2009

Exploring a Sense of Canadianess: Canadian Muslims in Kitchener-Waterloo (Ontario)

Soha Elsayed
Wilfrid Laurier University

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-49977-1
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 978-0-494-49977-1

EXPLORING A SENSE OF CANADIANESS: CANADIAN MUSLIMS IN KITCHENER-WATERLOO (ONTARIO)

By

Soha Elsayed

B.A., Cairo University, 1996

THESIS

Submitted to the Faculty of Social Work

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for

Master of Social Work degree

Wilfrid Laurier University

2009

Abstract

Despite the fact that Muslims have been part of Canada's population for decades, there is a current lack of literature pertaining specifically to them. This qualitative study explores how Muslim Canadians living in Kitchener-Waterloo make sense of their Canadianess. I have selected two dimensions of citizenship – rights-based and sense-of-belonging – in which the former is categorized as the objective dimension and the latter as the subjective dimension. In this respect, subjectivity pertains to how people make sense of and understand their citizenship. This study used the interpretive critical approach; interpretive strategies were employed to unravel the deeper meanings the participants made of their reality and the critical theory was employed to examine micro and macro structures that impact and contribute to the participants' sense making and understanding of their Canadianess.

The findings that emerged from this process suggest that: the participants' sense of their citizenship reveals that Canadianess is blended with how they see Canadian values, ideals and principles and how these are applied in real life. Furthermore, the participants' perceptions of Islamophobia appear to have a great influence on their sense of Canadianess. The findings also show how participants draw clear boundaries between belonging to Canada and their Canadian identity. The implications of these findings are discussed, along with recommendations for practice and policy.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to my late parents who instilled in my heart a deep love for humanity and the desire to be a caring human being.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to all those who supported me, making the completion of this thesis possible. My special thanks go to the research participants who gave me the gift of their time and trust in sharing their experiences. I hope this study has honoured your voices and narratives.

To my advisor, Dr. Martha Kumsa, your support and guidance made the success of this study possible; your dedication to research and to your students filled the entire time we spent together. You deserve special thanks for your priceless scholarly experience, your sharp insights and thoughtful feedback. You walked with me through this intense time holding my hand gently, but firmly. I also want to thank my thesis committee members, Dr. Peter Dunn and Dr. Kathy Abslon for their valuable input.

To my three little angels, Logine, Areej, and Abudi, your patience and understanding while you waited for mommy to finish her thesis is beyond words: I love you all. You were with me for the whole journey and never complained. I am sorry for being so busy with my research, but now we can spend more "family time" together. To Mamdouh, your emotional support meant the world to me; your belief in my goals was a powerful motivation that inspired me to move forward and never give up.

To my sisters Abeer and Manal, and to my aunt Nawal, your encouragement, love, passion and prayers have been always the light in my life. Thank you for all you have done for me. Finally, I extend my gratitude to my friends Dalia and Fadia and all those who helped and supported me in making my dream come true.

Table of Contents

SECTION I: THE RESEARCH BACKGROUND

This thesis is organized into three sections. Section I consists of three chapters and it lays the foundation for the entire thesis. Chapter 1 introduces the study and identifies my social location as a researcher. In chapter 2, I critically review the literature and identify existing gaps in the literature. In chapter 3, I outline the design, methodology and ethical considerations of the study.

Section II includes the findings of the study and it consists of three chapters. Chapters 4 and 5 deal with the construction of the objective meaning of citizenship in light of Marshall's citizenship theory. Chapter 4 deals with layers of political engagement and chapter 5 sheds light on the right to freedom of expression, and the macro structural barriers to full citizenship. Chapter 6 explores the subjective aspect of citizenship, in this chapter I present the layers of the Islamic-Canadian identity formation and sense of belonging.

Section III consists of two chapters. Chapter 7 presents a discussion and implications of the findings, and chapter 8 is my personal reflection.

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Muslims in Canada

Islam in Arabic means "submission" to God. This religion is embraced by 1.2 billion people worldwide and its adherents are called Muslims. Muslims believe in the Five Pillars of Islam. The first pillar is called *Shahada,* which means to bear witness that there is only one God and Muhammad is his messenger. The second pillar is *Salat*, praying to God five times a day. The third pillar is called *Zakah,* which means almsgiving (charity). The fourth pillar of Islam is *Sawm,* which means fasting. Muslims abstain from food, drink, and sex from sunrise to sunset during the holy month of *Ramadan.* The fifth pillar of Islam is *Hajj,* which means performing the pilgrimage to Mecca.

The earliest record of any Muslim presence in North America dates back to the eighteenth century. By the late 19th century (1871), there were only 13 Muslims in Canada, but that number has grown steadily and dramatically over the past two centuries (Yusuf, 1993). According to 2001 Statistics Canada figures, there were 579,640 Muslims in Canada, accounting for 2.0 % of the population. Later figures from various sources now estimate that in 2008 closer to 750,000 Muslims make Canada their home. Significantly, Muslims have also recorded the largest increase of all minority religions.

Canadian Muslims represent a surprisingly broad range of distinct languages, cultures, races, sects and values. For the purposes of this research, however, I will signify Canadian Muslims as a category of collective identity based on the commonality of their religious affiliation. In contexts where differences among Muslim community members are relevant to my

study, I will attempt to note them. It is important to note that although I critique the use of labels throughout the study, for the absence of other suitable terminology, I use the label "Canadian Muslims" to refer to those who identify themselves as such. The use of labels in fact presents an interesting paradox. On one hand, it implies identification, and on the other hand, it is loaded with socially constructed meanings.

According to Hussini (1990), the Muslim community faces a challenge in maintaining coherence as a multi-ethnic group; ironically, they are perceived by outsiders as a largely undifferentiated homogenous body. Thus in the west, Islam seems to be the only identifying marker for Muslims. While religious affiliation is a very important social characteristic, it is not the only one: socio-economic class, race, ethnic background and other identities may also come to the fore. But where Muslims (Middle-Eastern Muslims in particular) are concerned, all other social characteristics are immediately overshadowed by their religion, which becomes the sole focus of attention (Kelly, 1997). In this study, I hope to provide a balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity by focusing on religious identity as a unifying factor without losing sight of the differences within this category.

Muslims who immigrate to western countries face the common dilemma of how to practice their faith while integrating into new and unfamiliar postmodern societies where religion constitutes only a fraction of the public interest. Unlike most westerners, Muslims consider their religion to be an all-inclusive way of life, with no separation between one's practice of faith and one's "secular" obligations.

Although Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms makes no distinction among citizens

based on religion, race, culture, sexual orientation, or other factors, practicing Muslims do face discrimination (Yusuf, 1993). According to Moghissi (2000) racism today is systemically targeted at the Islamic way of life, forcing many Muslims to segregate themselves from the rest of society. Haddad (2002) points out that Canadians still perceive Muslims as followers of an "alien" religion, providing yet another reason for some to avoid engaging with mainstream society. Haddad maintains that the chosen self-segregation of some Muslim communities has been exacerbated by the tendency of western religions – notably Christianity and Judaism – to intentionally segregate them from the rest of society. Muslims in turn have often reinforced this strategy, fearing the outcome of seeking more proactive integration.

Muslims have received little attention in Canadian sociological and demographic literature. Few studies in fact have attempted to give a significant voice to this marginalized population; despite the unique challenges it faces, the volume of research conducted has been very limited (Nassar-McMillan, 2003). In fact, Islam and Muslims have been perceived frequently in literature as the "other," a label that goes beyond skin color and other visible traits.

Although Islamic identity tends to be perceived multiculturally in Canada, it is primarily a religious identity, blended with Muslims' various ethnic identities (Tastsoglou, 2001). In fact, Muslims are facing an ongoing and significant challenge in this decade following the 9/11 terrorist attacks against the United States. For example, religious discrimination complaints increased by 20% in 2002 (most being complaints registered by Muslim employees) and remained at this level through 2003. A 30% rise in complaints of anti-Muslim harassment, violence and discriminatory treatment during 2004 was reported the following year by the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR, 2005).

The foregoing concerns indicate that my study fills a crucial need on several levels. It

focuses on a community whose voice deserves to be heard and understood; it will lead the rest of society (particularly policy makers) to a deeper and fuller understanding of how Muslim Canadians make sense of their reality; especially after the 9/11 terrorist attacks. It shows in realistic terms how Muslims themselves can become fully integrated into mainstream Canadian society; and it illustrates how members of this minority achieve a sense of Canadianess. Canadians in general can benefit from a greater understanding of how Muslims themselves have worked to overcome both real and perceived barriers to becoming "fully" Canadian. In this vein, I examine how Muslims make sense of their Canadian citizenship, as well as how micro and macro, structural, and systemic factors all contribute to shaping their perceptions.

Before exploring what Canadianess means to the participants, however, it is crucial to acknowledge that the current ideology of citizenship reflects a Eurocentric linguistic of individualism and its relationship to the state. In common with the Islamic understanding of community, this notion of individualism has not been part of the traditions of First Nations, Aboriginal and indigenous peoples who were once the sole inhabitants of this land. Among North American Aboriginal peoples, citizenship represents the wholeness of ancestral belonging and ongoing community relationships. Aboriginal thought emphasizes mutuality and interdependence in relationships; by contrastthe Eurocentric liberal theory of citizenship focuses on the individualistic view (Hébert 2003).

1.2 Locating Myself

My focus and passion for this study stems from my life experiences as a Muslim woman who immigrated to Canada from Egypt. After three years of residence in Waterloo, Ontario, I became a proud Canadian citizen and much more aware of my Canadian identity. In Egypt, I never questioned my sense of being Egyptian: it was a given fact of life. My racial, religious, and

gender identities were so fully enmeshed I simply never thought about them. But once I received my Canadian citizenship and swore allegiance to Queen Elizabeth II, I felt I truly belonged to this country. I felt that I had been granted the permission and privilege to be, from that moment on, included as a full citizen of Canada. I am proud of this aspect of my identity; yet even as a Canadian citizen, my primary marker in society is not my country of origin, not my skin color, not even my race, but rather my religion. I did not choose the fact of being Muslim as my primary identifying marker; this was chosen for me from among my many other attributes and characteristics. This confused and puzzled me: what makes Islam the only identifier of who I am? Therefore, I wanted to explore further the multi-faceted issue of what it means to feel genuinely Canadian, by pursuing this vital subject both personally and academically. My hope was to articulate some meaningful answers while walking a path of discovery with the research participants.

During this journey I experienced what it is like to be partially an insider and partially an outsider both in academia and my Muslim community; I realized I was caught in an in-between space, not fully belonging to either, as the binaries between the two were invisible. Despite my partial "insider" position, I did not come to this study with any preconceived notions about how "we" Canadian Muslims perceive "our" Canadianess.

An advantage to my partial insider status, however, is that I am familiar with this group and immersed in its culture, which allowed fellow Muslims to speak for themselves instead of watching from a distance and letting others speak for them. I strongly believe that minority groups must learn to speak effectively and proactively on their own behalf and engage in more opportunities to be heard. At the same time, I was cognizant of the limitations that came with my partial insider's position. To minimize these limitations, I allowed myself to step back

periodically and assess my personal responses along with those I gathered in the researcher's mode. Throughout the entire journey, therefore, I kept a personal journal to document my observations, reflections, and discernments; I was committed to monitoring and balancing my personal and professional stance vis-à-vis my individual experiences and those of the research participants.

I must admit that during this study, I questioned my social location in relation to the aboriginal peoples of Canada. Am I fighting to belong to the colonizers who stripped the Aboriginals away from their humanity, rights and identity? This inner struggle, indeed, has been a difficult and intense feeling (I have allocated the final chapter of the study to elaborate and expand on my social location in Canada.)

CHAPTER 2- LITERATURE REVIEW

There is a dearth of literature about Canadian Muslims in general and their perception of Canadian citizenship in particular. In this critical review, I selectively examine relevant bodies of literature pertaining to citizenship and minority rights before I close in on other aspects pertaining to the scant literature on Muslims.

2.1 The Citizenship Literature

For this study, I have selected two dimensions of citizenship – rights-based and sense-of-belonging – in which the former is categorized as the objective dimension (which will be explored in light of Marshall's Citizenship Theory) and the latter as the subjective dimension. In this respect, subjectivity pertains to how people make sense of and understand their Canadian identity and sense of belonging.

There is an extensive body of literature on citizenship expressing a variety of viewpoints. Various scholars view citizenship as particular sets of rights, and/or responsibilities, a combination of both rights and responsibilities, equality among members of a given society, a sense of belonging and inclusion (Kaplan, 2000; Faulks, 2000; McKinnon & Monk, 2000; Goldhill, 1986; Turner, 1999; Marshall, 1950; Janoski, 1998).

Generally, citizenship is defined as the legal, political, economic and cultural status that comes with being a member of society (Turner, 1993). In other words, "Citizenship is a status bestowed on those who are full members of a community. All who possess the status are equal with respect to the rights and duties with which the status is endowed" (Marshall, 1964, p. 92). There are two ideologies reflecting how citizenship in the western world is perceived; these are the liberal and republican ideologies. For republicans, citizenship is about one's obligation to

participate in the political sphere, become an agent of change, and acquire the right to govern. On the other hand, a liberal ideology of citizenship is about the rights that citizens acquire from the state (Smith, 1997).

Citizenship, thus, constitutes both vertical and horizontal dimensions. The vertical dimension informs the relationship between the citizen and the state whereas the horizontal dimension embodies the relationship between members of civil society with one another. Although the horizontal dimension of citizenship demands equality between citizens in society, a closer look at marginalized groups reveals that they struggle to acquire their rights from the state. In reality, the vertical dimension of the state intensifies the gap between privileged and unprivileged groups. These groups make up facets of the horizontal dimension.

As a result of this power imbalance between the state and its citizens -- the seeming incompatibility of the vertical and horizontal dimensions -- class inequality is further deepened and power relationship among citizens are eroded (Fox, 2007; Germain, Kenny, 2005). Thomas Marshall, a pioneer in the scholarly study of citizenship in the west, formulated the Citizenship Theory. He examined the ideals of citizenship and looked at the class inequalities between workers who were not granted full rights as citizens, as compared to those among society's elite. According to Marshall (1950), acquiring "full" membership as a citizen requires having three basic sets of rights: civil, political, and social. He notes that civil rights comprise those rights necessary to sustain individual freedoms, and include – liberty of the person; freedom of speech, thought and faith; the right to own property; to conclude valid contracts; and the right to justice. Political rights comprise the right to participate in the exercise of political power, either as a member of a body invested with political authority, or as an elector of the members of such a body. A citizen's social rights focus on one's entitlement to a modicum of economic well-being and security.

How fully one is a citizen, therefore, depends on how many of these rights or their subsets have been successfully acquired. Citizenship in that sense is concerned with issues around equality of opportunity for people to participate fully in their societies. However it is also important to note that "members of groups that feel alienated from their state, perhaps because of social disadvantage or racial discrimination, cannot properly be thought of as 'full citizens,' even though they may enjoy a range of formal entitlements" (Heywood 1994, p. 156). Heywood further argues that citizenship is not only a matter of rights and obligations, but is also about experiencing personal belonging and affiliation. In fact, citizenship theory has been criticized for failing to account for the unprivileged in heterogeneous societies. Barbalet notes that:

> All persons as citizens are equal before the law and therefore there is no person or group legally privileged, yet the privilege of citizenship across the line dividing unequal classes is unlikely to mean that the practical ability to exercise the right or legal capacity which constitutes the statues of citizens will not be available to all who possess them. In other words those disadvantaged by the class system are unable to practically participate in the community of the citizenship in which they have legal membership (1989, p. 2).

In order for marginalized populations to experience a sense of belonging and citizenship, they need their culture, values, and beliefs to be respected by the public as a whole. A sense of belonging will evolve if minority groups are included at all levels social, political, and civic activity. Citizens or their representatives should have the power to govern themselves and make laws that best meet their needs and enable them to become included in society (Tully, 1995). The

dilemma in multicultural societies lies in the challenge to apply principles of citizenship with equal rights for all citizens, while acknowledging the unique needs of minority groups (Baumeister, 2003). In light of the above, a closer look at minority groups' rights is needed in order to assess to what degree all citizens enjoy such individually focused rights.

2.2 Minority Groups and their Rights of Citizenship

The subject of minority rights has been intensely debated among scholars. According to Kymlicka & Norman (2000), some call for differentiated citizenship, allocating different rights for minority groups based on their unique needs and their group membership; others call for undifferentiated rights for all individuals with no exceptions to any group membership in society. Those who call for differentiated citizenship rights are mainly challenging the systemic injustices and inequities that many minority groups currently encounter. They maintain that undifferentiated citizenship rights serve only to deepen the gap between minorities and the prevailing majority (Walzer, 1983; Kymlicka, 1989; Young, 1990; Tully, 1995, Taylor, 1994). Conversely, a number of scholars promote equal, or undifferentiated rights for all citizens, regardless of their unique needs; their thesis is that such a policy ensures fairness in the distribution of resources and the preservation of a sense of nationhood among all citizens (Rawls, 1971; Huntington, 1996; Schlesinger, 1992; Kukathas 1993; and Kristeva 1993).

Thus it is important to examine the practicality and usefulness of undifferentiated and differentiated rights. In regards to civil rights, for example, minorities in western societies do not have full access to media representation, nor do they have significant input or control over how they are represented. Mass media continue to play a crucial and detrimental role in portraying certain minority groups as "problem people" who pose a threat to society and to subject them to double standards that criticize minority women and men regardless of their actual merit and what

they contribute to society (Fleras, A. and J.L. Martin, 2001). The media – especially in Canada -- are controlled by a very few owners who have the power to present what they believe is newsworthy and revenue-producing. Consequently, it is my contention that minority groups are generally denied a fair opportunity to be heard and to raise public consciousness regarding their issues; this in turn results in negative public attitudes toward minority groups based on media bias or neglect. The outcome is that the civil rights of the affected minority groups are curtailed or severely limited.

In terms of political rights, Tully (2000) points out that citizens or their representatives should have the power to govern themselves and make laws that best meet their needs and best enable them to become included in society. Yet a closer look at how laws are created in Canada reveals that people who are directly affected by a particular policy do not, in reality, have equal opportunity to influence that policy, due to barriers inherent in the political system. A citizen can choose not to vote for a particular political party, but if he or she belongs to a minority group, that choice at the ballot box will have minimal influence (Graham, Swift, Delany, 2004). In this vein, minorities have limited opportunities to influence policies and laws to suit their unique needs.

