Seeing Muslim students pray. Inviting someone who wears hijab to speak about their hijab. Inviting someone who wears niqab to speak about their niqab and Bill 21.		Muslim students are included in school decision-making. Muslim students are included in sports activities if they choose to adhere by a dress code. Adding school accommodations (e.g., prayer room, Eid holidays, exam accommodations during fasting month) in the agenda of the Muslim students so they do not have to muster up the courage to ask.
	Dress Code & Sexual Ethics	In certain subjects (e.g., arts, social studies and health and physical education) show the different dress codes Muslims wear and the reason why Muslims wear Niqab or looser	Asking students why is the dress code of Muslims (e.g., hijab, loose and longer shirts when playing sports) looked down upon or not accepted? Who makes the rules? What are the	Trying the Muslim dress code (e.g., hijab or wearing looser clothes with long shirts during sports) on for a day as social experiment to see how people react.		Hiring Muslim teachers who wear hijab and adhere to a certain dress code.

		clothes (e.g., to show their devotion to God)	assumptions when these rules are made?			
	Myths & Stereotypes & Biases	See Islamophobia above	Asking students how are myths and stereotypes about Muslims and Islam constructed? Where does bias come from? Why do we hold on to such biases?	See Islamophobia above	Questioning assumptions and beliefes. Eg, 'How do we view the "other"?' 'How do we view Muslims?'	Muslim students see themselves in their teachers, leaders, sports teams, student council, school plays, etc. There are clubs such as MSA (Muslim Students' Association)
	Curriculum-Related Issues	Using texts and resources from the Muslim culture (e.g., poetry, quotes, books or novels that contemporary Muslim writers have written such as S.K. Ali, Uzma Jalaluddin)	Understanding and investigating the implicit cultural assumptions and frames of reference in each subject. (e.g., What is knowledge? Whose knowledge is prioritized? How does one's implicit assumptions play out in the construction of knowledge?)			There is a specialist whom the teacher can contact to ensure that their curriculum is not feeding into the Muslim stereotypes and Islamophobia. Teacher training on culturally responsive practices for Muslims and anti-Islamophobia training.

Table 2. Two-Dimensional Matrix with An Example.

Conclusion

The purpose of this article is to present a conceptual framework for public school administrators and educators to assess their support systems provided to Muslim students. The conceptual framework offered in Table 1 is a two-dimensional matrix representing the five dimensions of Banks's multicultural education, and the six common struggles that Muslim students face in schools, adapted from the literature. Schools and those in the school system can use this conceptual framework as a starting point to assess the supports, or lack thereof, in place for Muslim students. The framework is not meant to substitute for deeper conversations and investigations that are required for each school to identify the institutional and structural barriers and discrimination that are embedded in the school systems.

Table 1 offers a graphic organizer to check off the cells and also provides evidence (using artefacts, observations, and conversations with student and staff) to give a visual representation of which of the challenges of Muslim students are adequately being met vis-à-vis the categories of Banks's multicultural criteria and which of their challenges need further support. This article provides some details on each of the challenges faced by Muslim students in a school setting and suggests using Banks's multicultural education and specific ways of offering the necessary supports.

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From I-RSS

Articles in this section of the RSS Journal showcase the latest original research from the Institute for Religious and Socio-Political Studies. I-RSS is a non-profit research institute with a mission to produce unique and relevant research and fill gaps within North American academic communities. I-RSS produces policy analyses and provides recommendations around issues concerning Muslims to governments and Islamic organizations. The research presented in this section would not have been possible without the funding and support of the Muslim Association of Canada (MAC), for which it was commissioned in order to inform their strategic planning and national operations. The Muslim Association of Canada (MAC) is a Canadian, independent, national, faith-based, charitable organization, which provides spaces, services and programs for holistic education and personal development for Canadian Muslims.

Muslim Organizations in Canada: A Composite Picture of Service and Diversity

Fatima Chakroun

Abstract

As Canada's Muslim population has grown since the late 19th century, Muslim organizations have been established and developed to respond to the needs of an increasingly diverse population. Muslim organizations are active in numerous spheres of Canadian society, including but not limited to social services, education, religious practice, politics, and mental and physical wellbeing. While existing literature tends to examine Muslim organizations by type of organization, sphere of operations, or a particular phenomenon, this study presents a composite image of Muslim organizations in Canada as a whole, identifying patterns in how Muslim organizations are established and develop over time, in terms of the scope and focus of their activities. The multi-methods study draws on organizational documents and communications, a survey, and qualitative interviews across Canada. A central finding of the study is that Muslim organizations emerge in response to unmet, specific needs within Muslim communities and that these needs are not limited to the realm of religious practice. Muslim organizations are increasingly engaged in what secular society considers "non-religious" areas of life, reflecting a holistic understanding of religious life and Islam as a comprehensive way of life that does not compartmentalise a secular public life from a private religious one.

Keywords: Islam, Muslim, Canada, organizations, non-profit organizations, charity, composite picture, profile, review

With the Canadian Muslim population steadily growing since the late 1800s, Muslim organizations have developed and expanded to cater to the growing needs of an increasingly diversified community. New organizations reflect new needs of the Muslim community, and pre-existing organizations continue to shift to meet those needs as well.

Muslim organizations can be observed engaging in multiple spheres within Canadian society. This includes but is not limited to social services, education, religious practice, politics, and mental and physical wellbeing. Existing literature on Muslim organizations is fragmented; each article analyzes and discusses a particular type of organization, sphere of operation or phenomena observed in Muslim organizations. This research project aims to create a composite picture of Muslim organizations in Canada to serve as an overarching resource that includes information on the types of Muslim organizations, their goals, scope, and processes. Additional data regarding obstacles, developments, and changes experienced by the organizations is also included in order to piece together a larger narrative on Muslim organizations in Canada.

This composite, large scale image of Muslim organizations reveals a pattern of Muslim organizations being created to meet the needs of the Muslim community where those needs are being underserved by the general society. While this was an expected finding in regard to prayer

spaces opening for the large influx of Muslim immigrants in the 1960s, the larger picture shows that these unmet needs extended beyond a simple need for religious practice — Muslims were looking to build a sense of community that they were unable to find elsewhere. A central finding of this study is that in the ensuing decades, Muslim organizations began to understand Muslim needs more holistically, and started catering to every component of human experience, directly religious or not. If a mosque or religious space was unable or unwilling to cater to a particular need, another Muslim organization was formed to fill the gap. As such, Muslim organizations are increasingly engaging in what secular society often deems "non-religious" activities by means of understanding religious experiences holistically. Understanding that mental health, physical health, social relations, and socio-economic status impact personal religious practice and faith became salient to conversations within Muslim organizations and in broader community discourse. With the understanding that Islam is a comprehensive way of life, Muslim organizations began recognizing that there was a benefit in having youth Quran classes, a community basketball team, movie nights, tutoring classes, and other supportive endeavours as long as they are in line with Islamic practices and principles. This approach has become a mantra for most of the Muslim organizations that function as mosques or community centers — a negation of the compartmentalization of an allegedly "secular" public sphere from a private religious practice.

The literature review for this study identifies gaps in the current literature on Muslim organizations in Canada and provides background information on their history and shaping factors and trends. This information is essential to the study as it provides the backdrop against which it is possible to understand why Muslim organizations were deemed necessary, and the community's motivation to establish, maintain and adapt them to evolving needs. The following sections describe the study's methodology and key findings. This article concludes with a discussion of the study's limitations and future research directions.

Methods

Collecting data on such a broad and complex subject poses challenges. A multi-method approach enabled the incorporation of data that would have been excluded by a single-method approach. Using multiple types of data allowed for a more multi-faceted analysis of diverse Muslim organizations. Multi-method approaches also permit the verification findings and support their integration into practice (McKim 2015, 203). The methods used were content analyses of organization documents and communications, surveys and qualitative interviews. Each method contributed to the process of documenting and understanding the diversity between and within Muslim organizations.