The social welfare "safety net" is a concept whereby the state ensures the provision of universal social support programs for those in need (Graham et. al., 2004). Empirical evidence suggests, however, that government assistance programs do not effectively help minority groups, as some of the highest poverty rates in Canada are consistently found among minorities (Galabouzi, 2006). Thus, despite the state's commitment to ensure that each member of society is entitled to a minimum standard of living, minorities continue to be disproportionately represented among those in dire poverty. This fact illustrates that universal social assistance

programs have failed to meet minorities' unique needs.

I contend, therefore, that although all citizens should be entitled to the same rights and privileges before the law, with no citizen being considered more privileged or deserving than others, minority groups have been broadly excluded and have not been granted the same rights as their peer citizens. According to the Canadian Constitution, for example, Roman Catholics are entitled to more social rights and privileges than other faith groups. Catholic schools, churches and institutions are funded with public tax money. This situation poses a clear incongruency between the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms that guarantees equality for all citizens, and the Constitution Act that grants a majority faith group more rights than all other Canadian faith groups.

Furthermore, it is worth noting that the Indian Act of 1876 clearly limits Aboriginal people's citizenship rights. In this act, First Nations individuals are legislated separately from other citizens and are unable to practice their political, civil and social rights as mainstream citizens (Armitage, 1995). Carens (2000) points out that many injustices suffered by Aboriginals are due to the fact that they have been treated as second-class citizens.

Thus there are fundamental and systemic barriers restricting those who are underprivileged or disadvantaged due to social, racial, economic, educational or religious factors; this restriction limits their opportunities to fully exercise their legal and/or constitutional rights in a context of fairness and equality. In other words, their lack of standing in the community prohibits them from full participation as citizens, even though they have all the rights and privileges of citizenship under Canadian law (Barbalet, 1988).

It is for this reason that some researchers who support differentiated citizenship rights

resist the concept of official "blindness" to minority distinctions; they see this as policy that poses a threat to minorities by forcing them to play by mainstream rules. Defenders of undifferentiated citizenship, however, resist exceptions of any kind, believing that differentiated citizenship threatens social cohesion and unnecessarily polarizes or dichotomizes citizens. They argue that it is unfair for selected groups of citizens to acquire rights that cannot be accessed by all.

Although both viewpoints raise valid arguments, it would be simplistic to impose a clear cut distinction between them. In researching my specific area of interest, however, empirical evidence convinced me that differentiated minority rights do *not* oppress or discriminate against the majority (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000). When laws and policies accommodate minorities' needs, they lessen the gap between otherwise disadvantaged citizens and the majority, helping them to overcome existing systemic barriers. Considering differentiated rights as the *only* solution to structural and systematic injustices, however, makes it easier for institutions to exclude minorities on the basis of inappropriate criteria, which can further limit their opportunities as citizens and result in greater societal fragmentation. Similarly, maintaining the majority-driven status quo and expecting minorities to find their way to full citizenship on their own is counterproductive and serves only to ghettoize and marginalize them. For example, when minority children attend racialized or faith-based schools, mainly due to a real or perceived exclusionary environment in the public education system, this illustrates the urgency of needed reforms so that the public system can accommodate their needs; otherwise there is a danger of further excluding them, claiming that their needs will be better served within their own communities or institutions. This is a case in which both the defenders and opponents of differentiated rights need to come together in a balanced understanding, rather than create

polarities.

The foregoing illustrates the objective aspects of citizenship, which are tangible and measurable. In my opinion, however, it is insufficient to look at citizenship through a rigid empirical lens that does not consider its subjective aspects; that is, how people make sense of their individual feelings about the quality of their citizenship. A few studies have attempted to address the need for a fuller understanding of personal perceptions around citizenship.

One study was carried out in Finland exploring how one particular minority group, known as the Finnish Roma, articulated their citizenship. It reveals that the Roma (known in other parts of Europe as Gypsies) see themselves as an underclass whose rights and needs for inclusion are ignored by mainstream society and the state. Roma interviewees communicated their sense of economic marginalization through a cultural lens that emphasized their desire for greater inclusion and recognition of their rights. The researcher argues, however, that economic and cultural injustices are inseparable aspects of citizenship and that the interviewees were communicating their desire for a sense of belonging, rather than for citizenship in the formal sense. For them, citizenship is a matter of claimed rights, but belonging is a matter of attachment and the need to conform to the larger group (Nordberg, 2006). This study aptly illustrates that "members of groups that feel alienated from their state, perhaps because of social disadvantage or racial discrimination, cannot properly be thought of as 'full' citizens, even though they may enjoy a range of formal entitlements" (Heywood 1994; p. 156). Although the Finnish Roma study looked at the subjective meaning of citizenship, it did not specifically address factors that contributed to the Roma interviewees' perceptions, or how they understood the systemic barriers that limited their full inclusion as Finnish citizens. This is a gap my study aims to address when applying the same issues to Canadian Muslims.

Howard (1998) conducted a study examining what it meant to be Canadians. The research sample consisted of Aboriginals, first- and second-generation non-European immigrants, people of colour, and those born in Canada. The respondents associated their Canadianess with a sense of freedom, respect, and access to rights and opportunities. This study revealed that respondents understood Canadianess as a value that can exist alongside and within the pluralistic nature of Canadian society as a whole. Although this study shed light on the meaning-making of Canadianess, the heterogeneity of the sample prevented any reflection on what being Canadian meant to the separate participating groups. Also, this study did not differentiate between *being* Canadian in terms of legal / constitutional status, and *feeling* Canadian in reference to the subjective, personal aspects of citizenship. It was useful, however, in affirming that Canadianess genuinely exists as an identifiable marker, even though the majority of its racialized research participants believed that discrimination and racism prevented them from feeling fully Canadian. More attention to these marginalized minority voices was not possible due to the nature of the sampling. My study is dedicated to "hearing" the voices and the subjective experiences of Muslim Canadians as marginalized members of Canadian society.

Hildebrand (2007) explored through focus groups what Canadianess meant to youth. Based on the data received, the researcher sorted participants' responses into eight categories in which "being Canadian" meant: being free, not being American, nothing much, being safe, having pride, just a symbol, having democratic rights, and being fortunate. Out of these categories the researcher observed that for a majority of the young respondents, Canadian identity comprises flexibility, negotiation, and dialogue. The youth revealed that for them, multiculturalism and pluralism are interwoven with meaning-making in their perception of Canadianess. Overall, however, the interviewees in this study communicated little attachment to

Canada and their identities did not appear to be affected by their citizenship. While the above study usefully targeted the youth population -- a population segment that will be important to the future of Canada – the current study focuses on adults over 18 years old who are interacting now with the present social and governmental systems at their disposal. Thus my focus on a specific minority group in fact provides a different perspective.

Taken as a whole, the above-described studies fall short in a number of areas of inquiry. First, they do not address the macro factors that contribute to the formation of citizenship. As well, they do not explore what participants want to see happen in order for them to feel like full citizens; they do not address specific ethnic or religious minority groups (with the exception of the Finnish study); they do not examine the roles of religion, race, socio-economic class, or sexual orientation in determining perceptions of citizenship; and none addressed whether participants' perceptions of their citizenship came into conflict with their other religious or racial identities. To rectify these shortcomings, my study is intended to add to existing knowledge in the field by factoring in these critical but missing aspects in order to derive more meaningful answers.

2.3 Muslims after September 11, 2001

In Scotland, Hopkins (2007) conducted a qualitative study that looked at young male Muslims' religious and national identities and revealed that although Muslim men have a strong sense of national identity and identified themselves as Scottish, their religious identity was stronger still and formed their primary marker. Participants associated their Scottish identity with having been born and raised in that country and with having no foreign accent in their speech. Yet religious identity was nevertheless stronger for them than nationality. The researcher concluded that identity formation is more complex than simply being known as Muslim Scottish.

Many other factors had significant influences on their identity; their parents' place of birth, their degree of religious practice, and the way they understand their national affiliation.

All of these factors combine to shape how individual Muslims understand their national and religious affiliations. Some Muslims, for example, feel that having a national affiliation to a non-Muslim country is contradictory to their religious affiliation. While this study addressed the articulation of citizenship among Muslim men, it did not address how participants actually felt about being Scottish. Also, the researcher focused on micro factors, such as how their parents' place of birth and their level of religiosity contributed to their sense of citizenship, but made no reference to macro factors such as social justice, equality, policies and laws, or the participants' access and entitlement to citizenship rights identified by Marshall. In the present study, I address some of the key macro factors that contribute to national identity formation.

Maxwell (2006) conducted a quantitative study to look at national identity among south Asians and Muslims in Britain. He found that Muslims felt a slightly lesser sense of belonging to Britain than did Caucasian respondents. Muslims also felt that perceived discrimination had more impact on their sense of belonging than did their socio-economic status. The same study revealed that Muslims felt no sense of contradiction between their identification with the host country and their ethnic and religious affiliation; as well, Muslims expressed a belief in the British political system. The Maxwell study shed light on macro factors that contribute to an individual's sense of citizenship, such as discrimination against Muslims. Due to the quantitative research design of the study, however, it did not address the subjective meaning-making of British Muslims; this aspect of identity and citizenship, as seen within a Canadian context, is explored in my study.

Another quantitative study focused on Dutch Muslims and showed that they do not have

a strong national affiliation; rather, their ethnic and religious identities are their primary markers. This study, again, revealed that perceived discrimination related positively to ethnic identification and negatively to Dutch identification (Verkuyten and Yildiz, 2007). The researchers recognized macro factors that contribute to the formation of national identity, but did not address what Dutch Muslims would like to see happen in order for them to feel more like full Netherlands citizens. In this study I created space for research participants to express which factors in our society have contributed to their sense of Canadianess, as well as what needs to be done in order for them to have a fuller sense of being Canadian.

Canadian research carried out by Denise (2001) indicated that discrimination against Muslims takes different forms depending upon whether it occurs in the workforce, media depictions, schools, ethnic profiling by police or intelligence authorities, systemic and institutional exclusion, or the passing of anti-terrorism laws. The same study revealed that hate crimes against Muslims increased after September 11, 2001. It also shed light on the negative portrayal of Muslims by the Canadian media and concluded that government support is important in empowering this population to challenge discrimination aimed at it; this can be achieved through increased education of the public and of Muslims themselves. The Denise study presented a number of excellent concrete recommendations to the government; its findings are unique in that religious discrimination had previously received little academic attention (Sheridan, 2006).

Yousif (2008) concludes that the aftermath of 9/11 has had a significant impact, negative and positive, on the Muslim community in Canada. His findings are based on reviewing the literature, his sociological observations of the Muslim community, unstructured field interviews with Muslim leaders, and inquiries to government and non-government social service providers.

Negative outcomes include: the association of Islam with terrorism, increased hate crimes against Muslims after 9/11, negative media reporting, and increased fear and anxiety of Muslims among the mainstream population. Positive effects include: greater interest in Islam by the general public, increased inter-faith dialogue, some media efforts to overcome negative bias, and an increased political visibility of Muslims. Yousif's study is a holistic examination of the Muslim community and is unique in presenting some of the positive effects resulting from being held under the spotlight of public scrutiny.

A number of studies conducted in Sweden, England and Scotland also concluded that the level of discrimination against Muslims increased dramatically after 9/11 (Sheridan, 2006; Sander, 2006). Consequently, in this study I address how Muslim Canadians make sense of their Canadian citizenship in light of changed post-9/11 public attitudes.

2.4 Muslims in Canada

Few studies have looked at Islamic schools in Canada (Zine, 2007; Kelly, 1997). The main focus of those studies that have been conducted was to explore the impact of these faith-based schools on the Muslim children attending them and the effects on their interaction with mainstream society. Islamic schools provide students with an environment in which the sense of freedom from racism and discrimination is seen in proportion to the degree of oppression and discrimination that exist in society toward marginalized groups. Researchers have also noted that faith-based schools can ghettoize students and isolate them from mainstream society. In one instance, interviewees responded that they did not feel segregated by going to an Islamic school, as they regularly participated in extra-curricular activities outside their schools and interacted frequently with non-Muslims. However, none of the interviewees mentioned specifically how they interacted, or what type of activities fostered their relationships with mainstream society.

Furthermore, the participants did not mention whether they were able to be friends with people from outside their cultural circle.

I argue that Children spend most of their days in school and the majority of their relationships are formed within their school peer groups. Consequently, if they spend most of their time at religious schools, there is much less chance that they will form relationships outside their immediate network. While some studies argue that Islamic schools do not segregate Muslim children from mainstream society, they do not adequately address how participants integrate while they are in faith-based schools.

It is my contention that the lack of inclusiveness in Canadian public schools, (which are based on a Christian Eurocentric model) has pushed many Muslim students away from the public system, in some cases limiting their rights and opportunities. This situation illustrates that integration is a two-way process, where both parties -- minority groups and the public education system – need to meet on a middle ground to ensure that members of minority groups can access their rights as citizens and feel that they fully belong to Canadian society. In my study, I engage integration as a two-way process.

A qualitative study done by Schmidt (2001) indicated that Muslims believe the Canadian justice system is tailored to favour more affluent Canadians, while minority groups and the poor are victimized by it. Schmidt argues that the interviewees' negative perceptions of Canadian justice reflect their conviction that Canadian laws too closely resemble the American legal system. She notes also that research participants judged the Canadian justice system based on experience, rather than on its spirit and constitutional principles. It can also be argued that the constitutional principles should be directly reflected in the justice system. Schmidt claims that the negative attitude of participants stems from harsh childhood experiences in Canadian public

schools where minority groups were not included. She notes as well that Canada's constitution has changed since then to become more sensitive to minorities. Her study falls short, however, in not examining the deeper layers of participants' negative perceptions of the Canadian justice system. In fact, it illustrates the divergence between how the law addresses citizens' issues and how citizens actually feel about it. Thus I intend to address the gap between law in theory and practice.

Other research has been conducted in specific areas concerning the lives of Muslims in Canada and the United States. These areas include: the lived experience of Muslim women in Canada and the U.S.; the Muslim community in Toronto; Muslims in Detroit after 9/11; and Muslims' perceptions of the American-initiated global "War on Terror." (Naber, 2002; Kazemi, 2007; Nabut, 2007; Moor, 1992; Hussain, 2001; Mokbel, 2003). Although these studies have contributed valuable knowledge about Muslims, again I found that none addressed the subjective meaning-making of being and/or feeling like citizens in the countries where they live; nor were research participants allowed to voice what they wanted to see happen in order for them to feel more like true citizens. Instead, a common theme in these studies is that researchers present recommendations based on their own analyses, rather than on the responses of research participants themselves. Therefore I also intend to address this gap in knowledge by placing the meaning-making of participants and their voices at the centre of my research.

2.5 Gaps in the Literature

The current study addresses the gap in available literature concerning the meaning-making of citizenship among Muslims living in Canada. A review of literature concerning the perception of citizenship reveals that too little attention has been paid to how citizens understand and make sense of their national affiliation and belonging. Surprisingly, "[t]he vast majority of

citizenship scholar[ship] work focused on theories and ideologies; however, 'we know little about how different people understand their own citizenship (Jones and Gaventa, 2002; Lister et al., 2003)' " quoted in Nordberg (2006, p. 523). My qualitative study addresses this dearth of information in the following four areas.

First and foremost, it explores specifically how Muslim Canadians make sense of the totality of their Canadian citizenship. Secondly, it considers both aspects of citizenship – subjective and objective – as complementary, rather than competing polarities, with a primary focus on the meaning that participants attach both to feeling Canadian and being Canadian. Thirdly, my study examined macro factors that contribute to Muslim Canadians' meaning making which are not adequately addressed in the literature. Fourthly, the current study's particular focus is on Muslim Canadians, a community which is largely absent in the literature; it addressed the issue of more detailed research needed to enhance our understanding of the Muslim community in Canada. Through this specialized focus, my research explores societal stereotypes held about Muslims in Canada, especially since 9/11. Moreover, I believe that this study provides helpful insights for the use of Canadian policy makers and Muslim leaders.

To explore how Muslim Canadians make sense of their Canadian citizenship, I started with an overarching research question:

"How do Muslim Canadians make sense of their Canadian citizenship?"

I broke this down into the following sub-questions to get closer to the meaning-making process of participants.

"How do Muslim Canadians make sense of their Canadianess in light of their rights as citizens?"

"How do Muslim Canadians make sense of their Canadianess at the emotional level?"

"Did 9/11 impact their sense of their Canadianess? If yes, how?"

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I present the design and methodology of the study. I have approached this chapter in six sections. First, I present the theoretical underpinning of the research and the theoretical school of thoughts guiding this research. Second, I shed light on my rational of choosing qualitative method. Third, I outline the sampling strategies and the criteria for selection the participants. Fourth, I discuss how data were generated. Fifth, I present phases of data analysis. in the last section I present ethical considerations that guided this research.

3.1 Theoretical Underpinning

The theoretical framework shaping this study is an amalgamation of two schools of thought: the Critical and Interpretive approaches.

Interpretive methodology was used to enhance my understanding of participants' meaning-making within a particular context. The interpretive technique enables a researcher to delve into deeper layers of the meaning that participants make (MacArthur, Graham, Graham and Fitzgerald, 2008). This is crucial, as the main aim of this study was to explore how participants make sense of their respective positions in Canadian society.

Critical theory was integrated as it "assumes the necessity of critique of the current ideology, seeking to expose dominating or oppressive relationships in society ... [C]ritical theory research tends to emphasize relationships that involve inequities and power, and a desirable aspect of critical research involves helping those without power to acquire it" (Willis, Jost and Nilakanta 2007, p.81) . Consequently, my interpretive work "employ[s] critical theory to elucidate the relation between experience and relevant social structures ... [C]ritical theory is

employed within an interpretive framework ... to uncover new or hidden or ignored meanings or practices that bind experience to the social world. Within a critical interpretive framework, there are possibilities for social change" (Munhall and Chenail, 2007, p. 534)

Considering the realities and perceptions of oppression and marginalization affecting Muslim Canadians and the need to understand how they see themselves as Canadian citizens, the above theoretical framework enhanced the study of this key issue by enabling research participants to have their voices heard. This indeed helped them, as well as the researcher, to better understand the larger societal factors that have contributed to their perceptions of national belonging and citizenship.