Content from the online presence of a diverse selection of Muslim organizations was compiled and analysed. This selection was made from a list of every Muslim organization in Canada that could be found via government registry records, the comprehensive Muslim Link organization directory by region, internet searches, social media posts, pre-existing lists, and through snowballing of networks. This list became a unique resource that was used throughout the project.

It served as a central location for all information on each organization, including official websites and available social media pages such as Facebook, Twitter and Instagram and details of each organization's location, type, scope, target audience and purpose. The purpose of compiling this document was to paint a surface-level picture of what Muslim organizations in Canada look like. This process was also an opportunity to evaluate the ways in which Canadian Muslim organizations have been categorized, and to create a taxonomic system that would serve the purposes of this particular research project. With a system of categorization in place, it became possible to identify and reach out to a representative sample of organizations for interviews.

A general survey was also distributed across various Muslim networks and organizations to understand the impact that Muslim organizations have on those who patronise them, and to determine the rationales of those who do not. The survey was also circulated on social media pages that were not associated with particular organizations, in order to achieve a more representative sample of a general Muslim response.

Analysis methods for this study entailed observing the patterns regarding the locations and types of Muslim organizations across the provinces in Canada. These patterns were also analyzed alongside demographic trends of Muslims in Canada collected from available statistics. Interviews were transcribed and the themes were collected based on the notes made during the actual interview process and the transcripts that followed. In relation to interviews, survey results and content analysis, key themes were collected and analyzed against the multiple methods of data collection. The patterns uncovered from the collected data were also placed alongside the trends observed in the demographic distribution in order to further understand the data. Finally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a highly selective sample of participants. In choosing interview participants, close attention was paid to representation of the complexities within Muslim communities and the full range of organizations found in Canada. Thirteen interviews were conducted across 10 cities and 5 provinces. The organizations ranged in age from having been established within the past two years, to dating back to the early 1900s. The organizations self-identified as community centres, mosques, social services, and youth groups. Interviewees were all members of their organization's leadership team, who were able to speak to the organization's goals, initiatives, challenges and impact from a high-level perspective.

The interview questions were formulated using grounded theory, a method that specializes in developing theories from real-world situations by creating theories around the collected data rather than collecting the data to support the theory (Oktay 2012, 4). This method is compatible with the research purposes as they are qualitative in nature and look to investigate "lived experience from the perspectives of those who live it and create meaning from it" on topics with little scholarly literature (29). As a research institution, I-RSS strives to achieve research-based objectives for Muslim organizations. The research findings should be actionable and beneficial to the organizations that are the subject of analysis and interviews. This intention fuels the rationale behind a grounded methodology. Questions would be general enough to initiate conversation on

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broad-topics and so that interviewees could navigate the conversations into directions they deemed most important, resulting in a form of semi-structured interviews. This constructivist approach allows for the collection of rich data to inductively formulate theories.

Positionality

The positionality of the researcher for this project is essential to the benefit of the research. Being a member of the community being researched and a frequent patron of various Muslim organizations, the researcher foregoes a learning curve in understanding culturally sensitive research etiquette and has shared experiences with research participants. Shared experience between researcher and participants allows for a more comfortable experience for participants, an inclination towards more openness, and greater ease of communication due to not having to explain meanings and choices of particular wordings and concepts. Sharing a familiar epistemology as an insider provides the benefit of rich insights that are generally admired within ethnographies (Punch & Rogers 2021, 278). When a researcher is a member of the community being researched, they are able to "de-center the authority and control of the researcher," (Yeo & Dopson 2018, 335). There are questions and answers that can be produced with an insider researcher that may not be as welcomed if posed by a member of a dominant group (Zinn 1979, 212) due to the vulnerabilities of participants in fieldwork, especially considering the past exploitation of minority groups through research. This is additionally relevant for Muslims, who have come under undue scrutiny and abuses in surveillance and interrogation (Selod 2018, 56; Abu-Laban & Bakan 2012, 320).

One must also consider that that the Muslim population is not a homogenous group. There are differences in ethnicity, sect, class, immigration status, and location. The shared trait, namely being Muslim, does provide some insider benefits but due to the diversity within the Muslim community, one would not completely share position with those being researched. This fragmented position of being partly insider and partly outsider maximizes the benefit of the insider positionality while minimizing the disadvantages. These differences create sufficient distance to allow the researcher to look at the construction of experiences more objectively (Zempi 2016, 73).

An additional benefit of being an active member of the Muslim community in Canada was utilizing warm connections and extrapolating based on these networks to spread word of the survey and recruit interview participants. Warm connections were able to open doors that provided access to more distant survey respondents and interview participants. Organizations mentioned by contacts that were not previously listed were also recorded and added into the content analysis portion of the research.

Terms & Categories

As shown in Table 1, the categorizations created for the purposes of this study were religious space, social services, student/youth-based, education, sister-centred, charity-based and national and mixed-purpose/community facilities.

- Religious Spaces: organizations that facilitate spaces that are used solely for religious practice and events, including daily prayers, breaking fast, meeting spaces for religious education, and celebration of Islamic events.
- Student/Youth-based: organizations in which the target audience are aged between 14-30, typically also facilitated by youth and students.
- Education: full-time or part-time Islamic educational organizations, can take the form of daytime schooling or weekend/evening classes. While occasionally connected to mosques, this is not always the case, therefore necessitating a separate category.
- Sister-Centered: target audience is Muslim women, typically the organization looks to facilitate programs for Muslim women by Muslim women in fulfillment of particular needs that may or may not be accessible in the more general organizations.
- Charity-based/social services: these organizations look to provide aid, social services or general support to Muslim populations in various capacities. Occasionally these organizations may also be charity organizations that are facilitated by Muslim populations for the more general Canadian population. Most of the charity-based and social service organizations work towards one particular cause. As these organizations expand, so might their causes and reach.
- National: National Muslim organizations are concerned with issues of representation and advocacy. Some national organizations may be more concerned with specific issues and overlap with social services.
- Mixed-Purpose Organizations; these groups were labeled as mixed-purpose by fitting in two or more of the previously listed categories.

There are a couple of nuances to take into consideration with this typology. While most mosques would be assumed to fall under religious space, many mosque-organizations have expanded to include numerous other projects and have utilized their mosque spaces for initiatives that are not strictly part of religious practice such as programs related to socialization, physical activity, professionalization, and social services. These organizations have programming such as self-defense classes for Muslim women, tutoring in school subjects, and movie and game nights. The categorization of religious space includes full mosques as well as spaces that only function as prayer spaces. These mosques that function beyond prayer spaces are categorized under mixed purpose/community facilities. Potential overlap must also be acknowledged as many organizations could fit under more than one category. In this case, organizations were labeled as both and interviewed in light of both categorizations.

Finally, there were organizations that did not fit into any particular category yet were not enough in number to warrant their own categorization. These included organizations that were strictly sports-based but unrelated to broader organizations, organizations that looked to promote Islamic art and culture, and organizations that relate to Muslims in specific job fields such as medicine and law.

	ON	AB	QU	BC	MB	NB	NS	NLD	PEI	SK	North	Org. Totals
Religious Organizations	86	40	15	39	16	6	8	2	2	12	3	229
Community	24	10	2	6	1		1					44
Social Services	10	3	1	3	3		2					22
Education	17	4	9	2			1					33
Youth/ Student	23	11	2	6	3	1	1	1		2		50
Women	6	3		1	1	1						12
National	17											17
Other	7	1										8
Ethnocultural	72			11						2		85
Prov. Totals	262	72	29	68	24	8	13	3	2	16	3	500

Table 1. List of Muslim Organizations Per Province.

Content Analysis/Demographic Findings

The content analysis of the different organizations in Canada was organized by provincial or regional categorization, and by types of organization. While the list of organizations developed accounts for nearly all Muslim organizations that have a social media presence or are listed in publicly available records, it is essential to acknowledge a limitation of assuming "all organizations" were documented. As Muslim organizations exist and develop in various capacities, many may not have a social media presence or are not listed in public records. Some Muslim groups or organizations may also function on a micro-scale or an informal basis. The Muslim organizations that are accounted for, have undergone particular processes for formalizing their initiatives by means of registering, finance processing, and so forth.