3.2 Qualitative Research

In congruence with the interpretive research orientation, I chose the qualitative method to generate rich narratives and anecdotal data. This enabled participants to voice their experiences and to enable meaningful assessment and interpretation of their responses (Crabtree & Miller 1999). Qualitative research in the interpretive tradition assumes that reality and truth are multiple events or phenomena in respondents' lives, allowing both researcher and participants to construct new meaning(s) in the context of their interaction. Merriam (1997) points out that the qualitative method enables the researcher to understand each part in relation to the whole; thus people's perceptions are understood in context, rather than in isolation from other societal factors that contributed to their perceptions in the first place. Creswell (2002) further amplifies this concept: "The qualitative researcher systematically reflects on who he or she is in the inquiry and is sensitive to his or her personal biography and how it shapes the study. This introspection and acknowledgment of biases, values, and interests, (or reflexivity) typifies qualitative research." (p.182)

Qualitative methodology thus validates my position as a partial insider *and* outsider whose personal self is, in reality, also my researcher self. In this context, the qualitative method enabled me in the following ways; to understand this population's perceptions at greater depth; to be an informed observer of how they make meaning from their experiences; and facilitated my desire to closely examine their inner beliefs, rather than just what shows on the surface. Qualitative methodology proved very suitable for achieving all of the above goals in conducting this research.

3.3 Sampling Strategy

The sampling strategy was a non-probability purposeful sampling that involved selecting specific subjects who meet the selection criteria (Babbie and Benaquisto, 2002). In selecting participants, my intention was to maximize the variation within the sample, according to Patton's definition: "Maximum Variation Sampling [means] purposefully picking a wide range of cases to get variation on dimensions of interest" (Patton, 2002, p. 598).

It is important to note that the Muslim community in the Kitchener-Waterloo area is relatively small. As a result, to protect the participants' anonymity, specific information pertaining to each individual will not be provided. However, as the Muslim community in the Kitchener-Waterloo area is also a heterogeneous group, participants in my research reflect, to some degree, its diversity in terms of race, social class, education, language, level of religiosity, and gender, however, due to the fact that the participants did not mention their sectarian affiliation, references to their sects are not included in the study.

The sample consisted of first- and second-generation Muslims; these included converts, conservative Muslims, secular and moderate Muslims. It is important to note that these identity

markers were used by the research participants to describe their level of religiosity. Those who described themselves as conservative Muslims consider Islam as an encompassing way of life. Those who referred to themselves as moderate Muslims maintained that they are constantly negotiating between Islamic and non Islamic beliefs in an attempt to bridge the gap between the two. On the other side, secular Muslims described their Islamic beliefs as being more fluid and adaptable and that they are not concerned with the practical aspect of Islam, in relation to its five pillars and other religious commitments.

In addition, the racial cross-section comprised white, brown, and black Muslims. The ages of the participants ranged from 65 to 24 years old.

The detailed sampling criteria were as follows:

- I excluded participants under the age of 18 due to the complexity of obtaining parental approval, and my conviction that this age group requires a separate study in and of itself.
- Of necessity, language was another exclusionary factor, since all interviews were to be conducted in English. Therefore, participants required Level 6 English fluency in order to communicate comfortably without an interpreter.
- Due to the core subject matter of this project, Canadian citizenship was also a requirement for selection.
- Finally, all participants had to be clearly self-identified as Muslims, although their level of religiosity and/or practice was not a determinant of selection.

Participants were recruited through contact individuals, key informants, from various

Muslim Canadian cultural and ethnic communities, such as Arabs, Pakistani, Turkish, Somali, Bosnian, etc. I prepared participant information letters (see Appendix A), discussed my study with my contact individuals and asked them to suggest one or two potential research candidates. In keeping with a grounded theory approach, and because the information generated from each participant through qualitative research was rich and detailed, my sample size was limited to 8 participants. This sample size was also affected by the amount of data anticipated (Macnee and McCabe, 2008). I expected the data collected for this study to be complex and rich, requiring extensive post-interview analysis and interpretation; my expectations in this respect were accurate.

Interviews were conducted in locations and settings preferred by the participants and selected by mutual agreement with the researcher. My rationale for inviting research participants to choose their interview settings was to enhance their feelings of security and cultivate an atmosphere of freedom and confidentiality in which they could share their experiences without fear of being overheard or judged by others. Thus the comfort level of each participant determined the location, as some chose more private spaces, while others chose a more public setting, such as the local mosque.

3.4 Data Generation

While the popular focus group method of inquiry could provide valuable data through discussions among group members (Hesse-Biber and Leavy 2004), I preferred a one-on-one approach for a number of reasons. First, by conducting one-on-one interviews, I could ensure that all individual research participants' voices were heard. Second, due to the unique characteristics of the Muslim community and the strong bond among its members, some respondents may have been uncomfortable sharing their experiences in front of others, either

through fear of judgment, or of seeming not to conform to community norms. Third, a one-on-one approach allowed me to explain and clarify my study questions for those who needed additional time and assistance to understand them. Fourth, this approach allowed me to focus completely on each participant's unique perspective, whether or not it differed markedly from that of others. Lastly, one-on-one interviews allowed me to observe and evaluate each participant's non-verbal behaviours and the effect of such behaviours upon the overall meaning of their words.

For reasons of triangulation and enhancing the trustworthiness of my research, I also employed ethnographic participant observation to complement the data generated through these one-on-one interviews. Congruent with the interpretive approach, ethnography provided a secondary source of data and enabled me to access information that was not staged for my interview. It captured the "as it happens" element as I attended social gatherings and activities. Ethnography "bears a close resemblance to the routine ways in which people make sense of the world in everyday life" (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983, p. 2). To that end, I asked the interviewees' permission to join them at various social gatherings such as birthdays and community events. Some interviewees showed discomfort and rejected my request and others went on vacations, as a result, I did participant observation at other public events or semi public gatherings and social gatherings where the research participants were not present. I took detailed thick descriptions and ethnographic field notes by observing how people interacted, listening to what they said, and asking questions. My aim was to supplement the study interviews with data derived from observing people in their natural settings and while being immersed in their daily activities. In addition, I also employed auto-ethnography to explore the influence of my insider/outsider relations vis-à-vis the research and research participants. I have taken deeply

reflexive notes on the events and the intense emotional reactions of participants, including myself. I have included these critically reflective analyses in my concluding chapter, under Personal Reflections.

It is important to note that I did not have criteria for selecting which events I observed or was part of. Being Muslim myself, allowed me to gain access to the Muslim community, as a member, where I observed and participated in different social gatherings such as picnics; fundraisings, weddings, casual outings, and funerals.

In summary, data were generated via semi-structured one-on-one interviews and ethnographic methods. In one-on-one interviews, conversations were guided by the interviewer in order to facilitate an in-depth understanding of the issue being discussed. This type of interview allows research participants sufficient and flexible time to talk about their experiences and share their stories (Green and Thorogood, 2004). Taking this approach, I anticipated that each interview would last 60 to 90 minutes, but to be responsive to the uniqueness of each participant, I allowed experiential time, rather than clock time, to determine the interview length. Open-ended questions were used to encourage participants to tell their stories without conforming to any prior assumptions on the researcher's part as to what the answers should be. Direct and probing questions were also used to encourage participants to elaborate on their previous responses, as well as to ensure that their responses had been accurately understood (Babbie & Benaquisto, 2002).

Depending on the consent of participants, interviews were electronically recorded to accurately preserve their data. However, when one participant did not consent to recording, I asked his permission to take notes and he agreed. My intention was that if they do not consent to notes as well, I would still conduct the interview letting them know that I would make notes

immediately after the interview while the material was still fresh in my memory. I also included notations about any observed non-verbal behaviour of participants that could enhance my interpretation of the data later on (Wengraf, 2001). I augmented this data by entering into the interpretative analysis my field notes from my ethnographic participant observations and from my constant self-reflexive (auto-ethnographic) explorations. I generated 289 pages of field notes, in which I documented my observations from social gatherings and public or community events, my personal reflections, and thick descriptions of the relevant settings.

3.5 Interpretation (Data Analysis)

The data generated through interviews, participant observations, and self-reflexivity were analyzed and interpreted in two phases. The first phase consisted of examining the interview transcripts, the interpretation and understanding the story of each research participant and my participant observation; this stage included the surface meanings of participants' stories. Also in this phase, grounded theory was used to unpack the text by using open coding: coding entails organizing the data into manageable pieces, I employed color-coding. In this way, material was processed to let themes, patterns and commonalities emerge. In other words, I looked for shared experiences among research participants and then coded this data into themes (Dyer, 2006; Goulding, 2002). In this process, important ideas and experiences were identified and put into meaningful units; then relevant meaning units were grouped and categorized together (Tutty and Rothery, 1996). In the second phase of interpretation (data analysis), closer examination of the emerging themes was done and deeper symbolic meanings were sought. This phase entailed four levels of analysis: interaction with the empirical materials, awareness of the interpretive act, clarification of the political-ideological contexts, and handling issues of representation and researcher's authority (Alvesson and Skoldberg, 2000). The emerging themes were examined in

the light of both micro and macro structural factors that contributed to the development and adoption of participants' beliefs and perceptions. Through the lens of critical theory, I also considered the systemic and societal factors influencing respondents.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

The ethical considerations in my research adhere to the Social Work Code of Ethics and the Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans. This study was presented clearly and honestly to potential research participants, and gave them the power to refuse or accept involvement in it. Each research participant was presented with a brief summary of the study's purpose and the structure of the interview, and was encouraged to ask questions about it (please see Appendix A). Participants had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, with no need to explain or justify their decision. Since the questions asked during interviews might evoke some negative emotions or experience, I asked the potential research participants periodically about their feelings and whether they wanted to continue. My intention was to ask them whether they would need professional counselling in case they might experience any distress or emotional discomfort. If any had indicated that they needed such services, I had planned to provide them with contact information for local counselling agencies; however, this need did not present itself in any of my interactions with participants.

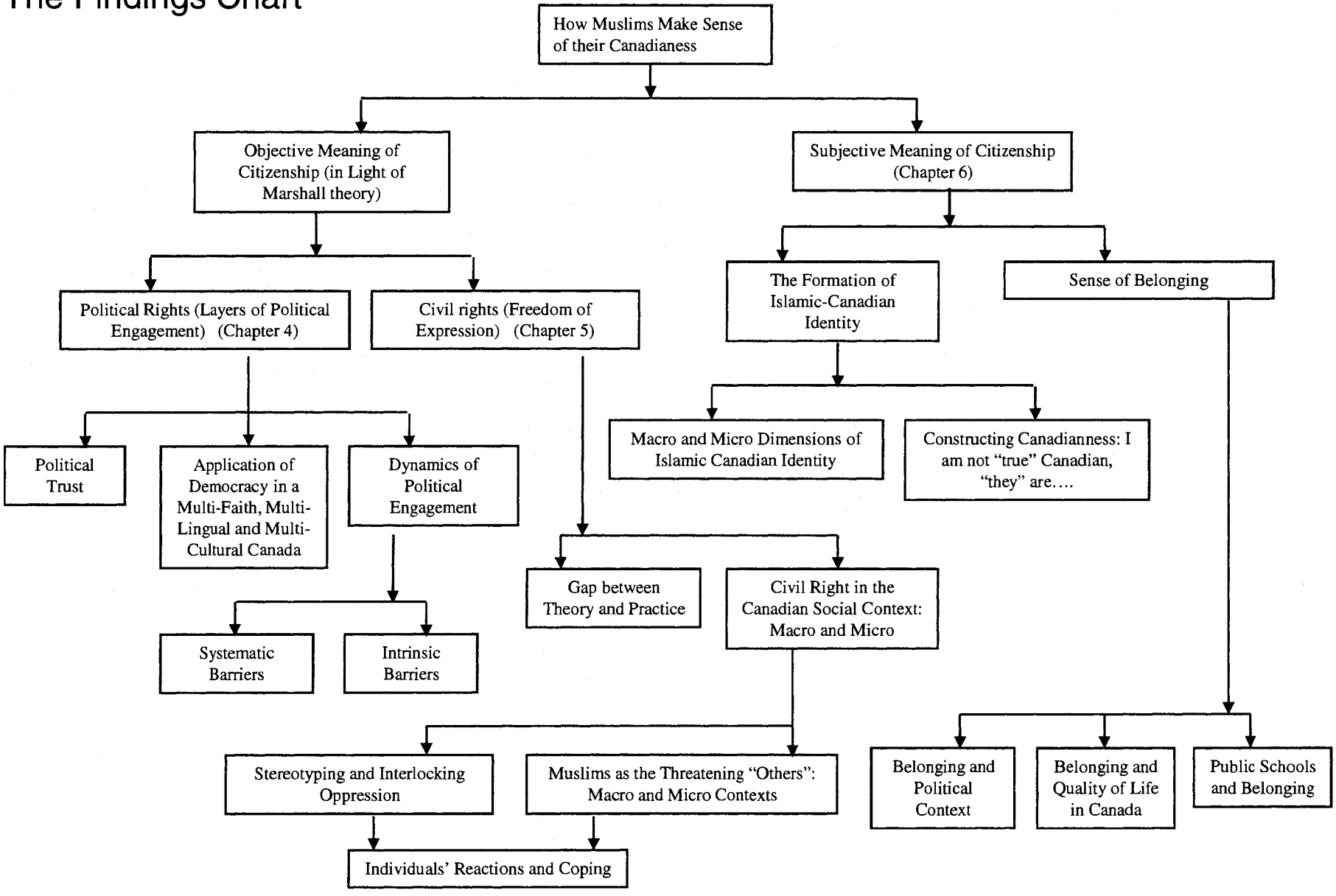
In appreciation for their time and effort, each research participant was given an honorarium of $15.00. For the ethnographic participant observation of community and family events, I obtained the informed consent of organizers (please see Appendix B). Due to the makeup of the research participants' cultural communities, information they share for study purposes might lead to their identification. To minimize this possibility, confidentiality was

respected through the use of pseudonyms, while any identifying information pertaining to individual experience, careers, educational degrees, or other specifics that fellow community members may know was not used in the publication of this research. To further protect their anonymity, I requested and used direct quotes only with participants' permission. Further, the data were stored in a locked box and will be destroyed after one year; this procedure also was explained to the research participants. All participants were given the opportunity to know the findings of my study; my contact information was provided and the findings will be sent to them upon request.

SECTION II - FINDINGS

In this section, I discuss the findings of this study. The section is divided into three chapters. The first two chapters explore how the research participants make sense of their objective meaning of citizenship in light of Marshall's Citizenship Theory. Chapter 4 deals with citizens' political rights with a primary focus on layers of political engagement. Chapter 5 explores civil rights with a particular focus on citizens' rights to freedom of expression and the macro structural barriers to full citizenship experienced during the post-September 11, 2001 period. Chapter 6 explores the layers of the Islamic-Canadian identity and sense of belonging which represents the subjective meaning of citizenship. It is important to note here that although Marshall identified three citizenship rights -- political, civil, and social -- the study participants and my participant observations provided very limited data pertaining to social rights; as a result, social rights are not explored in a separate chapter, but rather are woven into Chapter 6. To facilitate navigation through the process, I have included below a chart that gives a one-glance visual illustration of the emergent themes and sub themes.

The Findings Chart



Chapter 4 Layers of Political Engagement (political rights)

In light of Marshall's Theory of Citizenship, I explore in this chapter how the research participants make sense of their political rights as Canadian citizens. I unravel the multi layers of the participants' sense making of their political rights in Canada. Three distinct themes emerged from the data related to political rights, including: first, the participants' sense making of political trust and how it impacts their ability to acquire their political rights; second the application of democracy in a multi-faith, multi-lingual and multi-cultural society like Canada; and third the dynamics of political engagement. Each theme will be explored in depth. Despite the fact that the participants' Islamic identity is evident and enmeshed in their narratives, my intention is not to create a separate section on this issue, but rather to weave it into the analysis. I will focus on how the Islamic identity is interwoven with, and influences, Canadian Muslims' sense-making of their political engagement as citizens, since being Muslim *per se* adds another layer to their complex situation as a minority group in Canada. In subsequent sections, I will explore the complexity of this added layer in an attempt to reveal how Muslim Canadians make sense of their political rights.

4.1 Political Trust

While exploring the participants' sense making of their political rights, the theme of trust emerged from the data as one of the most prominent topics that most research participants talked about. They all maintained that their distrust of the Canadian political system profoundly impacted their ability to acquire political rights as Canadian citizens. Participant responses revealed that they feel Canadian Muslims in general have some degree of political distrust and this has an impact on their willingness to be part of the Canadian political process. For them,

political trust was not a matter of which party they believed in the most, but whether *any* government representatives should be trusted, regardless of their political ideologies.

In their views, it is their level of political trust that motivates them to be politically engaged, however, the current system is designed in such a way that makes trust-building challenging. Other Canadian Muslims with whom I interacted expressed that their lack of motivation toward political activity is due to lack of faith that the government will actually listen to them, or that they can actually effect change. Research respondents viewed trust in terms of the government's ability to attend to their demands and give them equal opportunities to effect change in policies pertaining to them.

At present, there is no specific definition of political trust, however, as it is an element perceived differently among various racial groups. For white mainstream citizens, political trust is linked to their satisfaction with policy outcomes. But for a minority group, such as African Americans, political trust is related to their perception of racism, discrimination, and social inequality and how they are being adversely affected by social injustice (Avery 2004). In other words, members of the white mainstream are concerned more with what politics produces, rather than with its process or context.

The analysis of political trust dates back to the eighteenth century (Klingemann and Dalton, 2007). A large number of theoreticians emphasized the importance of political trust as an essential component of a healthy political system (Nye 1997; Honohan and Jennings 2006; Hardin 1993; Hetherington 2005; Leif Lewin, Evert Vedung 1980; Katherine Tate 2004; Copeland and Johnson-Cartee 1991; Warren 1999). Furthermore, the Scottish moral philosopher and political economist Adam Smith (1723-1790) considered political trust to be an essential component of economic success. It is also worth noting that trust is a learned behaviour (Ridley

1997). Citizens do not naturally trust their governments; thus it is the government's responsibility to build and foster trust.