Many of the Muslim organizations catered to specific ethno-cultural populations through their language of operation, and were not titled as Islamic/Muslim per se. This study counted eighty-seven organizations that explicitly catered to specific ethno-cultural populations that are usually majority-Muslim. A total of 500 Muslim-specific organizations were counted Canada-wide. The number is expected to be a slight underrepresentation due to the groups that exist outside of formal organizational structures. While these groups may not count as formal organizations, they were mentioned in survey responses from Muslims who did not frequent mainstream Muslim

organizations. Finally, non-Sunni, Muslim-identifying organizations included denominations such as Twelver Shia, Ismaili, and Ahmadiyya groups.

Each province had a relatively even distribution of the different organization types; mosques, sister-centered organizations, youth-focused organizations, national organizations, social services and mixed-purpose community centres. Provinces with less urban cities and smaller Muslim populations were more likely to have general umbrella-organizations, while large metropolitan cities with larger Muslim populations were more likely to have both general organizations and organizations that catered to specific purposes and causes. A clear example here is the difference between the Yukon and Northwest Territories, which have a handful of Muslim families, and Ontario, which has the largest population of Muslims in Canada. The Yukon and Northwest Territories had one and two Muslim organizations respectively, while Ontario counted a minimum of 165, not including national organizations that may be based out of Ontario. These numbers are demonstrated in Figure 1.

The national-level organizations generally have different goals and purposes than those that function on more local levels, although some goals may be shared. Finally, there are international Muslim organizations that are based in Canada but tend to function as charity organizations that facilitate that processing of donations for specific causes that speak to Muslim sensibilities.

The number of counted organizations by provinces is as follows:
- 68   British Columbia
- 72   Alberta
- 14   Saskatchewan
- 24   Manitoba
- 262   Ontario
- 29   Quebec
- 8   New Brunswick
- 2   Prince Edward Island
- 13   Nova Scotia
- 3   Newfoundland and Labrador
- 1   Nunavut
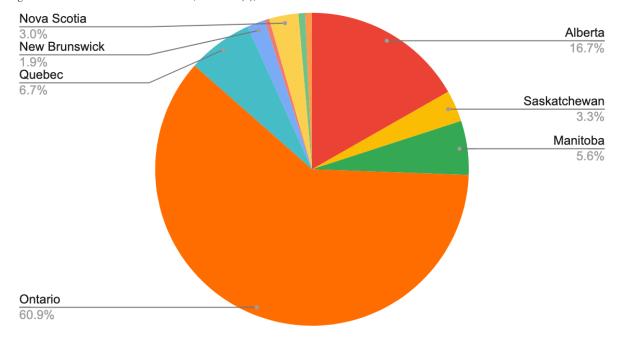- 1   North West Territories
- 1   Yukon

Figure 1: Percentage of Muslim Organizations Per Province.

While many national organizations may be housed in particular provinces, they are counted in a separate category as their audience and volunteers are generally also national. This study counted 21 national Muslim organizations. The organizations that were focused on international endeavours were primarily associated with other organizations that were located in particular provinces.

The number of Muslim organizations per location correlates with the number of Muslims living in that area, with the general trend being that the more Muslims are present, the more organizations exist. In areas that are more densely populated with Muslims, more ethno-culturally based organizations were found. Another observable trend was that the longer there has been a Muslim population in a particular location, the more developed the associated organizations were, and the more widespread their programming was in terms of different purposes. An example of this is that older Muslim mosques/community centers were more likely to have senior programs compared to more recently formed organizations (unless the organization was formed specifically with seniors as the target audience).

An exception to the observed pattern of a sizable Muslim population indicated a higher number of Muslim organizations to service them was in Quebec. Quebec had a disproportionately low number of explicitly Muslim organizations in comparison to other provinces with generally lower populations of Muslims such as Alberta. In the content analysis, other ethno-cultural organizations were found in Quebec that catered to Algerian, Moroccan and Lebanese audiences, however they were much less explicitly Muslim than the other ethno-cultural organizations documented in this study. This may be because of the religious diversity of the listed cultures as well as the frequent

debates and general discourse on secularism in Quebec. There may also be systematic barriers to the creation of Islamic organizations, which may also explain the preferences for ethnocultural centres. Interviewees from Quebec noted a very different culture within Quebec that made Muslims less likely to frequent organizations that were visibly Islamic.

The organizations that had specific target audiences illustrated the diversity within the Muslim population in Canada. Examples include organizations with programming focused on children, youth, and seniors, those that support new immigrants and refugees, and organizations that focus on supporting Muslims in specific occupations such as students, doctors, and lawyers.

Findings

Goals/Purposes of Organizations
The Muslim organizations examined in this study share similar goals and purposes based on their categorization, size, and specific audience served. Organizations classified as religious spaces or community centres often kept their goals and purposes general and flexible, as part of an effort to expand their potential deliverable programming and events. A respondent representing a mosque in Saskatchewan stated that a goal of their organization was establishing Muslim unity by "maintaining people's rituals, like coming to the mosque to practice the religion and pray. We also try to focus on education, which is one of the main goals especially for the youth. We have lots of educational programs. We also try to bring people together. Unity is one of our goals in our community." Similarly, a mosque in Toronto stated that although they began as an ethno-cultural center, as the Muslim community in their neighbourhood grew, they removed ethno-cultural specifications from their title to encourage other Muslims to attend and create unity.

Organizations classified as "student/youth centered" or "sister-centered" also typically had general goals, while specifying a targeted audience. An example of this was a youth group in Ontario that catered specifically to youth-aged Black Muslim girls; as such their goal was to "create a safe space for young Black Muslim girls in the area so they can reach their potential and dreams with less barriers." Similarly, student organizations that catered to Muslims in specific fields, such as those aspiring to be doctors and lawyers, and aimed to generally support their target audiences. While falling more into the social service category, organizations that cater to seniors are increasingly common, and like organizations serving the other end of the age spectrum, tend to share goals that specify the needs of their target demographic. One example is an organization in Ontario "offering services to assist seniors with hospital visits, a hospice program and a variety of exercise programs."

Education, social services, charity-based, and national organizations tend to generally have less purposes and goals and are more strongly tied to a particular cause. For example, one of the social service organizations stated that they focused on "clients fleeing abuse and homelessness, especially women and children." While the religious spaces and community centers were more

likely to list goals relating to "Islam," "practice," and "spirituality," these other types of organizations were more likely to list goals in relation to Muslim identity. As many of these organizations are formally registered, their goals and purposes are listed in their paperwork and as such they must legally function within those parameters.

A unique facet of larger organizations that have been around longer was their expansive goals relating to creating a safe Islamic environment for present and future Muslim generations. These organizations spoke of creating a safe space to build a "foundation" for younger Muslims and provide security and comfort for older generations. There were mentions of "passing the religion to the children" (a Toronto mosque) and specific goals supporting that outcome. An interviewee from a mosque in Alberta explained, "You want children to grow up in a Muslim environment and for them to have Muslim friends. You don't want to isolate them from society, but at the same time you want them to have a strong foundation; that they are Muslim, and this is what the religion looks like and these are safe places. So, investing in education for Muslim kids has been a huge focus for us." Organizations that were not categorized as community centres or religious spaces had goals that were broad enough to cover a wide range of issues but also tailored to specific causes and purposes. Examples include grassroots organizations combating particular issues that Muslim communities face. These organizations typically fell into the social services category and provide resources and support to Muslims facing poverty, abuse, refugee crises, and mental health issues. While many of these organizations specifically listed providing services to counter these types of issues, many also included goals that spoke to creating preventative measures as well.

As organizations expand their breadth, broad goals and purposes remain applicable as they evolve into organizations that serve every element and need of a community. Other organizations felt the need to adjust their goals to encompass their growth. A respondent from Quebec stated that their original mission was "helping the community at achieving their spiritual goals. It is a broad mission that lets us do a lot of activities within that scope." However, their mission has since been revised: "We have reviewed it for the future, and we made it more Canadian and up to date. We emphasized that Muslims are part of the larger Canadian society and the desire to go through the spiritual and daily life of Canadian people with respect to nature and environment." Other organizations emphasized that Muslims are an important part of the fabric of Canadian society as well but did not note this as explicitly as the organization in Quebec.

The organizations that catered to smaller or newer Muslim populations, typically in more remote locations, focused on creating "gathering space" for Islamic practice such as daily prayers, breaking fast, and commemorating Islamic events. These organizations spoke of using their space for whatever purposes were needed by the Muslim community at a particular time, rather than overly structured or rigid programming. These organizations also listed general and adaptable goals and purposes to account for future growth of the community. Finally, there were organizations that address specific niche interests or target an audience that may have been overlooked by mainstream organizations. While these niche organizations can exist as off-shoots

of larger mosques or community centres, they are just as often free-standing and not affiliated with a particular umbrella organization. Sister-centered and youth-centered organizations, as discussed above, commonly mention their target audience and the ways in which they hope to serve them in their stated goals and purposes. When organizations refer to a specific subgroup of Muslims in their goals, there is often a correlation to how overlooked that group is thought to be within mainstream Muslim circles. Such narrowly targeted organizations often refer to the notion of creating "safe spaces."

While creating community and safe spaces for Muslims is a common purpose among Muslim organizations, it is essential to note that many Muslims feel that Muslim organizations are not necessarily safe spaces, and as such, avoid patronizing them. Many Muslim organizations have a reputation for catering only to "mainstream" Muslims, so unless the organization specifies a particular audience, Muslims existing in the margins may not feel welcome. This issue was identified in the context of most Muslim organizations being dominated by Arab or South Asian men. Black Muslims, Muslims with disabilities, Muslim women, and Muslims who were not part of the organization's ethnic majority were identified as groups that are often marginalized in Muslim communities. Survey respondents indicated that Muslim organizations should engage in more outreach, as well as generally being more welcoming. In the interviews for this study, all the participants from mosque organizations spoke of their regular attendees and made minimal mention of additional outreach. One of the mosques acknowledged that the members who stopped attending for various reasons were particularly difficult to reconnect with. As Muslim organizations continue to expand, many have branched into directions that allow better ways to reach out to community members that previously felt neglected.

Development Over Time
Many Muslim organizations underwent similar processes of establishment, and as such many new Muslim organizations are following similar developmental trajectories to the older organizations. Many organizations, particularly those that were established by new Muslim immigrants settling in Canada, started in the same way: as a group of people with an idea to establish an organization, meeting and praying in borrowed spaces or even people's homes, followed by renting and eventually purchasing physical space while expanding membership and reach of the organization. In these initial stages, many organizations become more formalized. This may include applying for non-profit and/or charity-status, developing an online presence, and officially incorporating. Due to the lengthy process of achieving charity status, many more recently established organizations operate as non-profits until charity status is achieved. Organizations that have been around longer have had the time for this process, while newer ones are still navigating bureaucratic processes.

While having a physical space is not a necessity for formalization for all types of organizations, it is central for mosques, religious spaces, Islamic educational facilities, and community centres. Muslim educational organizations may require a physical space if they are running a day-time

school, but weekend schools and evening classes often utilize borrowed spaces such as the mosque or public schools that are available to rent in these time slots. Other organizations can exist without a physical space, depending on their purpose. For example, an environmental justice organization with the purpose of making the Muslim community more environmentally-conscious did not need a physical location and often worked through existing spaces. National organizations focused on advocacy and social service organizations also often do not have a great need for physical public spaces, although they may still have office space for their employees and volunteers.

Beyond acquisition of physical space, one of the key ways Muslim organizations demonstrated development over time is an increase in scope and reach, in a multitude of ways. As the capacity of organizations increases, they begin to develop curated initiatives for specific audiences as they assess their particular needs. Examples of this are organizations which create sub-groups or sub-committees to focus on creating programming for specific audiences like youth, women, seniors, and children. Another way in which organizations expand their scope is through initiatives that are not directly religious-focused. For example, being part of a community and helping your neighbour are Islamic values, but there is no formally structured practice that exemplifies this value. Therefore, Muslim organizations engage in outreach initiatives serving needs they identify in their area. This is in keeping with Islamic values but is not a religious practice, in the strict sense. The organizations provide funds, volunteers, or donations to existing charities that work towards a mutual goal or cause with the organization. Out of the thirteen organizations interviewed, eleven spoke of having some form of charity or service offered in support of the wellbeing of the broader society. This took the form of coordinating food drives, hosting soup kitchens, community clean-ups, and using their physical space for "out of the cold" programs.

Another indicator of expanded scope within Muslim organizations, specifically the mosques/community centers, is the engagement in elements of people's lives outside of religious and spiritual practice. This comes in the form of hosting events and programs for socializing, physical and mental wellness, professional and academic advancement, and childcare/education. Many mosques host movie nights, sporting events, tutoring, resume editing, networking opportunities, and a multitude of other initiatives that arguably fall outside of the traditional religious sphere. Interview and survey respondents commonly stated that this was the direction in which all Muslim organizations are moving or need to move. This increased the appeal of Muslim organizations to groups that less frequently patronized such organizations, such as Muslims who may not necessarily practice all elements of religious obligation, yet still look for the sense of community. Growing into programming and services that are not directly religious practices also spoke to a growing understanding of the limitations of the services provided by the broader society. The social service organizations interviewed spoke of filling a gap for the Muslim community, and catering to groups underserved by both governmental programming and the programming of other Muslim organizations.

Muslim organizations also reflected on the future needs of Muslim living in Canada. Community organizers and leaders anticipate the needs of the Muslim population as the population grows and changes. This was not only in relation to younger Muslims but anticipating the needs of a growing senior Muslim population within the community. An increase in the number of seniors requires an increase in senior programming, an increase in young children requires programming for children as well as a consideration of childminding during adult programs, and ultimately as children grow into youth, the organization must learn how to grasp and maintain their interest.

Finally, one of the greatest signs of growth and sustainability of an organization is the mobilization of its younger generations. While maintaining the interest of youth-aged members and young adults was an obstacle for Muslim organizations, the organizations that have been able to overcome this challenge are the ones that have active youth participation in their project planning processes. Youth-aged community members become leaders of the organization's youth components and begin coordinating their own initiatives. In having youth take over their own programming, organizations ensure that their youth are gaining the experience necessary to eventually coordinate larger-scale programs, and eventually take over leadership as they transition to adulthood. Handing over the reins to younger leaders is a difficult task for previous organizers who have dedicated their effort and time to creating and sustaining these Muslim organizations. As the leadership in the organizations shifts to younger members, this indicates a sense of trust between the younger leaders, the older organizers, and the organizations. This aligns with prior literature on the topic, which recommends listening to youth, addressing their needs directly, and shifting the organization's perceptions of youth in order to increase youth engagement (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio 2020, 16).

Programming/Events
This study uses the terms "programming" and "events" to describe the offerings of Muslim organizations, reflecting the terminology used by participants. Participants used "programs" for more long term, repetitive, structured offerings and "events" to describe singular occurrences, although there were exceptions to both usages. Although Muslim organizations are quite diverse in a multitude of ways, there are some programs and events that are commonplace amongst many. The most common programs and events found in large Muslim organizations that identified as mosques were the following:
- Prayers: Regular daily prayers were offered at the mosque or religious space, if it was within the organization's staffing and spatial capacity; if the organization did not have this capacity, weekly Friday prayers were offered.
- Ramadan Iftars: Iftar is a daily or weekly offering for the month of Ramadan, depending on capacity. Iftar is also sometimes hosted for target audiences such as youth iftars, sisters' iftars, and even inter-faith iftars.
- Islamic education: Islamic lessons and classes were offered by almost every mosque/religious space in some capacity. This included age-specific classes and lessons,

and a wide breadth of topics such as Quran classes, Arabic classes, theology lessons, and Islamic philosophy lessons.