In the following interview segment (cited below), Saeed illustrates how he, as a member of a minority religious group, distrusts his governments; he also observes how micro factors -- represented through personal beliefs and level of religiosity -- along with macro factors -- represented through systemic and government structures -- influence levels of political trust. Saeed illustrates that a number of layers contribute to his distrust of government.

> ***Soha***: Do you vote?
>
> ***Saeed***: Actually no, it is something that is not clear for me yet. When I vote for an MP, that MP when he goes to the Parliament he is not always going to remember me and my issues and what I stand for; he will go by the platform of the party. And also the party might support homosexuality, and it is a sin, that makes me compromise.

Saeed makes two key points here. First, it seems he does not trust that the person he chooses will actually represent him and care about his issues. He thinks that his interests are not represented in Parliament; as a result, he does not feel any enthusiasm to be politically active. Later in the interview Saeed stated that he believes his voice does not count and that politicians usually do not care much about those who do not support them to stay in, or hold onto, power, therefore, the cycle of mistrust continues. Ramakrishnan, Ramakrishnan, and Bloemraad (2008) argue that politicians indeed tend to ignore those who do not vote, either because they do not have legal voting status, or because they choose not to vote. This pattern exemplifies the complexity of citizens' political behaviours and how they are reciprocally co-created when an action influences a reaction. In fact, Powell (1986) and Cox (2003) argue that the level of citizens' trust in their governments is one of the major factors influencing voter turnout.

Secondly, Saeed's response also raises the issue of representation of minority groups. For example, in Toronto -- one of the most diverse cities in the world – the diversity of its population is not reflected in the ranks of its elected politicians (Statistic Canada, 2001). In fact, Saeed's experience reflects a common attitude amongst those who identify themselves as conservative Muslims, they believe that the western secular political system not only lacks Muslim representation but also violates their Islamic beliefs and values. They believe they should not support, nor be engaged in, the political sphere due to the fact that it does not reflect their religious beliefs (Warren, 2008). Based on my participant observation, I contend that this opinion is held by a considerable number of Canadian Muslims. They are struggling with the conflict between being politically active and being a "good" Muslim. Those who hold this opinion believe that Muslims should not be part of a system that is not Islamically based; and that by participating, they abandon the core values of their religion. Some Muslim leaders, however, are now moving beyond this conventional mindset -- at least in countries like Britain and France (Ansari, 2004).

As seen from Saeed's response and other participants, their religious beliefs shaped their perceptions of the quality of political parties and whether any political party can be supported. Political parties were evaluated according to whether (or if) they conform to Islamic teachings, and by how much or how little. In fact, within the research literature, a majority of Muslims echo Saeed's opinions about homosexuality (Cesari, McLoughlin, 2005; Qazwini & Crawford, 2007). For them, supporting a political party that either overtly or even implicitly condones homosexuality is an act of betrayal to their religious beliefs. Based on these findings, I would argue that this attitude is a major barrier that Muslims need to address from within. I contend that political engagement necessitates negotiating one's particularities, values, and biases.

Besides lack of political representation, another barrier is the perception of being able to

gain this representation and/or change the political system. In the following quote, Zainab illustrates her viewpoint that scepticism about Muslims' ability to effect change is translated into their lack of political engagement.

> ***Zainab***: Maybe they [Muslims] don't feel that they are going to make a difference. So even if they do care, even if they love Canada and they do think this is their home and feel like citizens, maybe I think Muslims think that it is irrelevant voting or even participating; it is just a lot of talk and what is happening in the House of Commons is just maybe there is some ideas about conspiracy theory and this is going to be the way, no matter what, and few individuals are not going to make a difference.

In light of the above, their lack of political trust has macro and micro implications; that is, it has an impact on both society and individuals. Moreno and Catterberg (2005) point out that "political trust is positively related to well-being, social capital, democratic attitudes, political interest, and external efficacy, suggesting that trust responds to government performance (p. 31)". At the micro level, when citizens feel powerless they internalize the values and beliefs of the powerful and the "powerless becomes socialized into compliance" (Zanetti, King, 2005, p. 56, citing Gaventa, 1980). My participant observations also reveal that the notion of compliance is popular within the Muslim community, for they believe this is the only option they have. Compliance, understood as diminished motivation to challenge the status quo or systemic injustice, is prevalent among the Muslim Canadian community. For them, compliance is a coping mechanism they developed in order to function in a system that they do not trust in serving their needs.

Participant Diana offers a different perspective on political trust and how her Muslim identity has shaped and influenced her attitudes. Whereas the previous two participants refer to their identity not being recognized in the political system, Diana prefers that her religious

identity not be taken into consideration when voting since she does not want the negative stereotypes undermining her political activity. She states that being identified as a Muslim, in itself, undermines her power to be politically active. Consequently, her willingness to participate in politics depends on her success in concealing her Muslim identity. Thus voting provides her with a secure hiding-place behind the ballot box so no one will identify her as Muslim, but rather "as a voice." Diana apparently makes sense of her political engagement based on discourses she hears from society. I would argue that her political behaviour is shaped by her belief that her presence as a Muslim woman in the political arena is not welcome; given her perception of societal norms and stereotypes, consequently, for her to be active and to practice her rights as a citizen, she needs to develop her own coping skills. The way she makes sense of it illustrates how dominant discourse influences some citizens' immediate behaviours.

> ***Diana***: Being politically active, I think I can do it; I vote, just because you are not so much a face as you are just a voice. And that's something I'm able to cope with … After I converted, often I feel afraid that if someone would see me as Muslim, I would be identified with all the negativity.

Diana fears that if she is identified as being Muslim, she will lose her power to effect change. As she says, "*I would be identified with all the negativity.*" She feels that the way her faith is viewed in society puts its adherents in a vulnerable position. As a result, she feels that voting and being proactive behind the scenes without being identified allows her to be politically engaged. For Diana, being active without being identified is something she can cope with. On the other hand, if her engagement required her to declare who she is, she would feel herself placed in a vulnerable situation and viewed in a negative light; consequently, she would be discouraged. Diana's narrative suggests that she does not trust the outcome of her political engagement if her Islamic identity is visible.

I was struck by the fact that Diana's sense of powerlessness reaches the same deep level as the rest of the research participants. I had assumed her story would be different because she belongs to mainstream Canadian society where issues of race, language, ability, sexual orientation, and economic class are concerned. Her faith, however, has automatically placed her in a position of being the "other." Although she would ordinarily be considered a privileged member of society, it appears that her Islamic identity overshadows other benefits of her place in society, at least in the context of this narrative. Diana's religious identity has become the only marker that immobilizes her from participating fully in society, as she is conscious only of the negativity associated with her religion.

Although some scholars argue that a degree of scepticism is healthy, since citizens become watchdogs of their government (Mishler and Rose 1997; Norris 1999), I believe expressions of scepticism went beyond a healthy level for some of the research participants. Ingrained scepticism acted as an immobilizing force that made it difficult for them to become politically engaged and to practice their rights as citizens.

4.2 The Application of Democracy in a Multifaith, Multilingual, Multicultural Canada

The research participants' scepticism went beyond political representation to the functionality of the system as a whole; they questioned the application of Canada's democratic values and principles that would enable them to practice and access their political rights. In this section, I aim to explore how the research participants' sense making of democracy impacts and shapes their perception of their political rights as Canadian citizens. I present the participants' narratives to pursue a more in depth exploration of how they perceive their political rights.

Participants view democracy as a means to influence political decisions on an equal

footing with their fellow citizens. For them, democracy means not only that they can claim the right, will, and freedom to critique current governmental policies, but that they can also effect change at structural and institutional levels as well as participate in the policymaking process. In fact, their sense-making of democracy is similar to that of prevailing views in scholarly literature (Padover, 1963; Manent and Waggoner, 1996; Ersson and Lane 2000; Grugel, 1999; Weale & Nentwich, 1998; Sharansky, Sharansky, Dermer, 2005).

The research participants demonstrated significant contradictions between democracy as it theoretically ought to be and its actual application. Most respondents, as well as my participant observations, reveal that democracy is not accessed and practiced fully by Muslim Canadians. Their experience of democracy is that it serves the majority population at the expense of minority citizens, with a few even asserting that democracy is meant to serve the powerful elite. To counterbalance the power disparity between the majority and themselves, research participants conveyed a strong desire that all Muslims living in Canada should unite to form one body that would safeguard their interests and speak on their behalf. Only when such a body is created, they feel, will democracy flourish.

In light of the above, participants felt vulnerable due to having little or no voice in policy. The vast majority of those with whom I interacted expressed a lack of faith that democracy can actually ensure access to their rights as Canadian citizens. However, some among the participants voiced a belief that democracy exists and is visible. They felt it is up to Muslims to access and practice it, and that Muslims themselves – not democracy -- are largely to blame for their political passivity. But those same respondents also acknowledged that becoming politically engaged is not an easy process, considering the fact that the Muslim community in Canada is relatively new. My observation is that while Muslims share some barriers to democracy with

other immigrants, their religious identity poses a barrier in and of itself; and the majority of participants acknowledged this to be true (as will be illustrated below).

In context with the above meaning of democracy, and the fact that most scholars articulate democracy as the rule or governing of people by themselves, Mohamed expressed doubts in the interview below that he can even dream of being a politician, much less run for office. He did not consider any other aspect of his identity as a barrier -- except for the fact that he is Muslim.

> ***Mohamed***: As a Canadian citizen, I don't even dream of being a politician.
>
> ***Soha***: Why?
>
> ***Mohamed***: Why? Because, it is too difficult, it is not realistic. When I dream of something, I have to be realistic. It is almost impossible; oh, I cannot imagine. Oh, Muslim and MP, or premier?

Mohamed here raises a key point about the nature of democracy, which comprises citizens' belief in their potential and ability to take a leading role in politics. In his view, being Muslim blocks his possibilities of entering the democratic system. Mohamed's narrative illustrates that for him, democracy entails equal rights, but not equal opportunity. Thus, he exemplifies the difference between democracy as a theoretical concept and its functional application in real-life outcomes. Held (2006) argues that;

> If people are to be free and equal in the determination of the conditions of their own lives, and enjoy equal rights as well as equal obligation in the specification of the framework which generates and limits the opportunities available to them, they must be in a position to enjoy a range of rights not only in principle, but also in practice (p. 277).

Mohamed does not deny his right to run for office, but he questions the application and the accessibility of this right in light of his Islamic identity. Later in the interview, when confronted with the facts, he acknowledged that there are Muslim politicians in Canada; however, he maintained that these politicians cannot fully represent Muslims' needs because the system is structured in such a way as to make it difficult even for them to attend to the needs of the Muslim community. Mohamed seems to suggest that the presence of minority politicians in Canadian government reflects political tokenism and that the Muslim community in reality receives little attention from them. Along with other scholars, I argue that minority or token members holding political office tend to diminish the differences between themselves and the mainstream majority in an effort to "fit-in" (Tancred-Sheriff and Tancred 1988). Moreover, calling attention to these differences serves to widen an already existing gap.

Participant Merriam in the following quote says that the Muslim community encounters a number of challenges that make it difficult to compete against the mainstream majority. She maintains that minorities' demands have to be compatible with those of the majority. While most scholars consulted maintain that democracy allows majority rule while protecting minorities' rights (Kenny, Patrick, 2006; Singh, 2003; Sabato, Larson and Ernst, 2001; Shaver and Strong, 1982; Mayer and Canon, 1999), the way the participants make sense of democracy, given their minority status, in fact contradicts the spirit of democracy. For them, their rights are controlled by the majority; this exacerbates the loss of their voice in decision-making procedures, resulting in overall diminished rights.

> ***Merriam***: Muslims have many challenges in this country. For example, Catholic schools are funded by government. And when Muslims wanted their schools they were denied. *If* you want to do it, then do it for everybody or nobody. This is not fair. The system should not take sides. I heard it from many people in private conversations with other Muslims;

> we believe that it is only about Islam. When Muslims wanted faith-based schools to be funded by the government, oh for God's sake, the amount of letters and how the media covered it, it was only for Islam. There is fear from this religion. They said it was only Muslim schools that they were worried about. Isn't it double standard? It is okay for Catholics to get public funding, but it is not okay for Muslims to get the same thing.
>
> ***Soha***: Why do you think …? [Merriam interrupted before I finished the question.]
>
> ***Merriam***: Why? Because Muslims are minority, and they are going to be minority forever. And politicians care for votes, right? If you send them a thousand letters saying we don't want this, that is it. Muslims are met with the greatest resistance. Both at the collective and personal level, Muslims cannot debate a policy or ask about the merit of it. We have to comply; we cannot change anything in the system. If anything comes from a Muslim source, people and politicians are worried.

Merriam clearly and forcefully conveys a sense of powerlessness in the face of the dominant majority culture. For her, no matter what she wants, it always depends on the majority's acceptance (or not) of any given issue that her minority raises. In the foregoing quote Merriam looks beyond the concept of differentiated-versus-undifferentiated citizenship rights; for her, it is a matter of equality among all citizens in relation to their acquired rights. Merriam associates and equates her minority status with powerlessness; she feels powerless to challenge or change policies that are not necessarily in Muslims' favour.

On this basis, I argue that minority groups should first acquire equal access to their democratic rights commensurate with those of their fellow mainstream citizens. Only when they have acquired this equality should the matter of differentiated-versus-undifferentiated citizenship rights be expanded and explored. It is important to note here that when democracy is shown (i.e. through respondents' comments and my analyses) as failing to grant minority groups equal rights, this does not infer my rejection of it. I agree with Spagnoli (2003) who argues that when

the majority oppresses the minority, society needs *more* democracy, not less. However, I do argue that this concept should be broadened to include some serious re-evaluation and re-examination of how democracy can function and flourish, so that all citizens acquire and benefit from equal rights, regardless of their social and/or cultural context.

Diana echoes Merriam's feeling of powerlessness due to her minority status. In the following response, she comments on the same point Merriam raised regarding the funding of Catholic schools. She describes how she makes sense of Canadian democracy, which for her means accepting the status quo that the majority founded a long time ago.

> ***Diana***: When the Conservatives brought up the idea of funding multi-faith schools, it was as if somebody left an envelope full of anthrax or something and someone says don't touch it, don't touch it, don't get near it. We are not discussing it, because if we did, we have to change something that we've built on, we have to change the democratic foundation, we have to change everything about us, just because few people want it.

Diana feels that even just discussing Muslims' issues entails giving up democratic values. Her narrative powerfully conveys a sense of Muslims' exclusion from citizenship rights. Mainstream society's response to the faith-based schools issue reveals to Diana that non-Muslims believe Muslims' rights conflict with the principles of democracy and would entail changing the "democratic foundation ... just because [of a] few people."

One might assume that all citizens are equal in a democratic country, but Diana views Muslims as being excluded from their political rights as citizens simply because of their Islamic identity. She vividly symbolizes the idea of addressing Muslims' issues through the threatening image of an envelope of anthrax, which by extension identifies her citizenship rights as an object

to be feared by the majority. Diana's views reflect one influential liberal theory which holds that a minority's culture, religion and ethnicity should be restricted to the private sphere (Castles & Davidson, 2000).

I contend, however, that the mainstream majority also embraces attributes of culture, ethnicity and religion which are not separated from public life, but rather protected by the law of the state. The difference lies in the fact that these "rights" are invisible; they have been normalized and interwoven as part of the basic social fabric. As a result, only minorities are perceived as having readily identifiable attributes of culture, ethnicity and religion that should be separated from public life.

Saeed in the following quote states that he believes Muslims in Canada lack a unified voice in the political sphere, due to the majority's negative attitude toward them.

> ***Saeed***: Unfortunately, we don't have a strong lobby in this country. We have to be united; we don't have a big voice.
>
> ***Soha***: Why do you think Muslims don't have a big voice?
>
> ***Saeed***: The label of Islam is not strong. Also, Muslims themselves are not united. For example, you would find Muslims discriminate against other Muslims. For example, South Asians don't get along well with Middle Eastern, and Africans don't get on well with other Arabs or South Asians. They need to come together and be united. It is a pity, but it doesn't bother me personally ... See how many Muslims' organizations [there are], instead of coming together and forming an umbrella.

Saeed maintains that Muslims do not have a strong voice in politics due to the negative label applied to Islam. His narrative emphasizes the extent to which a minority's fate depends on the good will of the majority, especially on whether the majority holds a favourable perception of him as a member of a minority group. Saeed also points out that for citizens to exercise their

democratic rights they have to be united and capable of organizing themselves. In fact, the two points Saeed conveys contradict one of the fundamental values of democracy -- namely the assurance of equal opportunities and rights of all citizens before the law, regardless of their social and/or cultural status.

In light of the participants' narratives, a strong argument emerges that on the one hand, they believe the challenges faced by the Muslim community necessitate unanimity, while on the other hand they have to deal with fundamental internal differences that stem from the heterogeneity of the Muslim community in relation to race, class, level of religiosity, culture, and country of birth. Consequently, they realize that they must work simultaneously on two levels; they need to challenge society's negative labelling or stereotyping of Islam, while developing more internal solidarity in order to speak with a united voice.

The larger questions now are: How can democracy prosper in a society where minority groups such as the Muslim community have to battle their way through a system that demands a high level of community organization in order to work? At this point in time, I argue that the Muslim community severely lacks the necessary level of organization. Secondly: Why is our society structured in a way that necessitates unanimity?

The participants in this study viewed the government's approach to their issues as a form of systemic injustice and exclusion. Their responses illustrate the discrepancies between the rhetoric and application of democracy, a discrepancy referred to in literature as the "tyranny of democracy." Catt (1999) outlines how democracy is in fact designed to protect the majority's interests at the expense of minorities' rights. She notes:

The majority is seen as having power because it has the right to make decisions.

> As the view of the majority prevails this can lead to the assumption that the majority is right … If equal voting and decision making using some sort of majority rule are employed, then the majority may impose its will upon the minority. Further, the minority may be oppressed by the majority in terms of what it can do, or the extent to which it can participate in the democratic process (p. 35).

Catt further argues that the majority can oppress the minority simply by not creating laws in relation to minorities' interests. Six of the eight research participants commented on how Canada's democratic government dealt with the issues of faith-based schools and *Sharia law* in Ontario courts. For these participants, those issues underscored a belief that democracy primarily serves the majority and that since minority groups cannot effect a change at the ballot box their demands are rejected (Graham et. al, 2004). They also feel that there are certain assumed qualifications citizens have to meet in order for them to enjoy the full benefits of democracy in this country. Those qualifications include: being white, speaking English with a Canadian accent, and being at least nominally Christian (this topic will be explored at greater depth in the next chapter). Therefore, according to participants, since Muslims do not meet all these criteria they are being denied some of their political rights as citizens. Although the pillars of democracy include equality for all citizens – including minority rights, political pluralism and social justice -- the participants felt that democracy's practicality in a multi-faith, multi-lingual, and multi-racial society is questionable, as they do not meet the implied criteria that would enable them to fully practice democracy.

Sammy holds a pessimistic view of Canadian democracy in which he even considers the possibility that the government might interfere in Muslims' personal practices. He makes

reference to nineteenth-century Canadian government measures that oppressively regulated the spiritual traditions of First Nations peoples.

> ***Sammy***: I say to people would you imagine, for example, the Parliament would pass a law in Ottawa saying the Muslims cannot pray the way they pray, bowing you know. And they have to sit down like Christians and do this; and of course people think that is out of imagination, will never happen. It did happen. In the 1800s, government of Canada passed a law that the native people cannot pray the way they pray … The Parliament of Canada said this is offensive to Christians, so this means Christianity is more superior, to the native, and they passed a law, so this is actually coming.

Sammy's beliefs about what the Canadian government could do to Muslims' faith practices clearly run counter to the democratic values and philosophy of Canada or any other civilized country. Yet according to my participant observations, I would argue that fears like those Sammy expressed are quite common within the Muslim community; many think that democracy stops when it comes to them. Because their practices are not compliant with Christian values, some Muslim Canadians believe that the government at some point might set limits on how they practice their religion. Sammy predicts this will be the future of Muslims in Canada.

His belief highlights how he makes sense of his status in Canada. Sammy illustrates how a person's perception of the past shapes their perceptions of the present. For Sammy, the government has a history of treating minority groups unjustly, thereby giving him no reason to expect that this will not happen again. Sammy uses the parallel process of governmental interference with native religion to illustrate how it might interfere similarly with the faith practices of Muslims.

Sally echoes Sammy's pessimistic views about extreme government policies concerning

Muslims.

> ***Sally***: Now marginalization is going to continue, if we sit there silent and say 'oh nothing bad can happen and everything will be okay'. We will be more and more marginalized until what the future might bring, I don't think of possibility; the Jews didn't imagine there was going to be Holocaust because they felt as German as the rest.

Although Canada's democratic values, political system, and entire social context differ significantly from that of 1930s Germany and the Holocaust period which followed, Sally believes that history could repeat itself here. She thinks that regardless of any policy put in place to safeguard people's human rights, the fact that Muslims are a religious minority in the west and that mainstream society perceives Islam in a negative light leaves Muslims vulnerable to such a catastrophe.

In contrast to Sally and Sammy's pessimism, Ali sees glimpses of hope in the democratic system, but only if Muslims take a more proactive role and challenge the status quo. He maintains that democracy is open for all citizens to take advantage of; it depends on how active they are in pursuing their rights. For him, citizens who become more engaged will mobilize politicians to act in favour of the Muslim community.

> ***Ali***: Politicians won't do anything until we tell them what we want. That is the point; Muslims should be writing to the politicians, writing to other entities, writing to organizations, to Amnesty, writing to different organizations that you can approach and who will listen. Then politicians will read it and they will say okay, one person, it doesn't not matter; and then the other day there is another one and a fourth one and etc, hundreds. Then they will go to their leaders and say Muslims are complaining and this is getting out of hand; they all are hurting by it, they all find that is unjust, they all find that is something improper in a civilized country. This is not something we should be silent about.

In the foregoing narrative, Ali expresses his pragmatic view of democracy. For him, it is about applying consistent pressure on politicians and exploring different routes by which citizens can achieve their rights. He sees his rights as a Canadian citizen being interconnected with and dependent upon his own level of political activism. In other words, democracy for Ali entails action and movement on the part of citizens. This notion has been discussed in the literature as "participatory democracy," which flourishes when citizens are actively engaged in the political process (Bachrach and Botwinick, 1992; Mill 1978; Pateman, 1970). However, it is also important to note that this idealized picture of democracy cannot be fully achieved without addressing the barriers and obstacles that citizens encounter.

Ali in fact holds more optimistic views than most regarding his rights as a Canadian citizen. Later in the interview, he described how democracy helps citizens to "vent," or get things that bother them out in the open. He compares Canadian democracy to the political system in this birthplace where people are put in jail if they express opinions critical of the government. For him, democracy provides a space where he can express his views even though nothing might change. He feels this is one of the greatest merits of democracy.

In analyzing their responses, it was clear to me that participants' narratives conveyed a shared sense of puzzlement over the disconnect between how they make sense of (or define) Canadian democracy and how it is actually practiced. For them, their Islamic identity hinders the ability to participate fully in Canadian politics. They believe that their minority status equates with vulnerability and a correspondingly weak position from which to effect change and that there is a parallel between how Canada dealt with its Aboriginal population in the past and how it deals with Muslims' issues today. Participants viewed their social location in Canada as

lacking both influence and public voice. As a result, the mainstream majority deals with issues and decisions on their behalf, or as Merriam put it, "As if Muslims were not able to decide for themselves and they need him [Ontario's premier, for example] to decide for us what is good or what is bad."

The conditions the research participants referred to echo a concept described in the literature as "elite democracy." In this model, the elite are in a position of deciding and pursuing goals that meet the interests of mainstream society, with limited involvement from citizens themselves. In this model, low political participation is preferred and encouraged, as there is a belief that the majority population is incompetent and cannot be trusted to make good decisions. Rather, the elites of society serve the majority without citizens' involvement (Posner, 2003; Lindert, 2004; Millett, Holmes, Pérez, 2008).

I contend that the ways in which the participants made sense of democratic functionality does not reflect the reality of democracy in Canada, where the majority in fact enjoys a considerable amount of power. However, the basic constituents of the elite democracy model can still be applied appropriately to the participants' collective experience as a minority group. In other words, participants viewed their citizenship rights in Canada and relationship with the state through the conceptual lens of the elite democracy principle, which produced contradictory views on how the Canadian political system presents itself to them. The message they receive "from on high" is that their religious identity is a barrier preventing them from belonging to the powerful decision-making "elite;" or in this case the majority. I can argue, therefore, that their view of Canada's political system suggests that it is hierarchical and that Muslims are at the bottom of the ladder where public influence and voice are concerned.

4.3 The Dynamic of Political Engagement

The opinion of the majority of participants indicates that the foundation of the democratic system limits its applicability in an equitable manner for Muslims, thus suggesting that more and stronger linkages between minority groups and government representatives to break down the barriers to accessing their political rights are required. The participants' narratives suggest a need for more dialogue between policymakers and the Muslim community, where both groups engage in critical reflection and negotiation. This kind of relationship is referred to in the literature as "transformative accommodation" and it is a model particularly needed in multicultural societies (Shachar, 2001). In transformative accommodation, the involved parties become engaged in a continuous (i.e. transformative) process of mutual accommodation.

While, in a multicultural society, the recognition of diversity may entail granting some minorities collective cultural rights and may require institutional arrangements that are sensitive to the differentiated political identities that constitute the state, such a differentiated citizenship must be accompanied by an open-minded, morally serious dialogue between the majority and the minority. Such dialogue must search for common ground and aim at mutual adaptation. In this search, neither majority nor minority can expect all their existing cultural practices to remain unchanged (Shachar, 2001).

In adopting the transformative accommodation model as described above by Shachar, the Canadian government would undertake to address the systematic inequalities that Muslims face in this country as presented throughout the entire chapter; in turn, the Muslim community would address and/or renegotiate certain beliefs or practices in order to accommodate liberal Canadian values.

The research participants recognized the need for their community to be politically active and maintained that big government's role should be to cooperate and give them access to the

political sphere. In other words, the systemic barriers preventing Muslims from practicing their political rights as Canadian citizens, as well as intrinsic barriers within the Muslim community itself, need to be addressed. By intrinsic or internal barriers, I mean those issues that need to be addressed within the Muslim community, whereas systemic barriers -- those embedded in the larger Canadian social and political system -- must be addressed at the macro level.

Participants' narratives suggest that a number of internal and systemic barriers currently hinder the formation of a common culture that could facilitate the process of greater political engagement. I argue that there is a need for such dialogue, leading to a common culture that all citizens could share and cherish. Therefore, majority and minority parties should engage in this dialogue toward developing an agreement on shared culture.

4.3.i *Systemic barriers*

The participants identified a number of systemic barriers that prevent them from fully participating at the political level. One major barrier is unfamiliarity with the Canadian socio-political infrastructure: most immigrants came from countries where citizens do not have a voice in the political process and as a result are used to being silent and compliant. Another barrier is language fluency: participants believed that most new Canadians focus their primary efforts on establishing themselves financially. And since many come from non English-speaking countries, it is difficult for them to function in Canada where English literacy is a necessity. They believed the government should take a greater responsibility in addressing these issues by educating citizens about their rights and how they can become more politically engaged.

In the following statement, Mohamed relates Muslims' lack of political engagement to their unfamiliarity with the Canadian system:

> Well, Muslims are not engaged in politics. We have not reached that level yet. We are so, so far. We need support; the government has to support Muslims to be engaged. We are left alone, in a system that is foreign to us.

Mohamed uses two key images to describe how he makes sense of his political engagement -- foreignness and aloneness. For Mohamed, his sense of loneliness has been imposed on him; he did not choose to feel this way. He calls for support from the government to intervene so he can feel more at home here. He feels as if he's struggling all by himself with no support. It seems that Mohamed is not referring to literal loneliness or aloneness, but rather to the symbolism of the concept. The lack of support he's received from the government makes him feel lonely, a condition suffered by most immigrants and refugees who have a sense of exile (Parkinson, 1987; Rose, 1997; Begnal 1990).

Later in the interview, Mohamed reported that he rarely associates with non-Muslim mainstream Canadians, and that the vast majority of his friends are first-generation Muslims. His loneliness, I argue, is not due to a lack of friends, but rather his lack of knowledge about the system with which he is supposed to interact. Moreover, the fact that his friends share the same condition further exacerbates his sense of loneliness.

Mohamed also referred to the Canadian system as being foreign to him. Half of the research participants, as well as many Muslims with whom I have interacted, echoed Mohamed's concern. In fact, research on the political behaviour of immigrants has shown that one of the main barriers newcomers face is their unfamiliarity with the host country's political system (Reitz, 2007). In this regard, Muslim Canadians share this barrier with other immigrants who came from countries whose political systems differ significantly from that of Canada.

In this regard, I have chosen to present Merriam's quote at length, as it expresses a

number of barriers Muslims encounter – particularly how being Muslim in Canada is a barrier to political participation.

> ***Soha***: So what do you think should happen or change in order for Muslims to be fully engaged in the political process?
>
> ***Merriam***: Muslims share all the difficulties that other minority groups face; Muslims are not immune against that. But there is an added layer to that. Being Muslim makes it even more difficult. The fact that we are minority in this country makes it more challenging. The moment people see me visible, Muslim, and woman, they have their negative assumption about who I am and everything. This added layer is created by the media: imagine that you are a Chinese, the assumption is that you are a hard working individual; that is not a bad stereotype, I can take that. And if you are a Muslim you are oppressed, or probably you never got education. Everything is just negative. This makes it difficult even for us to do anything.

For Merriam, her perception about the negative image people have of her as a Muslim woman acts as a barrier, making it difficult for her and other Muslims to engage in politics. In responding to a question about political activity, she connects her ability to be politically active with her gender, her status as a minority Canadian, and her Muslim identity. These factors work together to create a context in which Merriam feels a sense of helplessness. As she says, this condition "makes it difficult for us to do anything."

One researcher who conducted a study to assess how perceived discrimination against oneself (or one's group) impacts individuals' levels of political engagement amongst American Latinos found that perceptions of discrimination translated into non-voting and lack of trust (Schildkraut, 2005). This finding sheds light on Merriam's self-description as a Muslim woman living in Canada. Her experience reflects how complex societal factors can produce and shape an individual's political engagement. It also shed light on the multifaceted interaction between

macro and micro factors, especially among minority groups. In other words, Merriam's sense of how she is being viewed by society greatly affects her perceptions about her ability to change or challenge the barriers she encounters. Joseph and Najmabadi (2003) consider one of the biggest hurdles Muslims face in the west is negative public perceptions about them. They conclude that this makes it even more difficult for a Muslim politician to reach out to the public and challenge how he or she is perceived in light of their Muslim identity.

4.3.ii *Intrinsic barriers*

Just as systemic factors act as barriers hindering Muslim Canadians from fully participating in politics, there are also intrinsic barriers present within the community itself which profoundly influence Muslims' political engagement. These barriers can be classified as both religious and cultural.

In the following quote, Sammy presents an important aspect of the intrinsic barriers encountered by Muslims within their own community. In his view, channelling the community's efforts mainly into building mosques and preserving its religious identity weakens Canadian Muslims' collective ability to be more politically active. Sammy maintains that nurturing Islamic identity at the expense of political activism should not be the priority of Muslims living in Canada.

> ***Sammy***: Muslims should have self-worth of their culture religion as a Muslim Canadian; I am not against that. And then at the same time, you participate in election, you run for public office, you voice your opinion, you become active in the community, build alliance and groups with similar minds in the country … We have more priorities than just building cement blocks and we call it mosques, and even schools and graveyards, these things are important …
>
> ***Soha***: But not the most important?

> ***Sammy***: Not the most important; and I would think that 90% of money and effort of the community goes towards that, to build mosques, and blocks, and schools.

In this interview excerpt, Sammy calls for more engagement and activism on the part of Muslim Canadians. He conveys that having a strong sense of one's culture and heritage should not conflict with being active politically. For Sammy, mosques represent "cement blocks" that do not deserve the bulk of his community's attention and effort. He thinks that political activism should be placed at the top of the Canadian Muslims' priority list.

However, the Muslim community is still relatively new in Canada, and as noted earlier, its members have a strong sense of religious identification. Consequently, for them, strengthening their religious identity is their foremost priority. The question then arises: How can a community with such strong religious affiliation become politically active and engaged? It is obviously not an easy process for Muslims to balance their desire for a strong sense of Islamic identity with a parallel aspiration to be more engaged in the larger community.

Chapter 5: FREEDOM OF EXPRESSION (CIVIL RIGHTS)

This chapter explores how the research participants make sense of their right to freedom of expression. I divided it into two main sections. First, I explore the gap between how freedom of expression theoretically ought to be and how it is applied. Second, a great deal of my analysis focuses on exploring the Canadian social context in which the participants make sense of their reality. In this section I explore three subthemes, these include: first, stereotyping and interlocking oppression; second, the participants' sense-making of their social location as the threatening "other" within the context of Islamophobia; and finally, how the participants respond to this context as it relates to their freedom of expression.

5.1 Gap between Theory and Practice

In exploring how each participant understood freedom of expression in a Canadian context, most participants expressed a deep gap between provisions of the law regarding access to freedom of expression and their ability as Muslim Canadians to benefit from this right. For them, freedom of expression is shared in whispers to one another. They believe their religious identity as Muslims is a barrier preventing them from expressing their opinions openly, freely and fully.

I have selected quotes from Mohamed and Merriam that illustrate their sense of discrepancy between the provisions of law and its application. Neither one questions the fact they are entitled, theoretically, to freedom of expression.

> ***Mohamed***: In regards to freedom of speech, yes the law grants everybody freedoms of speech, but Muslims don't enjoy it 100%. You cannot say what you want in this country. Everyone is looking at you in a suspicious way. I say what I want privately but oh, I cannot say my opinion openly. I

> have to be very careful about what I am saying. I feel that I am being attacked day and night and I have to defend myself.

In this statement, Mohamed describes his sense of powerlessness when it comes to expressing his views as mainstream Canadian citizens do. His narrative illustrates two key points. First, it appears that he developed his own ways to cope with this inability to express his opinion freely; he says what he wants only in private. Mohamed thus developed his own coping technique to overcome the constant silencing he feels. In doing so, he raises a key issue that most participants in this study encountered. They indicated that due to their sense of not being heard by mainstream citizens, politicians, and media outlets, they bond among each other in an effort to create a safe haven that might substitute for the estrangement they feel from their non-Muslim fellow citizens. This results in intergroup closeness and out-group estrangement. As Levine and Laar (2006) report, exposure to prejudice can lead minority group members to feel less positively toward constructing relationships with the majority. The way Mohamed feels about his inability to express his views acts as a barrier, preventing him from trusting his non-Muslim fellow citizens. I believe that a context in which minority groups bond from within and fail to integrate, or build mutual trust with other citizens, creates polarized societies where people are viewed as groups, rather than as individuals. Cochran (1999) also argues that people should be treated as individuals, not as groups.

Second, Mohamed uses another coping technique as well to practice his freedom of expression. In stating, "I have to be very careful about what I am saying", he shows a high level of awareness about what he can and cannot express safely. Because Mohamed believes that mainstream society views him suspiciously, he has become selective in what he shares "openly," which often contrasts with the actual views that he shares "privately." Mohamed's foregoing

statement illustrates how his interactions with others are shaped and defined by how he feels he is perceived by those outside his community.

In the following quote, Merriam presents a different layer of her perception regarding accessibility to freedom of expression. While Mohamed, a white middle-aged man, finds it relatively easy to hide what he really wants to say and can present socially acceptable opinions, Merriam, a brown Muslim woman who wears a hijab (headscarf), encounters different obstacles to her freedom of expression. She maintains that when she expresses her views with mainstream Canadians, the race card is played; she risks being told to leave Canada and "go back to where you came from." She is automatically perceived as the "other" whose loyalty is therefore questionable.