- Islamic event celebration: The celebration of Islamic events occurred in most religious spaces, but in varying capacities. While some organizations may simply offer Eid prayers and allocate additional time for social interaction, other organizations produced large celebrations that included games, decorations, Islamic lessons, gifts, and other celebratory activities. Islamic events include commemorating historical occurrences, Ramadan events, and celebrating Eid.
- Social events: For smaller organizations, social events may overlap with other happenings such as Ramadan iftars and Islamic event celebrations. Muslim organizations noted the importance of socialization within the Muslim community and as organizational capacity increases, have dedicated additional efforts towards social initiatives. This occurred in various capacities and with a wide range of creativity, such as board game nights, sporting events, movie nights, or doing particular activities.

These types of programs and events were identified as community needs, and in some cases were even cited as reasons for establishing the organization itself. Many organizations stated that they arose out of Muslims looking for communal places to pray, break their fasts, and interact with other Muslims. As the organization's capacity increases, additional programs and events beyond the organization's core activities become commonplace. These secondary programs and events open space for creativity within the overarching goals of the organization. This stage of development typically coincides with an increase in organizational capacity. Increased capacity could come from new members joining and volunteering, receiving funding, or creating a physical space that could accommodate additional programs. Some of the common offerings that emerge with this stage of organizational development are providing services for life events, encouraging physical activity, promoting professional/academic development, facilitating charity opportunities and hosting inter-faith events.

Services for Life Events

Providing marriage and funeral services for community members is a consistent primary goal among recently established mosques and Muslim community organizations. Some mosques even aim to coordinate the Hajj pilgrimage for their members. Providing marriage services is typically easy for these organizations, but funeral services tend to be more difficult as it requires more complex components and facilities. As such, funeral services are usually established as the organization's physical and financial capacity increases.

Encouraging Physical Activity

Physical activity programs for all age groups are common among most Muslim organizations. Some organizations were also dedicated to encouraging particular groups of Muslims to engage in physical activity such as youth, women, or seniors. For the more general organizations, sporting events or physical activity was a way to encourage youth to attend events and programming. In

line with the literature, youth feel that Muslim organizations which build safe spaces for their participation help mitigate their identity crises (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio 2020, 7). Non-religious programming where youth can share space with people in similar situations is considered an attractive feature. Sport tends to be a space in which youth can create bonds of friendship and connect towards mutual goals. Making physical activity more accessible for vulnerable Muslim subgroups was also a driving force for developing these types of programs. A popular concept in this area was creating Mixed Martial Arts classes for Muslim women. While regular gyms have "women's hours" or women's sections to accommodate women who prefer to work out without the presence of men, specialized physical activity programming are not readily available. Muslim organizations felt it important that Muslim women had access to self-defense classes as they are often targets of Islamophobic violence, and as such established MMA/self-defense classes for women. Including time, space, and opportunity for Muslims to engage in physical activity in association with Muslim organizations is also an indicator that the organization has branched out beyond solely engaging with traditional religious practice and are therefore hoping to broaden their appeal.

Promoting Professional/Academic Development
Providing community members with resources, workshops, and opportunities for professional and academic advancement is another common programming purpose.

Facilitating Charity Opportunities
Many Muslim organizations incorporate a form of charitable giving opportunities for their members. This can take the form of simply donating to the organization itself, or the organization can facilitate ways in which their members give back to the communities they live in. Some of these efforts are food drives, volunteering at soup kitchens, clothing drives, providing warm shelter in cold seasons, and hosting blood donation clinics or encouraging blood donation. Charitable opportunities are also offered internationally, in the form of building wells, schools, and providing medical supplies in places that are in need of such donations.

Interfaith Events
As Muslim organizations become more visible in the Canadian landscape, many have begun to engage with other faith-based communities to encourage understanding and companionship. While these types of programs and events are common to mosques, religious spaces, and community centres, many of these programs are also undertaken by particular organizations as their sole purpose. For example, there are organizations that focus on professionalization for youth, socialization and wellness for seniors, and physical health for Muslim women (often coming in the form of Martial Arts classes).

Coordinating programs and events to cater to the growing and developing needs of the Muslim population in Canada is a complex process that requires dedicated volunteers and some level of financial consistency. As an organization, there is also the process of measuring the needs of the

community, evaluating the success of each event and program, and assessing the overall impact the organization is having on the people it intends to serve. Many organizations (but not all) have teams or subcommittees dedicated to carrying out these tasks.

Measuring Community Needs

Muslim organizations cater to diverse audiences in terms of age, ethnicity, language, class, immigration status, and individual lived experience. As such, organizations adopt various strategies to assess the needs of their audience or audiences and maximize community benefit. One such strategy is simply regularly asking community members what the organization could do for them. Surveys and feedback forms are intermittently distributed when deemed appropriate. Annual or biannual town halls were also a popular method to gauge community needs. Some organizations cited that their planning team was easily accessible to the general community, and when community members had ideas or needs, they wanted met, they simply asked the coordinators. Other community organizers stated that they were aware of the needs of their audience, as they shared similar needs, and therefore were able to cater to them. This was particularly true for sister-centered and youth groups as they were led by members of the target audience. More general organizations also similarly cited being a close community and therefore knowing the community's needs. In line with this, a mosque in Alberta stated, "The community is very tight, it's not very hard to figure out what is going on. We do a few needs assessments to get opinions and feedback. We do hold meetings with our community as well. A lot [of our measured needs] is what we are seeing on the ground." For the larger organizations, the community can determine particular needs based on what they currently have too large of a capacity for. This particular organization also stated that their Islamic school project had around 300 kids on their waitlist and acknowledged that future generations would also have this structural limitation to deal with.

Growing religious spaces began assessing the broader needs of their audiences as they began to function as community spaces, dealing with multiple dimensions of the human experience and recognizing the holistic nature of religious practice. Two large mosque/community center organizations in Alberta and Ontario spoke to assessing the needs of the community and recognizing that seniors require their own programming and initiatives through the mosque. Both stated that seniors felt deep connections with the mosques and needed the programming for socialization and religious benefit. Additional services needed by seniors became apparent and were assessed by understanding what the general society provided Muslim seniors, and filling in the shortcomings, included services for which public programs were at capacity, like long-term housing and wellness checks. These centres also stated that research was an important tool for assessing community needs. This included looking at what other Muslim organizations were doing, what general Canadian services are offered, and assessing needs by age group.

Measuring Success

Charities, social services, and education organizations can measure success with quantitative measures. Many have a framework of statistics that are utilized to measure developments in their

audience, increase in organizational outreach, and attendance. Depending on the type of event, tracking this information is often embedded in their programming organically by means of sign-up forms or program fees. Religious spaces may also have methods in place that allow for measuring success in a quantitative way. The religious organizations did state that this required extra effort on the part of the organizers, in the form of creating surveys and opportunities to collect audience reviews and ratings of the organization's initiatives. Many of the organizations did track event attendance and noted that while having high numbers of attendees was viewed as a success, so were lower numbers of attendees when they were repeat attendees, as this indicated programs and events were resonating with the community. The mosque in Alberta stated that "People coming back means we left a mark, there was an impact. Seeing some of those attendees wanting to become volunteers is something we look at to see if a recurring program was successful."

Organizations were also able to measure success qualitatively by collecting anecdotes and testimonies from their audiences. Four of the organizations spoke about hosting town hall events in which people could voice their needs, concerns, and offer their compliments for the organization's successes. The other organizations were more likely to rely on surveys and testimonials. Testimonies were collected by checking social media pages. Many organizations had a strong online presence and engagement with their audiences online allowed for further collection of data. Using features such as Google Reviews and Facebook page ratings, community members are able to offer testimonies online whenever they want. Social media also enabled quantitative assessment of general community engagement by keeping track of trends associated with social media comments or "likes." Even if an event had an average attendance, if the social media advertisement of the event had high engagement it could offer insight as to the success of the initiative. Events and programs that were asked to be repeated by audience members were also marked as successful initiatives.

Measuring Impact

The most difficult component of an organization to measure is overall impact. In some capacities, impact was measured quantitatively, but most of the organizations chose to understand their impact through qualitative means. The concept of impact was considered a more valuable component to measure compared to the success of a particular program or event. While an event with high attendance would be considered successful, an event with lower attendance but higher impact would have been considered just as successful by the organizations. The subjectivity of impact meant that it could be measured from multiple perspective including, but not limited to, an increase in an individual's religious practice, mental wellbeing, sense of community, identity as a Muslim, and improvement in social relations. A youth group that catered to young Black sisters noted that "we know at the end of the day we reached our goal if we even have a single girl say that was powerful or impactful or "I'm applying what I learned at that workshop here." This organization collected data through surveys at the end of each program and event they hosted but also formally and informally collected comments from their audience to gauge their long-term impact.

Organizations that fell outside of the realm of traditional religious spaces noted transformational impacts they had on Muslim organizations as a whole. Typically, this meant they triggered realizations that a particular group or service was going underrepresented. A women-centered social service organization noted that they felt their organization had a "transformational impact on the Islamic non-profit sector as well as the entire Muslim community" due to their highlighting of issues impacting women. Other organizations looked to make their impact through religious organizations by providing tools and resources to be more environmentally conscious. This impact was more readily measured through the success and engagement with their programs and initiatives.

The survey component of this study also gathered data about impact. Muslim organizations were found to have impact by creating a "sense of belonging" and becoming a "second home" for some survey respondents. For particularly devoted attendees, the Muslim organizations they attended became part of their identities and lifestyles and as such, they speak of long-term impacts the organizations have had on their lifestyles.

Although there was no prior literature on measuring the impact of Muslim organizations on the Muslim community, it was a point of interest for many Muslim organizations. The idea of measuring impact appeared abstract upon questioning, but with discussion and thought, became a very tangible feature to assess. This indicated that measuring overall impact was not necessarily part of strategic visions in regard to short-term planning but was relevant to organizations that plan for long-term. While it was easier for organizations in the social services to observe their impact, other forms of Muslim organizations are increasingly witnessing the impact of their programs and services.

Barriers/Obstacles

Financial Obstacles
The most mentioned obstacle to executing programs and events that the organizations felt would benefit their community members was financial barriers. All respondents mentioned depending on community member donations to sustain the organization's functions. Mosques and religious community centres in particular relied on donations to purchase or rent their physical spaces. The Muslim organizations that have a charity status were able to provide their donors with tax receipts for their donations, in an effort to provide an additional benefit for those offering donations. As communities grow, donations can increase as community members have increased capacity to donate. In turn, the organization's programs are able to expand in the directions the community or organization deems necessary via the assessment tools mentioned above.

Many of the non-mosque types of organizations also made use of government grants where eligible, but many of the organizations stated that the process of applying and receiving grants was very complex. Additionally, grants that were issued by government agencies were focused on

creating programs and events within minority communities that may not necessarily align with the organization's values or goals. With the use of grants being outlined by the issuing government, the organizations may not find these uses a priority and as such, are discouraged from applying.

Volunteer Shortages

Another consistent obstacle across many of the Muslim organizations was the challenges associated with being volunteer-based organizations. While some Muslim organizations have been able to create an organizational structure with paid staff, mosques and community-based organizations tend to have volunteer-based boards and structural committees. Organizers have stated that this makes it difficult to rely on consistent help. While for most volunteers, giving their time to Islamic organizations is a form of time donation and working towards a noble purpose, this does not mean they are able to provide unlimited amounts of time. Due to not being provided other forms of incentive, if volunteers get discouraged by a particular organization, they can easily invest their time in other places and as such may result in high-turnover rates in volunteers. Having high turnover rates also comes from a cycle of not having enough volunteers to begin with, causing volunteers to overwork themselves, leading to a high burnout rate and more volunteer shortages. Some organizations also cited the benefit to their community members if there could be a space caretaker that could open the space whenever needed by the community. This would require a form of staff position in which the caretaker was financially compensated for their time, but many of the organizations said they simply did not have funds they could allocate for this particular purpose.

Organizational Politics

Muslim organizations are no exception to internal organizational politics and the issues they create within community dynamics. Some of these dynamics impacted larger-scale goals while some caused structural disturbances on a smaller scale. Larger-scale goals are impacted by organization leaders that are "resistant to change." As Muslims continue to grow, the needs of the population change, as does what they look for in the organizations they patronize. As such, some of the Muslim organizations cited resistance to new ideas as a hinderance, particularly as they entered new fields of programming outside the scope of religious worship. Some community organizers relayed the anxieties of their peers in engaging with non-religious programming, as it would be entering completely new territory. Many of the organizations cited this as an issue that occurred at early points in their development. However, in efforts to engage new generations, especially youth-aged community members, the organizations eventually were able to engage in different types of programming within and outside the scope of worship practices.

Smaller-scale issues that were mentioned were disagreements among coordinators when there is no mediation process in place to provide a solution. Of the organizations that cited these types of issues, the greater frustration was with the lack of mediation and accountability process that was typically associated with volunteering in a Muslim organization's leadership teams. While some organizations did mention finding solutions to such problems, such as rotating or nominating

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people in leadership roles, other organizations stated that this was not possible due to the shortage of volunteers to begin with. A shortage of volunteers also made mediation processes difficult as organizations were concerned about people associating their personal grievances with the organization and turning away.

Islamophobia

While not every Muslim organization reported that Islamophobia was a major obstacle for their institutional goals, all types of organization mentioned it as an issue that the Muslim community dealt with. Some of the larger, more visible Muslim organizations did state that Islamophobia was a problem for them as institutions as well. Fears of vandalism and hate crimes were high, particularly after other Islamophobic incidents took place.

The extent to which Islamophobia kept Muslims away from Muslim organizations depended on the other factors. One trend pulled from this study was that organizations in Quebec did notice a decrease in attendance in the aftermath of Islamophobic incidents, or when Muslim/Islam-related topics became abundant in the media. The organizations cited that their community members had fears of becoming the victims of hate crimes or that being visibly associated with Muslim organizations would put strain on the relationships they had with their non-Muslim friends, peers, and neighbours. Organizations from other provinces noticed an increase in attendance and rallying support from neighbouring communities following such events. During this type of circumstance, they noted that their patrons needed the reassurance of support from the community. They also took these opportunities to host events and programming regarding these types of complex topics, providing structured support for Muslims who had anxieties related to Islamophobia and doing anti-Islamophobia education and community outreach to the general public.

A notable absence in our study was any mention of forms of structural Islamophobia by the interviewed organizations. While there was mention of difficulties achieving grants and the lengthy processes of achieving charity-status, financial hardships were not attributed to structural inequalities, despite literature suggesting otherwise. In the 2021 NCCM and University of Toronto report entitled *Under Layered Suspicion*, which reviewed CRA audits, findings emerged that suggested Muslim organizations were placed at a disadvantage in comparison to non-Muslim organizations. This was a result of structural bias that formatted "religious" activity in relation to Christian religious activity and the overall "othering" of Muslim organizations (Emon & Hasan 2021, 5). While this was not directly mentioned as Islamophobia by any of the organizations interviewed for this study, there were mentions of applying for grants and not receiving any. One of the social service organizations stated that the only grant they were successful in receiving were COVID-19 related grants. Only four of the thirteen organizations interviewed spoke of successfully receiving grants, and none of those organizations were traditional mosques: three were social service organizations and the last was a youth group. Additionally, two of the thirteen organizations interviewed explicitly stated they viewed access to grants as an obstacle.