> ***Merriam***: I have to say that Canada does have a high standard of freedom of speech, not as other parts of the world where you cannot speak up and feel safe … but when freedom of speech comes from Muslims or other minorities, it is not welcomed. When I express my views people say, 'go back to where you came from.' I am not going back, this is my country. People don't understand that when I give my opinion or I don't like something, it doesn't mean that I don't like the country as a whole; this is our country.

Merriam echoes Mohamed's perception that Canada does indeed have high standards of freedom of expression. However, she does not have access to it, even in personal conversations with mainstream citizens; the social climate is not open for Merriam's input. Potter (2003) points out that:

> The legal protection of civil liberties is not sufficient to bring about freedom of speech if the society's majority are dominating discursive practices and suppressing through

> judgment and exclusion . . . The cultural climate, then, may serve to silence members of minority groups even though those minority members have the legal right to engage in dialogue and exercise that right (p.162).

Merriam believes she is challenged by negative notions that mainstream society holds about her community, which places her in the position of having to fight for rights that every other citizen can take for granted. Merriam's visibility as a Muslim immigrant woman hinders her ability to express her opinion, leaving her challenged by her social location. For her, having minority status invites others to play the race card; this forces her to defend herself and prove that she still loves Canada, despite her disapproval of some issues. She sees mainstream society as pushing her into a defensive position where she must choose between being silent in Canada, or leaving the country and going "back to where you came from."

The Council of Europe considers this social phenomenon, as experienced by Merriam and numerous others, to be one of the world's major human rights challenges. In a working paper presented in 2007, the Council called for much-needed progress in this area as "the gap between standards on paper and the reality on the ground is striking" (p. 88). The experience of the research participants illustrates clearly that their religion greatly affects their ability to access their due rights as citizens. Cochran (et al) argue that people's differences in race, religion, sex and ethnicity should no longer make a difference to their civil rights and opportunities, as laws should express those rights in universal terms that apply equally to all. In fact, Merriam's and Mohamed's narratives both shed light on the discrepancies between law in theory and in practice. Razack (2008) argues that Muslims are denied citizenship rights that are supposedly universal because they are considered undeserving of them.

In the following section, I explore the social context -- particularly after the September 11, 2001

attacks -- that shaped participants' experiences in accessing freedom of expression.

5.2 Civil Rights in the Canadian Social Context; Macro and Micro Factors

In this subsection, I explore the Canadian social context that shaped participants' realities pertaining to freedom of expression. A number of layers will be explored: first, stereotyping and interlocking oppression; second, the participants' sense-making of their social location as the threatening "other" within the context of Islamophobia; and finally, how the participants respond to this context as it relates to their freedom of expression. Although the theme of Islamophobia emerged very powerfully in the participants' narratives, my intention is not to create a separate section on this issue, but rather to weave it into the analysis.

5.2.i *Stereotyping and Interlocking Oppression*

All participants in this study reported that Muslims in Canada are negatively stereotyped. In fact, for them, all Muslims in the world are associated with negative issues. The participants similarly reported that their individual voices are also taken as being representative of all Muslims. They see mainstream citizens as having collectively created a specific set of schemas and expectations of how Muslims should behave and react. Consequently, fellow Canadians have preconceived notions of who Muslims are and what constitutes their practices and values. Study participants experienced how problematic it becomes when all Muslims are grouped into one inseparable unit. Thus when a very few individuals commit negative actions, claiming the name of Islam as their motivation, all Muslims are viewed as guilty-by-association, thereby resulting in more negative stereotyping. Mullard and Cole (2008) point out that:

> Muslims all over the world are being lumped together as a homogeneous group; homogeneity flattens differences and people as individuals become

> caricatures and stereotypes of images, which in turn undermines humanity and at the same time legitimizes violence because the other becomes less human (p.6).

Merriam and Sammy shed light on how their Muslim identity invites non-Muslims to stereotype them and establish a distorted or negative connection between them as individuals and other Muslims in different parts of the world.

> ***Merriam***: It bothers me when they see me wearing hijab; they tell me see what is going on in Saudi Arabia, and they expect me not to say a word or talk about things that I don't like in Canada, because here is better than Saudi Arabia. I don't care about what is going on in Saudi Arabia. Why should I be responsible about other parts of the world only because we share same religion? People don't say oh, see what is going on in other Christian countries; if others are not responsible about what is going on in Christian countries, why would I be responsible about what is going on in other Muslim countries? As soon any Muslim says anything, they start saying, oh look at Taliban, look at this, look at that. As if I am responsible for the whole entire Muslim world! When I as a Canadian citizen talk about a policy that is happening right here, I am not talking about a policy that is happening elsewhere; listen to me and do not tell me that my brother or sister in faith are doing this and that elsewhere.

Sammy in the following narrative echoes Merriam's experience by elucidating how he as a Muslim is expected to speak for all his co-religionists.

> ***Sammy***: [People ask me] what do you think about this; can you comment on that. This means that they associate the crime or the situation with Muslims and Islam rather than this is just a crime. Of course I don't have comments. Of course, there are criminals everywhere, and they should be condemned; right is right and wrong is wrong. They don't ask Catholics or Protestant or Sikh or blacks, or Jews; would you condemn this guy who murdered this guy?

Merriam points out that her visibility as a Muslim woman provokes people and makes them draw connections between her as an individual and Muslims in other parts of the world; her visible identity thus invites people to mute or even silence her uniquely individual voice. She is understandably not happy with this association, realizing that those who interact with her think only of the connection between her and Muslim women in Islamic countries.

Merriam questions why this associative grouping happens only in non-Muslim attitudes to Muslims. Why aren't individual Christians expected to speak for all who belong to their faith? Her question sheds a critical light on power relationships in Canadian society. Being a minority group places Canadian Muslims in a position where they do not have the power to shape and define societal norms. Conversely, Canada's mainstream majority *does* have the power to define how its citizens are viewed. So while individual Muslims are asked and expected to speak for their entire community, it is not a case of vice-versa for the rest of mainstream citizens.

This association raises an important question. Is it due to the fact that Muslims themselves place so much stress on group solidarity? If so, Merriam is obviously not happy with this connection; it seems that this concept has not been her choice, but has been imposed on her. She maintains that it is not her choice to represent the entire Islamic world. The question then is: Where did this assumption come from, and by whom was it created? Merriam refers to other Muslims as her "brothers and sisters," yet she does not want to be viewed in light of this kinship connection. On the other hand, she makes an emphatic comparison between Christians and Muslims concerning the issue of community association. In her opinion, this close association is negatively emphasized only when it comes to Muslims. It appears she is right, for despite the fact that some conservative Christians assert the virtues of brotherhood and sisterhood among themselves, most denominations (with the exception of a few distinct sects, such as Doukhobors,

Hutterites, Mormons, Amish, etc.) are not viewed by the rest of society as one homogenous unit. Like Merriam, Sammy also questions why he is expected to speak for all Muslims, as if he were their representative.

The participants' narratives suggest that they feel Muslims are categorized as one undifferentiated group and that people hold negative attitudes about them as a whole, which contributes to muting their voices. This kind of categorization is a function or outgrowth of social oppression and discrimination against many minority groups (Bernal, Trimble and Leong, 2002; D'Augelli, Patterson, 1998; Sleeter, McLaren, 1995).

To focus specifically on Merriam's narrative, I argue that for her it is a manifestation of interlocking levels of oppression. She is a woman, she is not white, and she is Muslim. Merriam's gender intersects with her racial and religious identities. In fact, on many occasions Merriam said that people use her identity against her, in order to silence her from expressing her thoughts. Acker (2005) argues that such interlocking oppression "should be conceptualized as macro-level structures that link systems of oppression such as race, class and gender." Acker further argues that individuals or groups within these structures of oppression are described by the "metaphor of intersectionality (p.37)." She attests that interlocking macro structures and intersectionality form oppression. Merriam's narrative illustrates how oppression has become ingrained and embedded in her life; there are many binaries that label her as "other" and exclude her. Razak (1998) points out that oppression in the lives of those already oppressed has become the rule, not the exception. Merriam's encounters with those who ask her to "go back to where you came from" are a painful manifestation of such domination and otherness.

It is important to note here that the intersection of religious identity with combined forms of other oppressions is virtually absent in the literature. Sammy, with his identity in manhood

and Diana, even in her whiteness, also share Merriam's experience. From participants' emphasis on discrimination and marginalization, I can attest that being Muslim attracts all forms of oppression; it has become a card that is manipulated to silence the participants. Without exception, all study participants maintained that they feel silenced, either because they do not have the skills to navigate through Canada's complex political and social milieu, or because of deliberate systemic exclusion. Their freedom of expression is limited as long as their energies are primarily channelled into combating stereotyping and systemic silencing. Hoeveler and Boles (2004) argue that the silencing of minorities remains a powerful force of oppression.

5.2.ii *Muslims as Threatening 'Others'– Macro and Micro Contexts*

Participants in this study reported feeling they are viewed here as a threat to Canadian values, which results in their opinions being scrutinized and viewed in a negative light. In fact, they believe that the negative perception mainstream society holds about them, hinders their ability to practice their civil rights. They reported that they feel categorized as "others"; as foreigners who lack commonalities with "real Canadians"; as people who do not contribute positively to society; and as misfits whose practices and values are "wrong" and should be corrected. None of those with whom I had interviews or discussions reported feeling that mainstream Canadians perceive them in a positive light. On the contrary, they believe themselves to be portrayed as the enemy; as anti-Canadian, backward, uncivilized, the threatening other, and/or alien. They all reported that they feel judged according to mainstream majority ideals of what constitutes Canadian and western standards.

Diana exemplifies this frustration as she describes how she sees fellow Muslims portrayed in society.

> ***Diana***: It is always the Muslims' fault; the Muslims hate us, the Muslims [are] terrorists, the Muslims, the Muslims. The media has an impact on the way Muslims are perceived in Canadian society. I think from that, Canadians themselves they are just western people, take that ideal and work with it. So if the media is saying hate Muslims, the people would be like, okay, we hate Muslims. And then of course children, their parents don't take the time to explain to them, these are Muslims they are Canadian citizens. Children might ask, mommy why is she wearing that cloth on her head, she is gonna be like, oh she is a terrorist [with laughter] or because she is a foreigner. She doesn't take the time to explain to her children, she would not tell her children that, oh because they are Muslims and they believe in this and believe in that, they are a person, they believe in God, they believe in [the] Divine, they believe in hope, they have a soul, they have ideals, they have everything that a regular person has. She is just going to identify us with what is on our head.

In the above narrative, Diana strongly unravels how she believes Muslims are perceived in Canada; they are presented as the "other" who hates "us" -- the other being a barbaric terrorist who does not conform to the Canadian lifestyle. In fact, a number of authors believe that the west has a long history of presenting Muslims as individuals who pose a collective threat to western values and principles (Shaheen, 2001; Said, 1979; Shadid, 1992; Karim, 2003). Diana states plainly that Muslims are labelled as terrorists and as problematic, both of which fuel the negative imaging of Muslims. She attests that such stereotyping has been constructed and created by the media. Karim (et al) maintains that Muslims are among the most profiled minority groups in Canada. He argues that the Canadian media have contributed profoundly to the negative image of Muslims in this country.

Diana's narrative sheds light on the social construction of terrorism, which I argue has become normalized in order to draw boundaries between the "civilized" mainstream self and the "dangerous other." This construct is in fact a blend of discourses, attached labels, and

interpretations that create a skewed perception of reality (Berger and Luckmann, 1966). Jenkins (2003) argues that the construction of terrorism is, in fact, a product of the multiple discourses of politicians, media representatives and interest groups, each pursuing their personal and institutional agendas. This created reality, according to Said (1979), is a means of creating an inferior and frightening image of "others" to justify supremacy over them.

Diana also talks about another layer of the issue, namely mainstream society's lack of interest in questioning whatever is presented; in other words, the danger of unchallenged social constructs. Borrowing from feminist literature and how gender has been constructed, the female biological function has been blended with her role in society; together, these functions have been constructed to become what identifies women. As Angus (1993) observes: "these relations may go unrecognized and unchallenged, but the lack of recognition means underlying assumptions may go unchallenged and unquestioned (p. 48)." I argue that the construction of gender can also be applied to the construction of terrorism. Because they are unchallenged phenomena that have become interwoven and embedded in the minds and hearts of people, gender and terrorism are consequently treated as unchallenged realities. As Constantine and Sue (2006) argue, oppression relies on unexamined and unquestioned constructs to remain undetectable, invisible, and "transformative in nature" (p. 195).

Consequently, Muslims have become the subject of justified, legalized, and institutionalized oppression that is sanctioned by the laws of the state in order to protect the nation from these "dangerous terrorists." Razack (2008, p.1) captures this social phenomenon very powerfully, arguing that the construction of terrorism is in fact the "expulsion of Muslims from political community, a casting out that takes the form of stigmatization, surveillance, incarceration, abandonment, and torture"(Razack et al. P. 1).

Although Razack bases her argument concerning the casting out of Muslims mainly on "race thinking," I contend that it also intersects with "religion thinking," or in other words, Christian supremacy. Diana's narrative and those of other white Muslim participants, suggests that the expulsion of Muslims from the boundaries of citizenship rights has its roots in the medieval Crusade wars (circa 1100 through 1300 AD), the conversion of Native populations, and the colonization of non-Christian countries. The notion of Christianity as dominant is not a recent one; rather, it is a fundamental cause that motivated all of the above (Juergensmeyer, 2003; Scahill, 2008; Iwamura, Spickard; 2003). Iwamura (et al) argue that Muslim Americans comprise the minority group most demonized in public discourse by fearful white Christians.

Three days after the September 11, 2001 attacks, columnist Ann Coulter wrote in reference to supporters of Islamist terrorism; "We should invade their countries, kill their leaders, and convert them to Christianity." It is striking for me to note that Coulter's comments passed with little condemnation from the public, politicians, or other media outlets, as she was seen to be practicing her right of freedom of expression. In Canada, most participants expressed deep concern about how the negative images of Muslims and Islam have begun to be normalized and accepted in our society. A series of articles published by Macleans Magazine in 2006 further instilled fear of, and hatred toward, Muslims in the minds and hearts of mainstream Canadians yet evoked weak condemnation. Muslims were once again portrayed as the barbaric "other" whose presence poses a perceived threat to Canada's social fabric.

While the above analysis shed light on the macro context, I want to zoom in closer to examine participants' daily life experiences in dealing with their right to freedom of expression. Due to their inability to fully access their freedom of expression, study participants believe that negative stereotyping goes unchallenged and becomes treated as a reality, which in turn creates a

cyclical process of silencing.

Most participants conveyed serious concerns regarding the employment and hiring process as it applies to Muslims, for example. They expressed conviction that their faith is a serious barrier preventing them from competing equally in the job market. A number of them reported that their Muslim-sounding names make potential employers reluctant to hire them. Merriam reported that a friend who attended a job-finding workshop was told by the instructor that her head covering (hijab) would be a challenge for her in finding a good job. Most participants reported that Islamophobia is on the rise and is affecting Muslims economically. For the participants Islamophobia means hatred of Islam and its adherents for no reason other than their inability to conform to western values and culture. Their sense-making is similar to prevailing views in scholarly literature. Zine (2003) and Galabouzi (2006) argue that Islamophobia is translated into different forms of oppression and discrimination.

It is my contention that Islamophobia remains a crucial influence and barrier, as it creates a uniquely difficult context in which participants must endeavour to make sense of their Canadian citizenship. All reported that Muslims deal with Islamophobia in their workplaces and social lives, as well as in public locations, including schools, hospitals and airports. They are often denied promotions at work, due to their religious affiliation and/or Islamic dress. This context has resulted in constant silencing of the study participants, who reported that they are often so preoccupied with fighting discrimination and exclusion, that there is no space for them to express their civil rights.

In the following narrative, Diana (who wears the Islamic head-covering, or hijab) describes a moment where she felt humiliated for no reason other than her visible identification as a Muslim.

> ***Diana***: I was getting coffee and I was waiting in line and this guy got agitated with the order, because it was just mixed up with coffee and what not, and I got my order before him; and I was standing in line, and as I turned around he was standing there with a drink in his hand. And he bumped into me and his coffee spilled all over the floor; he said 'f*** Muslims'. I just walked by and I even didn't say anything, and people around him didn't look at me, they just looked at the floor and they were like, why this guy is saying what he is saying, anyway; I think he was upset because his coffee spilled; but Canadian society, if something hurts you, you blame the thing just next to you.

Diana describes her experience getting a cup of coffee, a daily routine for millions of Canadians, but one that caused her humiliation. For Diana, that small but disturbing incident was another reminder of the majority-driven hegemony and oppression under which she lives. Diana's appearance as a Muslim woman provoked and irritated the man. Diana waited her turn, paid for her purchase, and did not break any social rules; yet a stranger verbally attacked her cultural/religious group. It is worth noting that it appears none of those who witnessed the incident extended a hand to support Diana or condemn the man's behaviour. Later in the interview, Diana shared more anecdotes about being verbally attacked because of her faith. Her narrative illustrates how diverse bodies interact when in a context of hatred and suspicion.

Diana's encounter with the angry stranger in a coffee queue illustrates how the man reacted in a way that suggested Diana was a known entity, about whom he had already formed his assumptions. In his own mind, he "knew" Diana from the media and from current social and political discourse about Muslims. For him, Diana belongs to the "other" that he hates. Sara Ahmed's (2000) analysis of how racialized bodies become the "other" and how skin color becomes one of the boundaries that separate the mainstream self from that other-ness, can be aptly applied to Diana's experience. Her headscarf has become the marker that differentiates

between the normalized self and being "the other." Thus, as Ahmed notes, her encounter with this white man illustrates how her image as a Muslim woman "is contingent on bodily differences that are themselves inflected by histories of particular bodily others" (p. 90). Diana's headscarf has become the identifier that keeps her outside the boundaries of mainstream society's self-perception. When Diana bumped into the man, their bodies touched each other and through this contact a transformation occurred to his coffee; it spilled. His enraged reaction was a result of her presence, whose impact threatened him; she had crossed his boundaries and caused him to deal with an unpleasant situation. The man might have tolerated her presence if his coffee had not spilled, since for Diana to be tolerated she must be present, yet paradoxically absent, with no effect on his movement. This has become a central analogy for how the presence of Muslims is defined in western society. They are welcome as long as they do not cause any change to their surrounding environment; their voices should be muted, and their bodies should be symbolically paralyzed so as to produce no societal effect.

Diana's encounter "allows us to think about how the bodily exchanges between subjects reopen the histories of encounter that both substantiate and subjugate stranger bodies" (p. 52). Ahmed (2000) further argues that these bodies are constructed to be black, and I would extend that argument to contend that these bodies are also constructed to be Muslim.

Taking the argument in a different but relevant direction, this incident raises important questions. First; could the angry man or any of the people who witnessed the coffee line incident have been an employer, a teacher, a doctor, a service provider, a police officer, or a neighbour? The answer is most likely, yes. Second; could Diana hypothetically have been a recipient or user of the services provided by any of the above people? Again the answer is, probably yes. Crucial questions remain: first, how can Diana's interests or her access to equal opportunities be

ensured? Second; how can Diana be protected from such encounters, where her dignity as a human being is undermined and her rights as a citizen are publicly stripped away from her?

My argument is that Muslims in Canada face challenging situations for a number of reasons. Islamophobia is a relatively new terminology that is not conceptualized in the same way as other "isms," namely racism, ageism, sexism, etc. Consequently, it is difficult to address what is largely still invisible. To counteract Islamophobia, it must first be made visible for what it is. I strongly call for making Islamophobia a real and visible entity in society: keeping it invisible allows mainstream citizens "to deny the experiential reality" (Win-Sue, 2004, p. 763) of Muslims by pretending that it does not exist.

Making Islamophobia visible will not be an easy process, as those who use this term are accused of attempting to silence the critical analysis and voices of Islam. Spencer (2005) claims that the term Islamophobia was invented by "moderate" Muslims to "shift attention away from jihad terrorists (p. 199)." Spencer (2008) further claims that the use of this term threatens freedom of expression, because Muslim activists want to ban any criticism of Islam. Although it is not the focus of this study to refute Spencer's argument, I wish to draw readers' attention to the fact that most of Spencer's criticism of Islam uses western ideologies and standards as its frame of reference, thus promoting an atmosphere of western superiority versus Islamic inferiority.

Because Islamophobia is invisible and unrecognized, those who encounter it do not receive adequate empathy or support, which further exacerbates their negative experiences. For example, one participant reported that a non-Muslim friend accuses her of being "too sensitive" because she is offended when people mock her beliefs and accused her of belonging to a "terrorist group." In fact, numerous studies show that Muslims are routinely discriminated

against in everyday life. Although a number of writers assert that Muslims face discrimination more than any other religious group (Sheridan, et al; Merali, Ameli, Elahi, 2004), it is not realistic nor it is beneficial to determine which group is discriminated against the most. It is the root cause of oppression which has to be tackled and dealt with.

In this context, the participants' sense-making of their Canadian citizenship and its inherent rights is constructed and formed in an environment where they feel they do not "have the right to have rights." Their surroundings exclude them from the boundaries of the nation state. Along with others, I argue that "Muslims are increasingly being excluded from [the] definition [of citizenship] and are having to define their citizenship outside the boundaries of their nation states, and in the context of their religion and culture." (Mullard et al, 2008, p.7)

5.2.iii *Individual Reactions and Coping*

In this section, I explore how participants reacted at a micro level to the foregoing macro structure and how they make sense of their citizenship. Each conveyed a number of different reactions to the issues of combating Islamophobia and coping with an exclusionary social structure. Some of them have undertaken the responsibility of representing Islam and Muslims to mainstream citizens as a moral and ethical obligation; their aim is to prove their loyalty as citizens.

They reported that in restaurants, malls, schools, hospitals, parks – in fact, almost everywhere they go -- they are consciously on their best behaviour, so that mainstream Canadians will perceive them as good citizens. Some reported that they even encourage their children at schools to let racial slurs go unchallenged, so non-Muslim children will think they are tolerant. Similarly, abused Muslim women often refuse to seek help in order to protect "the

image" of Muslim men; they do not want to ruin the already damaged image of Muslims before non-Muslim professionals. In daily conversation, they also encourage one another to pay larger tips at restaurants so as to appear generous. They take great pains to learn western etiquette and to appear "civilized"; they learn how to speak well, look rational, tolerate harassment, and appear peaceful. I contend that living under such detailed scrutiny has influenced every aspect of Canadian Muslims' lives.

Others have internalized the dominant discourse and feel that their presence as Canadian citizens is due to the generosity of those in power and that Muslims should not abuse this generosity. One participant reported that hearing hateful discourse affects him at a deep psychological level. In the following analysis, I present three narratives -- from Zainab, Ali, and Sally.

Zainab states that because the image of Muslims is not positive, she assumes responsibility for improving it by intentionally reaching out to mainstream citizens in an effort to change their perceptions. She believes that individual Muslims can be "messengers" of Islam to mainstream citizens. To do so, however, they ought to be equipped with communication skills, such as advocacy and writing. Her narratives suggest that these skills are actually keys to access greater freedom of expression.

> ***Zainab***: If you want to be vocal you are going to be representing Muslims, and if you are not going to be adequate and rational and professional ... that something could back-fire and make Muslims look negative ... When I went back to school, for a while I felt very afraid that people would not accept me; I felt it was difficult to be confident.
>
> ***Soha***: What made you feel this way?
>
> ***Zainab***: I think because I felt we really needed to represent Islam well, and maybe intellectually or spiritually I was not at that level to be a good

> representative of Islam … It felt more stressful to engage with my classmates because I felt a little bit more foreign and not ready to explain myself as a Muslim … So I felt that when I am not prepared to explain myself as a Muslim, or explain the whole community, that it is better not to be engaged until you are ready to engage in a proper way that represents Muslims well.

Zainab describes her feeling of being morally obligated to represent her faith well to her classmates and others. For her, being Muslim entails taking on the responsibility of representing all Muslims. She accepts this obligation without question as her reality, considering it a commitment that all Muslims should assume. Zainab's experience illustrates how society conditions individuals and shapes their attitudes. It appears that Zainab is socially conditioned to believe she must represent Islam well. When she felt unready to fulfill that responsibility, she did not want to let her community down; consequently, she preferred not to engage with non-Muslim classmates. Later in the interview, however, Zainab stated that because so many mainstream citizens hold negative attitudes about Muslims, it is a religious duty to counteract Islamophobia by presenting Islam in a positive way. She added that she "seeks" opportunities to prove to mainstream Canadians that she is like them and not an alien, and that she loves this country as much as they do.

The experiences of Zainab and other Muslims whom I observed are similar to what Fortier (2008) calls "the compulsion to testify." He argues that minorities at times are forced to display their questioned loyalty to the public in return for acceptance. Because Muslims, as noted earlier, are lumped into one undifferentiated group, Zainab behaves and reacts according to how society treats her. Like her, some participants believed that they need to counterbalance the negative image of Muslims and Islam by assuming responsibility for improving the whole community's image.

Zainab deals with this "responsibility" as if it is an established reality and accepted truth. Her narrative illustrates power relationships and how her reality or truth is shaped by the discourses of the powerful in Canada -- the group that owns and controls "the gateway to knowledge construction, truth and falsity, problem definition, what constitutes normality and abnormality" (Win-Sue, 2004, p. 766). For Zainab this is the reality she has to deal with and she aspires to be "equipped" with the necessary tools to perform the task she has been assigned by society -- to fulfill the role and mission of representing her community.

Foucault (1976) theorized that there is a relationship between power and the dissemination of knowledge that is communicated by discourses; as a result, truth is constructed to serve and maintain power and control. Zainab does not question why an individual would be required to represent millions, if not billions, of people; nor does she question why her social location has placed her in a situation where her actions and behaviour are seen in relation to her minority status. For Zainab, this responsibility is still her truth, her knowledge, and her inevitable destiny. I have not met a single Canadian Muslim who does not feel, or is not made to feel, that he or she is responsible for improving the image of all Muslims. While some wonder why this obligation devolves upon them, others assume it as an unchallenged and unquestioned "truth."

Sally's narrative is also an illustration of power relationships in Canada. Here, she talks about how Muslims, in her opinion, have contributed to the construction of their problematic image. Her theory is that some Muslims abuse the "generosity" of the Canadian system, which results in negative attitudes toward them.

> ***Sally***: Our demands have to be reasonable; we cannot say I want to be able to pray every day and I need a room for that. Some Muslims demand things like this; that is not reasonable, they are using people's generosity. The thing is that Muslims abuse, and it has happened in one of the

> schools; they failed to tell the school that they have a gap of three to four hours to conduct their prayers, and they have to pray at the exact time. To ask for a room to pray, this creates, alienates and creates hostility, [people would say] what are those people who want to come and do this.

Sally's narrative illustrates two key points. First, she maintains that the need to fulfill a religious duty in Canadian society should be negotiated. Her use of the word "reasonable" raises the question of just what *is* reasonable, who defines it, and how it is constructed. Does the recipient or the provider define what is reasonable? I contend that it is a matter of who holds the power, rather than the nature of what is being demanded. For example, six of the eight research participants could not make sense of why public schools celebrate only Christmas, despite the fact that Canada presents itself as a secular and multicultural country. This illustrates how power has a role in defining and shaping reasonableness. It is seen as reasonable for the majority to celebrate Christmas in public schools, but it is not reasonable for minorities to acquire the same rights.

Second, Sally refers to the benefits Muslims acquire as *"people's generosity."* She sees the schools' permission for Muslim children to be allowed some time to pray as a generous act -- not a matter of citizenship rights, but rather the kindness of whoever makes that decision. Sally feels that Muslims' behaviour often creates animosity, resulting in their portrayal as eccentric foreigners and that this is how hostility grows.

For these reasons, Sally feels the negative portrayal of Muslims in Canada holds some truth. In her opinion, Muslims' negative actions have contributed greatly to how they are perceived as an entire community. Later in our interview, she also called for self-criticism, asserting that without examining their own part in the reality of their anger toward the media or

society, Muslims only exacerbate their plight. In her opinion, it is not healthy to complain about outward issues without also turning one's eyes inward. She believes that the Muslim community in Canada has to engage in "internal cleaning" and not continue to be so immersed and absorbed in its victim mentality; Muslims should overcome this notion and move beyond it.

While Zainab's narrative sheds light on how knowledge is socially constructed at the macro level, it is my contention that Sally's narrative illustrates how she has internalized the dominant discourse about her group. Fanon (1967) theorized that at times, minorities internalize surrounding discourses and embrace them to shape who they are and what identities they adopt. Fanon exposed how black people internalized the dominant discourse of those who enslaved them. Similarly, Sally appears to have internalized the negative societal discourse about Muslims. Her way of coping with this negative discourse and her sense of exclusion are shown by her insistence that a Muslim's duty is not to abuse the "generosity" of more powerful mainstream people.

This strategy of embracing the dominant discourses about who Muslims are and how they should behave causes a great deal of stress to Ali. In the following excerpt, he illuminates how badly he feels on hearing negative discourse about Muslims.

> ***Ali***: I think I can say, it [9/11] added a lot of stress, a lot of stress to one's daily life, so instead of getting up every day and thinking about life, we are thinking about this problem, and what we should do, what is going to cause and how to resolve it and how to respond to the thousands of attacks on Muslims in every kind of way. That is as far as I understand at least, stress, stress, stress. You switch on the TV, any channels, it is always attacks on Muslims and Islam and Muslims and Islam, the stress to responding to the attacks that are happening against Muslims and Islam in general ... It was like a floodgate was opened, and the stress was just, and still continues, it is ongoing.

Ali repeated the word "stress" seven times in the foregoing narrative. His repetitions suggest a deep desire to emphasize the amount of stress he suffers when he hears "*attacks on Muslims and Islam and Muslims and Islam.*" Ali feels that all the discourse around him is focused on attacking Islam. To him, society has become immersed in an Islamophobic discourse. His tone of voice in this narrative was down and conveyed his desperation. It appears that Ali feels challenged by overwhelming forces that make it difficult for him to fight and resist and that this condition contributes to his feelings of stress. In fact, many studies show a marked association between perceived discrimination and psychological distress that individuals suffer when they or their group members encounter discrimination (Moradi and Risco 2006; Dion 1975; Dion et al. 1992; Thompson, 1996; Amaro, Russo, Johnson 1987). It is important to note that although there are definitely some balanced perspectives in the media, Ali was not able to recognize them; this suggests that the negative stories he hears and reads about far overshadow the positive ones.

In light of the above analysis, I contend that the study participants -- regardless of their race, ethnicity, class, or gender -- all share very powerful feelings about their reality as Muslims in Canada, and the manner in which they make sense of it. As Bullock observes; "Sadly, too much energy is spent by Muslims combating and dealing with negative stereotypes rather than working toward alleviating more pressing issues of social justice" (2005, p. xxi). And this situation limits them from functioning more fully as Canadian citizens, who supposedly have the same rights and are worth the same dignity as the rest of the population. Thus I believe that Muslims' sense-making of their rights as Canadian citizens is blended and interwoven with their experiential realities.

CHAPTER 6 – SUBJECTIVE MEANINGS OF CITIZENSHIP

This chapter comprises two parts. The first segment (6.1 and 6.2) critically analyzes the formation of Islamic-Canadian identity with its macro and micro dimensions; in this context, I also examine the construction of Canadianess. The second segment (6.3 and 6.4) explores participants' sense of belonging. In order to unpack the complexity of this area, I explore their surrounding Canadian political context; I also shed light on how quality of life in Canada affects the participants' sense of belonging. Included in this exploration is the consideration of how public schools contribute to, or detract from, the participants' sense of belonging.

6.1 THE FORMATION OF ISLAMIC-CANADIAN IDENTITY

Before outlining an analysis of Islamic identity formation, it is important to stress that the study research sample consisted of individuals reflecting a wide range of Islamic schools of thought. While it is not my intention to explore the internal diversity of Islamic identity (as this would go beyond the focus of my study), I will nevertheless outline some generic aspects of Islamic-Canadian identity without going into further detail about how each individual participant negotiates his or her personal interpretation of Islam.

For all participants, their Islamic identity was closely intertwined with how they make sense of their Canadianess. Except for Ali and Sally, their Islamic identity is so much a part of who they are that it is a complete way of life. It is their way of coping with stressful situations and it forms the lens through which they filter everything. My research data confirmed that Islamic identity is the primary frame of reference for most of the participants and the significant outward marker of their identity. Some participants conveyed that their Canadian selfhood is influenced by how freely they can express their Muslim selves. Six of them expressed fear that

their Muslim identity is being threatened by Canadian secular values.

For most participants, this fear translated into a strong desire to preserve, and draw clear boundaries between, their Canadian and Muslim identities. It is this fear that dictates and shapes how they function in society; first as Muslims and second as Canadians. It is interesting to notice that this pattern of prioritizing identity exists even among second-generation Muslims, as well as among converts who were born and raised as non-Muslims in this country. For them, the loss of their Islamic identity is a loss of self; consequently, their Canadian identity retreats when their Muslim identity is threatened.

Although Canadian values are filtered through an Islamic lens, Muslims are forced at times to renegotiate their Islamic practices to harmonize with their Canadianess. The participants in this study conveyed a wide range of perceptions on what Islamic identity actually means to them. For some, it is the full adoption of Islamic practices in daily life activities, such as practicing the Five Pillars of Islam – declaration of faith (Shahadah), praying (Salat), fasting (Saum), almsgiving/charity (Zakat), and pilgrimage to Mecca (Hajj). For others, religion goes beyond these pillars; it is about embracing Islam in every aspect of one's life and directing all actions toward Islamic values.

For some who aspire to embrace Islam fully, their Canadianess is often compromised when their Islamic identity is threatened; on the other hand, those who identify themselves as secular Muslims regard their Islamic identity as being more fluid and adaptable. The latter group is more concerned with the universal principles of Islam, rather than its practical elements or applied practices. For them it is a matter of ideologies rather than ritual. Their secular Islamic identity is shaped by how well they can participate in Canada, a non-Muslim country, rather than by how freely they can practice Islam.

Although their Islamic identity could be seen as "tainted" or compromised by the culture in which they grew up, the Muslims in this study expressed the desire to create an Islamic identity that would gather all Muslims -- regardless of their inherited cultural practices -- under one umbrella and with one unifying set of ideologies. However, the participants also acknowledged the social and logistical challenges of such a lofty goal, due to the wide diversity of Canada's Muslim community, which now numbers an estimated 750,000. Their continuous efforts to form individual Islamic identities seem to distract from focusing more on their Canadianess.

In the following interview excerpt, Saeed illuminates how he sees Canadian identity through an Islamic lens. For him, the conflict between his Islamic beliefs and Canadian values is very real and will never end. His concern is not how to eliminate that conflict, but rather how he can cope with it.

> ***Saeed***: The western culture wants conformity, and the Muslim culture does not give up their values as it is a complete way of life. They don't need to conform in a way that you take off your hijab, and mingle with the community and go to night clubs. They value that and they think that this is civilization. But we Muslims don't value that. People sometimes ask why she is not doing like us, even they think of it as an insult if you don't mingle with them; why we gave them homes, we welcomed them, sometimes they fled from difficult situations back home, we gave them home and peace and still they don't appreciate our values, and this is where the conflict comes.
>
> ***Soha***: And how do you feel about that?
>
> ***Saeed***: It is a conflict that is there and it is not something that will end in the near future; it will always be there, people are different. Diversity should be viewed in a healthy way.

In the above quote, Saeed maintains that there are two opposing forces; Canadian values

versus Muslim culture. In his view, there is great pressure on Muslims to assimilate, while Muslims on the other hand embrace Islam as an all-encompassing "way of life." It seems that Saeed realizes the differences and is concerned that Islamic identity will become diluted and ultimately lost. He does not want Muslims' ideologies, values and beliefs to give way entirely to those of Canadian secular society.

It is interesting to note how Saeed constructs his images of self and other. For him, going to nightclubs symbolizes other-ness and the hijab symbolizes the Islamic self, and in his world these two symbols -- wearing a hijab and going to nightclubs -- cannot exist simultaneously; Muslims need to embrace one and give up the other. Although Canadian culture and Islam cannot be condensed in this oversimplified either/or binary, Saeed used these two symbols to illustrate how he personally views the polarities of society.