Lack of Physical Space

As many Muslim organizations grow and develop, they find themselves needing particular types of physical spaces to accommodate their particular goals. While some mosques and community centres can make use of any rentable/purchasable space, eventually the community needs particular types of spaces that may require specific adjustments. Some of the organizations simply mentioned needing more space to accommodate larger groups, others mention hoping to expand by creating specific facilities that can be used for specific purposes. Examples of these facilities are banquet halls to facilitate marriage ceremonies, gyms and recreational purpose rooms, and spaces that would allow for taking care of the deceased. Muslim organizations that are not mosques or community centers may have a variety of needs for different types of expanded facilities. For example, Muslim social service organizers look for spaces that could be utilized as women's shelters, homeless shelters, food banks, donation centers and other specialized spaces relevant to their goals. While many organizations cited this as a current barrier that they were facing, most had solutions or long-term plans that would allow them to eventually create the space they needed. Some of the older organizations mentioned this as an issue they once had, and eventually with funding and community organizing, were able to overcome.

Maintaining Audience Interest/Engagement

Many of the organizations had methods to count the number of people that show up to their events and programs. The patterns of attendance were consistent amongst the different organizations that collected attendance, with some events and programs drawing larger crowds than others. This ranged by type of organization, location and size of the organization. A trend that was consistent across many organizations was the need to retain the attention and interest of their youth members. Organizational leaders noted that as children transitioned to youth, they became less interested in the programs the organizations had to offer. A noticeable dip in attendance was described in this age group, and therefore the organizations take special care to cultivate programming that would interest youth aged community members. This did not mean that there were no youth attendees; many youth took active roles in the organization. The lack of youth attendance was based on a discrepancy between the number of youth attending and the number of children who start attending at early ages and eventually the number that attends at an older age. Prior research has shown that youth felt some of the Muslim organizations they attended exacerbated the identity issues they dealt with regarding feeling like a "third culture," particularly regarding judgment from other community members and lack of inclusion in community (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio 2020, 7). The organizations recognized that youth faced challenges in schools and that influenced their identity crises; this was looked to be remedied with providing access to Islamic schools. This idea was reinforced by literature regarding some of the challenges faced by Muslims students attending public schools (NCCM 2017). However, there were still difficulties faced within Islamic schools that have been documented in previous research (Zine 2001; 2006). While Islamic schools were categorized within the research, they were only discussed in relation to larger Islamic organizations that had daytime Islamic school components. Both organizations that spoke to their Islamic schools stated they were very successful in terms of student enrollment and impact. However, there was

little discussion of retaining students as part of the organizations following their graduation from the school or tracking their involvement.

In the focus on retaining the interest of youth aged community members, many organizations did not look at the age group beyond youth to the transition period into early adulthood. The assumption that general programs cater to the new young adults also led to a shortage of attendance in that age group. This group was commonly overlooked as the youth-centered programs no longer catered to their needs but neither did the regular programming. As such, many organizations noticed a shortage not only in their youth ages, but also young adults. This indicates that making programming appealing and accessible to the young adult age group is an area with potential for increasing participation. There are some common needs between youth and young adults, such as majority English programming and programs that cater to the "third culture" identity issues. However, the planning of these programs may overlook that young adults have different limitations on their time than youth and may even have young children that require childcare — not something usually provided at youth events. While the age groups share similarities, their differences often go overlooked and the young adults are either lumped into youth, adults, or neglected altogether.

Deterring Audiences

For some members of the Muslim community, religious organizations are not a place of positive experience. The survey responses indicated a number of reasons as to why some Muslims have chosen to avoid attending Muslim organizations or limit their attendance to particular times and circumstances. Some respondents stated that they avoided patronizing Muslim organizations due to structural disorganization and messy organizational politics. Others mentioned that they were deterred by community members who do frequently attend and that make the organization feel unwelcoming, or by the sense that there was little space for new members or new ideas. This idea of being unwelcome was cited frequently throughout the survey responses as one respondent stated, "They should be more inclusive to diverse Muslims, not all Muslims are the same or are at the level of faith as others and organizations should respect that." This was in relation to the programs being held as well as in community discourse that aimed to "shame" people into engaging more deeply with religious practice. The phenomenon of fear of judgment regarding religious practice or level of faith was corroborated in earlier studies regarding why youth may avoid religious organizations (Al-Qazzaz & Valerio, 9). The idea that one needed to have a certain level of faith was also mentioned in a prior study that found that mosque attendance was higher in those who more strongly identified as Muslim (Environics Study 2016, 17). Survey respondents shared similar reasoning as to why they may not attend mosques, namely stating past experiences of harassment regarding spirituality.

Other survey respondents stated that some Muslim organizations needed to further evaluate the needs of their community members. Survey respondents noted that they wanted to see programs on racial injustice, mental health, financial education, and physical health. Respondents also stated

that they would attend Muslim organizations, mosques specifically, if they embedded social services into the organizational structure and implemented environmental justice initiatives in their organization.

Racial injustices and patriarchy were mentioned by survey respondents who both frequently attended Muslim organizations and those that did not. They noted that seeing more women in positions of leadership at the mosques would be helpful to begin amending structural patriarchy within Muslim organizations. Previous research shows that regular mosque attendance is twice as frequent for men than women (Environics Study 2016, 17). The question of racism was spoken of in relation to witnessing or experiencing racist actions within the organization, particularly when a Muslim organization was dominated by one ethnicity. Racism was also spoken of as an issue that needed to be addressed amongst older generations within mosques, by means of countering racist mindsets. An example of this was that Black Muslims experienced anti-Black racism in Muslim organizations that were majority non-black or not explicitly catering to Black Muslims. As such, this was a reason one would choose to not attend a Muslim organization that did not specifically cater to Black Muslims.

Limitations

In the process of carrying out this research, there were a number of limitations that arose and required amending. The most salient limitation that posed a number of difficulties throughout this process was the COVID-19 pandemic. Not only did the pandemic and national reaction to COVID understandably colour many of the answers given by the Muslim organization's leadership teams, but it also impacted the scheduling of interviews. Questions regarding barriers and difficulties endured by Muslim organizations all revolved around COVID. This was amended by re-formulating the question to be dated pre-COVID, or even simply asking for other examples outside of the COVID context. Due to the increased usage of video conferencing in all spheres of people's lives, scheduling research interviews proved difficult in light of the participant's already overbooked schedules and pre-existing "Zoom fatigue." Participants also cited overflowing email inboxes for delays in response to the calls for interviewees. This poses the possibility of limited representativeness of data. As such, outreach and recruitment required additional effort and the exhaustion of warm contacts for snowballing purposes.

A further limitation is that some Muslims go entirely unrepresented due to not patroning any religious organizations; this group is particularly hard to reach when only speaking to organizations. In part, the survey responses were able to speak to a Muslim audience that felt unrepresented by any Muslim organization. While most taking the survey found the survey through their community channels, many came across the survey through internet platforms and as such did not associate with a particular organization. This type of respondent provided ample justifications for their reservations in associating with Muslim organizations. This finding requires further elaboration in a study of its own to understand why people may actively avoid Muslim organizations.

Future Directions of Study

As this research project is only a preliminary study, it reveals numerous directions for future study in order to provide deeper understanding of the dynamics, impacts and challenges of Muslim organizations. This study identified six distinct categories for Muslim organizations and provided a schematic breakdown of organization distribution across Canada. Further studies are needed that are both qualitative and quantitative in nature in order to have greater understanding of trends and patterns.

In terms of quantitative approaches, further collection of demographic information regarding Muslim patronage of organizations would provide a reference and framework for future research endeavours. While national data on Muslim organizations is limited, this data can be collected by inquiring from the organizations themselves. Many Muslim organizations do collect data on their community members in order to understand their audience. A separate research project could also study why some Muslims do not patronize any Muslim organizations and seek to understand the alternatives or reasonings behind this deliberate or unconscious decision.

Qualitative methods provide an opportunity to further investigate the trends and concepts found in this preliminary report. While this report investigated Muslim organizations as a whole, executing future studies on individual categories would allow the different types of organizations to provide insight on topics and specificities unique to their categorizations. Organizations that cater to women and youth warrant individual investigation, as do educational organizations, national organizations and the ones that engage in social services. Each category has questions specific to its type that could be answered through a more specific study. A comparative analysis can be done for independent youth and women-specific organizations in relation to the sub-groups within larger organizations that cater to the same demographics.

A number of studies have been done on religious spaces and mosques in North America, however there is still space for further investigation into topics that were uncovered in this preliminary report. An example of this is research regarding local, national, and transnational social justice and charitable causes that Muslim organizations are involved in and the processes these undergo. How Muslim organizations select which areas, and which causes to champion would be beneficial for providing Muslim organizations in general with insight into the processes of their peers. This study collected some data regarding the perspectives of the general Muslim population on the impact they perceived from the organizations they patronize. This in itself requires its own study to understand why and how people select the organizations they patronize. This study was able to find some answers in shared location, shared ethnicity, and shared language, however further study is needed, especially for provinces with higher Muslim populations. Another comparative analysis could be done looking at the similarities and differences between religious spaces in cities and provinces with low Muslim populations versus high populations. Some studies have already been done on the inter-faith initiatives taken between mosques and other religious institutions, however

these studies would also benefit from being contextualized by specific location within Canada. Location plays an impactful role in how Muslim organizations in Canada are created and developed. This also warrants further research, and while a province-by-province analysis would be exciting, such a study could also group together the provinces by proximity/shared culture to find more generalized trends across Canada.

While this list is in no way exhaustive of further research needed regarding Muslim organizations in Canada, it shows that there are a multitude of research possibilities that would benefit both the general Muslim population and the organizations themselves. Muslim organizations also have a lot to offer in terms of insight for marginalized communities dealing with issues such as Islamophobia, poverty, gender violence, and mental health issues. Research done in this regard could inform smaller or newer Muslim organizations on how to combat these issues based on the experience of the larger Muslim organizations.

Conclusion
Muslim organizations have had a visible presence in Canada since the late 1800s and increasingly so since immigration policy changes in the 1960s. Since the initial immigration of large groups of Muslims, the Muslim population has been steadily growing and the organizations catering to their needs have had to grow and develop alongside them. This is observable in the changes to organizations' intents and purposes and their expansion in scope and reach. Of the six mosques interviewed for this study, they all mentioned a form of expansion in their goals. This is also indicated by the various types of unique organizations being formed outside of the scope of religious spaces and mosques. The ability to categorize Muslim organizations beyond "mosques" is also indicative of the changing trends and adaptations Muslim organizations have made.

As one of the first schematic studies of its kind, aimed at developing a composite picture of Muslim organizations in Canada, this research was long overdue. Studies of this scope and depth are able to provide insight into complex community structures and benefit the communities in which the research is focused. With this type of information, Muslim organizations can benefit from seeing the issues being dealt with by other organizations and in turn can find solutions or navigate avoidable issues. By cultivating further research on Muslim organizations in Canada, one can hope that Muslims can utilize an understanding of the dynamics and challenges at play to further progress the goals and purposes of their organizations.

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FORTHCOMING ISSUE OF RSS JOURNAL

Navigating Place as Muslims in Canada

In "Wisdom Sits on Places" from *Senses of Place*, Keith H. Basso argues that "the self-conscious experience of place is inevitably a product and expression of the self whose experience it is, and therefore, unavoidably, the nature of that experience is shaped at every turn by the…social biography of the one who sustains it." As Basso also states, "places [thus] come to generate their own fields of meaning… [by being] animated by the thoughts and feelings of persons who attend to them." To a large extent, this experience can be shared to varying degrees by individuals who perceive themselves to be part of the same groupings or communities, especially when those collectives are subordinate or liminal to dominant cultural groups.

In "Liminality and Communitas," Victor Turner describes liminality as the threshold between separation and aggregation. While he is speaking specifically about space during religious rites, the notion of liminality and its interaction with dominance and power is useful for understanding religious groups on the periphery societally, and for our purposes here, Muslims in Canada. As the separation represents the "detachment of the individual or group from an earlier fixed point in the social structure…or a set of cultural conditions," and aggregation signifies a new stability and position of the ritual subject in the social system, the intermediary phase operates with unique characteristics not found in other areas of human practice: ambiguity, invisibility, pristineness, silence and so forth. On the way to establishment (if that is even a possibility - a point which is arguable in this context), there is a communion of individuals engaged together and signification of sacrality in their activities. Eventually, this movement "becomes itself an institution among other institutions," leading to a collectivity with acquired authority.

Situating this framework of negotiating through space and transition in interdisciplinary studies of Muslims in Canada, the Religious and Socio-Political Studies Journal (RSSJ) - a double-blind, peer-reviewed, open access interdisciplinary journal from the Institute for Religious and Socio-Political Studies (I-RSS) - aims to provide an interdisciplinary forum for current thinking about navigating and building places as Muslims in Canada. We have invited submissions for the next collection dedicated to spaces (physical and symbolic) - geographical land (nations, borders, refugees, etc.) community buildings (prayer and community spaces), and symbolic spaces (like ethno-religious identity and belonging for various Muslim communities in Canada). We are interested in topics pertaining to public space, community space, religious/sacred space, and domestic space, as well as questions of belonging and "the stranger" in Islam, specifically in relation to kinship in the midst of dis/placement and/or dis/citizenship. Insights from a broad spectrum of areas were welcomed: philosophy, digital humanities & media studies, history, anthropology, sociology, psychology, literature, etc. Subscribe to the I-RSS newsletter at i-rss.org for publication details!

About Our Editorial Board

Nakita Valerio is an award-winning writer, researcher, and community organizer based on Treaty 6 Territory in Edmonton. Nakita is the Research Director for the Institute for Religious and Socio-Political Studies (I-RSS), as well as the Editor-in-Chief for this journal. Her graduate studies were in Islamic-Jewish history at the University of Alberta where she continues to act as an academic strategist/mentor for graduate students in the arts, especially history and religious studies, as well as at other institutions. Nakita is founder of The Nusaibah Collective (a holistic Muslim women's study group) and is a student of the traditional Islamic sciences in Arabic language and calligraphy, and tajweed. Nakita serves as an advisor and research fellow for the Chester Ronning Centre for the Study of Religion and Public Life at UAlberta and is the Faculty of Arts representative for the UAlberta Alumni Council. She is the recipient of the 2018 UAlberta Alumni Horizon Award and is the sponsor for the Fatima Al-Fihri Graduate Award in Islamic Studies.

Dr. Sabreena Ghaffar-Siddiqui is an award-winning public speaker, media pundit, researcher, and human rights advocate. She is a professor of sociology and criminology at Sheridan College and Seneca College, is a DEI policy consultant and a current research fellow with ISPU. Focusing in the areas of migration, race/ethnicity and ethno-religio diasporic identity, Dr. Ghaffar-Siddiqui's research has explored the ways in which Muslim communities in the West navigate their social worlds in a post 9/11 climate, amidst rising Islamophobia. She has served on the boards of The Pluralist Foundation and The Canadian Council of Muslim Women Toronto, is on the editorial boards of Monitor Magazine and RSS Journal, and on the advisory boards for Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, & the Canadian Muslim Vote.

Dr. Muna Saleh is an Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Education at Concordia University of Edmonton. Drawing upon her experiences as a Canadian Muslim woman, mother, educator, and researcher, Muna's doctoral research was a Killam Trusts-funded narrative inquiry into the experiences of Canadian Muslim girls and their mothers. Prior to engaging in graduate studies, she was an elementary and secondary school teacher and leader. Her most recent research was a narrative inquiry alongside Muslim mothers of dis/abled children who arrived in Canada with refugee experiences, and she is now beginning a SSHRC-funded narrative inquiry into the curriculum experiences of Palestinian Muslim youth and families in Alberta.

Elisabeth Hill is a researcher, writer and editor living on Treaty 6 territory in Edmonton. She holds a MA in History and a MSc in Urban & Regional Planning, both from the University of Alberta. Her research has taken her from the big picture (the history of madness and mental illness) to the hyper local (the role of neighbourhood associations in urban planning). She has worked as a freelance researcher and writer for eight years and has provided research support to I-RSS since 2021. In addition to her work with I-RSS, Elisabeth currently works for the University of Alberta as a research assistant and is a planning intern with the City of Wetaskiwin.

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