In fact, nothing in classic Islamic literature and scholarship considers the hijab as the main definer of Islam. Rather, Islam is classically defined by the aforementioned Five Pillars. I argue that it is only during the present era that wearing a hijab has been constructed as the quintessential symbol of Muslim women, rather than as a functional head covering. When Muslims perform the Five Pillars of Islam they cannot be visible (except, perhaps, during the Hajj pilgrimage), but in western society the hijab is a very prominent visual symbol that sets Muslim women apart. I contend that Saeed regards hijab-wearing as a means of maintaining cultural visibility so as to delineate clearly the boundaries between self and other. Saeed's strict dichotomy in this regard illustrates how suspicion is co-constructed between the two identities. Thus the Other considers it as an "insult if you don't mingle with them," while viewing the Self as inferior; by contrast, the Self views the Other's practices as corrupt. Many theories have examined how the images of Self and Other are constructed (Ahmed 2003, Said, 1979). Most of

these look at how power relationships define them, based on who holds the power. In this case, the imagery of Muslims as a minority group in Canada is constructed by the majority. However, it seems that the participants in my study also illustrate how they are able to construct their own images for the Other. When participants were asked how they describe Canadian culture to people outside Canada, most responses focused on the differences between themselves and mainstream others. They wanted to convey the message that they, too, have the power to construct undesirable images of the Other, just as many non-Muslim others have done when negatively describing the Muslims in their midst. Nevertheless, those images constructed by the dominant majority have proven to carry more weight than those constructed by minority communities.

Saeed and fellow participants Zainab and Diana view Canadian culture as a threat to their Islamic identity. The images they draw of mainstream others reveal a society that is largely incompatible with their Islamic values and beliefs. Participants also identified how mainstream societal values pose a long term threat to Muslims in Canada. They fear that when the next generation becomes fully assimilated, Canadian Muslims' distinctness as a group will fade and dissolve. The next stage will see Muslim community members drifting away from being involved in Islamic activism and no longer united in combating majority oppression. These future fears fuel their current efforts to preserve Islamic identity; thus they are very engaged in self-monitoring, where behaviours that appear to imitate mainstream culture are not welcomed. Instead, they are determined to adapt and form a different identity from the majority. I believe this stance is similar to the theory of "oppositional identity," through which minority groups strive to form an identity that is defined in conscious contradiction to that of the dominant majority (Tillman, 2008; Opotow, Clayton, Clayton, 2003; Rakow, 2004).

The participants in this study all acknowledged external pressures to conform to the values of mainstream Canadians. They struggle to maintain their Islamic identity in isolation from the inroads of Canadian influence. Their fear is that the surrounding social context in which they live threatens to exert too great an impact on how their identity is constructed and preserved. For some of them, a sense of Canadianess is realized only when there is no perceived threat to their Islamic identity. But when their Islamic identity is threatened, it becomes the precious fixation that needs to be protected and preserved (Gupta & Ferguson, 2001). For them, Canadianess is co-constructed with the majority only where mutual acceptance is achieved.

Despite the fact that they struggle with multiple identities, all the participants in this study view their Islamic identity to be their only significant marker. It is important to note, however, that for those who came from Muslim majority countries, Islam was not always their main identity. It is not my intention to assess and define the causality in this dynamic. However, some critical questions might be: How is the need for distinctiveness created? Is it influenced by macro structural factors? The individuals themselves? Or it is co-created?

In light of how Saeed, for example, views himself in Canada, I observed the similarity of his attitudes with what Brewer (2003) calls the "optimal distinctiveness theory," through which humans naturally strive to form their own distinct identity as a means of satisfying their psychological needs. In fact, Roald (2001) argues that Islam becomes their main identity marker when there is a need for distinctiveness. Thus the awareness of their Muslim identity started when they came to Canada. This experience of identity development is similar to that of Oromo refugees in Canada (Kumsa, 2004). Kumsa argues that the awareness of self is a relational process, in which the self is formed and transformed only through a relationship with the other. For the participants in my study, the realization of their Muslim identity is in fact embedded in

their relationship with the non-Muslim others in a Christian-dominated country.

6.2 Micro and Macro Dimensions of Islamic- Canadian Identity

In this section, micro and macro dimensions of the foregoing discussion are interwoven to explore in greater depth the participants' sense-making of boundaries present in the tension between their Islamic identity and Canadianess. I argue that the Islamic identity constitutes a very real and tangible boundary.

The data suggest that Muslims' involuntary distinctiveness has been co-created by both participants and the societal structures around them. Six of the participants, for example, referred to the Muslim women's head cover (hijab) as a precious Islamic symbol. Drawing on the optimal distinctiveness theory, I can argue that a Muslim women's head covering is in fact regarded as one of the characteristics providing Muslims with a unique distinction apart from the majority.

This is consistent with the arguments of Stryker, Owens, and White (2000) that the criteria minorities adopt must be sufficiently distinctive to meet a given group's need for differentiation from the majority. As a result, Muslim women's hijabs have become a symbol of group differentiation. Six of the participants asserted that because they feel excluded from many mainstream activities; they need to create their own identity in response. For them, the issue has become a dynamic of action and reaction. The majority emphasizes and exaggerates a minority's differences in its attempt to further deepen the existing cultural gap, while members of the given minority group (including the study participants) continue behaving as they are set to behave; and so the cycle continues. This further supports the argument that their emphasis on preserving Islamic identity has been co-constructed by the relational processes of the collective Self and Other.

Sammy, however, looks beyond identity differences and instead calls for building areas of overlapping interest. In the following narrative, he proposes how Muslims and non-Muslims could be engaged in constructing this mutual area. His view promotes Muslims' equal responsibility to reach out to mainstream others.

> ***Sammy***: In general, Muslims are citizens of this country. I hope one day Muslims in this country become invisible. What I mean is that other Canadians would treat Canadian Muslims as citizens with different views maybe, different religion maybe, or different political inclinations, but they will be Canadians and invisible so you can debate the issue and argue the message, but not shoot the messenger. I think we have a long way to go for Muslims in Canada to be invisible in that perspective ... Assimilation has negative impact on the community and also on the country. We saw the assimilation of the natives, they give up their language, their religion, and their culture ... and we lost the native in numbers, religion, and culture. We don't want this to happen to Muslims, so assimilation is not an option. Also, isolation is not an option, which is to practice your religion but you don't get involved in the bigger community ... You should have self-worth of your culture, your religion as a Muslim Canadian, and then at the same time, you participate in election, you run for public office, you voice your opinion, you become active in the community.

Sammy calls for a benign invisibility of Muslims in Canada. For him, Canadianess would be the inclusive umbrella under which all Canadians could live, yet with continued recognition of the differences among them. Thus Canadianess would be the main marker for all citizens, with no emphasis on other aspects of people's identity, such as race, color, religion, etc. He also calls for more effort on the part of Muslims to reach this level of mutuality. For him, Islamic identity should be interwoven with Canadianess. However, Sammy's narrative presents a number of key issues, since grouping Muslims together in one category can dichotomize Canadians and deepen the notion of "us-versus-them."

Sammy puts the onus entirely on Muslims to achieve this invisible status, when in fact this issue is more complex than it appears. The Muslim identity intersects with a number of other different identities -- race, gender, age, ability etc. Overcoming these multiple identities can also be perceived as challenging Canada's foundational multicultural principles. Furthermore, Muslims are not the only group in Canada who are labelled and marginalized: there are members of the LGBTQ communities, women, the people with disability, as well as other racial groups, to name just a few. Thus Sammy's call to unity conflicts with the ways in which Canadian society is structured; diversity and distinction are deeply embedded in the very fabric of Canada, indeed of any society.

Sammy feels that labelling itself is problematic and that Muslims should not be called a "visible" minority. I argue, however, that the label is not the problem; rather, the connotations and the loaded meanings attached to it are the issue. For example, people are often identified by their occupations (such as doctors, engineers, or teachers); however, since the meanings attached to these labels are nearly always favourable and positive, they are no longer problematic. In the case of "visible minority" status, however, the negative connotations attached to this label are at the core of the issue. The problem lies with the vast social inequality between "visible" minorities and the mainstream majority. Labels and meanings attached to minorities are the product of imposed power relationships. Knowles, Amit and Amit (1996) argue that these stratifications are exerted by "invisible" majorities to put the other (inferiorized minorities) into categories designed to ease the process of attaching meaning to them. Knowles et al argue that these imposed-upon minorities might choose different identifying labels if given the choice. I contend that since this situation is rooted in an unequal and imbalanced power relationship, any labels or identity markers chosen by minorities can be distorted again by the majority to fit its

needs. The result is that Canadianess is defined by majority-constructed boundaries that determine who is included and who is not. I contend that the meanings attached to Islamic identity need to be deconstructed and reframed in order to achieve the ideal society Sammy envisions.

6.3 Constructing Canadianess: I am not "true" Canadian, "they" are...

The research participants in this study were asked to define who is considered a "true" Canadian. For them, Canadianess has its own criteria that citizens have to meet in order to achieve a full sense of national belonging. The way they construct Canadianess illustrates the interplay between existing societal structures and each individual's sense-making. For them, Canadianess signifies three predetermined layers: being white, being English-speaking, and being (at least nominally) Christian. Those who emigrated from non-white countries find themselves lacking in all three layers. Moreover, meeting one, or even two, of these parameters does not grant them unimpeded access to the status of Canadianess. For them, these three inflexible layers create a multiple boundary that keeps them well outside this idealized status of Canadianess.

The study participants also realized that Islam adds yet another layer to the complex makeup of Canadianess. Even for those who do not feel that Islam's values conflict with Canadian values -- Merriam, Sammy, Ali and Sally -- they cannot embrace Canadianess either, because it is constructed in a way that excludes them, in spite of their efforts in reaching out to acquire it. For the other participants, who do see Islam's values as being in conflict with those of mainstream Canadians -- Saeed, Diana and Mohamed – they realize that Canadian Muslims as a whole have had a share in co-constructing the boundaries that now exclude them.

In the following quote, Ali relates how he makes sense of the boundaries that define Canadianess.

> ***Ali***: I was told on many occasions, 'go back to where you came from,' by regular Canadians, 'go back to where you came from,' I never hold it against the rest of society.
>
> ***Soha***: So when you say a 'regular Canadian,' what do you mean by that?
>
> ***Ali***: Mainstream; someone who is visibly white Canadian and whose accent totally Canadian; I don't know his religion of course, but someone who is obviously Canadian from his accent, totally Canadian accent and totally Canadian.

Ali touches on two layers of Canadianess -- whiteness and citizens' language abilities, in relation to proficiency and accent. In fact, all the participants in this study echo Ali's perception of Canadianess, as do other research participants in a number of studies (Kumsa, 2004). For them, the three main layers that constitute Canadianess make it an unreachable goal; these excluding layers cannot be deconstructed, nor can they be accepted. Non-white participants shared their experience of being asked either to "go back to where you came from," or of being asked where they are from; both are questions that all non-white citizens have to deal with (Palmer, 1997). The implications of such questions (although offensive in themselves) are even more problematic in their embedded meanings, as they reflect otherness and estrangement from the majority. Those who meet the criteria of being "true" Canadians do not have to deal with issues around proving their Canadianess; their energies are channelled elsewhere.

Ali, in fact, reflects the dominant discourse about who is included in the nation of Canada and who is not. Since the earliest days of Canada's nationhood, whiteness has been constructed as an exclusionary identifier and a means of supremacy to draw the boundaries between the

supreme Self and the inferior Other (Nakano-Glenn 2002, Rasmussen, Nexica, Wary, 2001).

Ali and four other participants in this study referred to whiteness as an actuality rather than as a construct. Merriam, however, resisted this notion and wanted to construct a new meaning for Canadianess, a meaning that is more fluid and inclusive. This meaning comprises what Canadian historian Strong-Boag (1998) calls the "non-nationalistic framework." This framework challenges the assumption that Anglo-Canadianess is an inevitable embedded characterization of Canada. She asserts that Anglo-Canadianess is "socially constructed, historically emergent, and open to change in response to, among other dynamics, hegemonic and counter-hegemonic struggles over national identity formation" (Strong-Boag 1998, p. 218).

Therefore, to challenge the construct of whiteness is to be engaged in a process of deconstructing it. It is important to note that deconstructing whiteness is by no means about abolishing it: "the abolition of whiteness is unthinkable without the eradication of the concept of race itself, an outcome as undesirable as it is impossible" (Nexica et al 2001, p. 107). My argument centres around the privileges and power attached to whiteness, which should be distributed equally among all citizens. Nexica (et al 2001), calls for more self-awareness around the privileges whites still retain. Furthermore, racialized groups also need to be engaged in a self-reflection process in which the internalization of the dominant majority discourse is unravelled and challenged. In other words, minorities must be critical of assumptions that are held as unchallenged paradigms.

In the following narrative, Saeed illuminates Christian-ness, the third layer of Canadianess, which he feels dominates this country's supposedly inclusive culture.

> ***Saeed***: Everything is just about Christmas and Easter and that stuff, very slightly when they remember we have Eid; it is not fair. The school culture

is based on Christianity. I want the kids get accommodated and their feelings should not get hurt.

Soha: So when you are saying their feelings should not get hurt, can you elaborate more on that?

Saeed: I mean the kids should not feel different from others. It is a public school, it should be the same for everybody; they should not feel they are foreign to the education system.

Soha: So part of it is acknowledging their events and celebrations?

Saeed: And yes, the religion should be in the curriculum as Christianity in the curriculum.

Soha: Do you think Christianity is in the curriculum?

Saeed: I would say yes, because you have Christmas and Easter; you have Halloween; yes, I don't see why Muslims' celebrations are not included.

Saeed conveys the strong sense of exclusionism that some Muslim students feel in public schools. He challenges one of the founding principles of Canada, Christianity. Looking very briefly at Canadian history reveals that when European settlers arrived in this land, the Aboriginal inhabitants, who were not Christian, were forced to convert. Although the aboriginal peoples resisted colonists' attempts to convert them, the power relations were not balanced; consequently their resistance was unsuccessful (Treat, 1996; DePasquale 2007; Brown & Nock, 2006). Since then, Christianity has become interwoven with the fabric of Canadian culture (Qureshi & Abu-Laban and Waugh 1991; Peat, 1945). The way the government of Canada historically dealt with Aboriginal peoples illustrates that Canadianess was constructed at least partially through the brutal exclusion of Aboriginal others. Almost all participants (except Mohamed) commented on the fact that the Ontario government funds Roman Catholic schools.

In the following quote, Ali challenges the myth that Canada is a secular country; for him

it is very much a Christian country.

> ***Ali***: Whenever somebody tells me we have a country that separates state and church, I tell them no. You are people whose law that is very much based on the Bible, we have many laws that are derived from the Bible. Our holidays are derived from the Bible, the crosses in certain courts of law, things in the legislature in Quebec which they don't remove, still based on the Bible; there is not that separation, there is in some ways, but there is not absolute separation.

Ali is engaged in a critical analysis of the founding principles of Canada. For him, there is a clear contradiction between what people say and the reality of facts "on the ground." Ali rejects the dominant discourse about the nation; and because his surrounding environment contradicts that discourse, he views the two as being heavily interconnected. Ali describes himself as a secular Muslim; thus, for him clear well-defined boundaries should be drawn between religion and state. Later in the interview, he emphasized the importance of the privatization of religion. In other words, individuals should be granted freedom to practice their spiritual beliefs; but government should not take sides, nor should it support one group over another.

In this narrative, Sally describes her experience in a courtroom where she was asked to take an oath on the Bible.

> ***Sally***: I can tell you about something happened to me. I had to stand in front of a judge in court and he provided me with a Bible and I said, I am Muslim and the judge snapped at me and said oh you wouldn't pray on the Bible; I said I can swear on a Bible if that what ease you. But it is not binding to me, is that what you want. Hey I can do it but it doesn't put any obligation on me, it doesn't make me obligated. Either you give me Qur'an or affirm, and that is how I made my point. I am not demanding Qur'an, I am saying I can swear on the Bible but it means nothing to me.

Sally raises an important point about the justice system in Canada. Although the Canada Evidence Act allows individuals to choose their oath, Sally was not given that choice. In Canadian courtrooms, judges and lawyers do not ask witnesses about their choice of oath-taking, and witnesses are often too intimidated to ask (Martin, MacCrimmon, Boyle, 1999).

This example illustrates the normalization of Christianity and how deeply it is rooted in Canadian culture. Sally's anecdote raises several leading questions: In the first place, why should oaths be administered using a Bible? Why is it not left open for individuals to bring or choose whatever they believe is binding to them when swearing an oath? And why are judges not mandated to ask witnesses their preference? Why should this important matter be left entirely up to the judge's sensitivity?

Participants made clear distinctions between belonging to Canada and embracing Canadianess, which for them is intertwined with criteria that they cannot meet. In the next section, I will shed light on the participants' sense of belonging to Canada in terms of something they can negotiate.

6.4 Belonging to Canada

While exploring how the participants make sense of their belonging to Canada, a number of themes emerged. These include: how the Canadian government deals with Muslims' issues, or in other words the political context; quality of life in Canada; and the issue of public school education. These themes were interwoven in their individual experiences and contribute to their sense of belonging (or of exclusion).

Before proceeding, however, it is important to examine the meaning of belonging that

participants understood or referred to. In this study, belonging referred to one's emotional attachment to the country; some participants even used the word "love" to describe their feelings for Canada. The term "belonging" also was used to refer to their sense of social inclusion and/or exclusion.

For the participants, belonging was not construed as a reified fixity, but as something more fluid and flexible, describing an emotional attachment to Canada as one's home. This kind of belonging is a private and internal tie that is not open to questioning by others as their Canadianess would be. As individuals, they are free to negotiate this emotional and relational attachment to Canada as home. They are not negotiating fixed concepts about how Canadian they are; it is rather about an intrinsic feeling that grows or fades over time. For them, there is a clear boundary between belonging and Canadianess.

As one participant said, "Feeling Canadian is like being your son; you cannot be your son, but you can love him and have this attachment with him." This powerful metaphoric description illustrates how Canadianess and sense of belonging are two separate entities and this understanding is in fact consistent with the experience of participants in other studies (Kumsa, 2004) which have found that while Canadianess may be unattainable, the sense of belonging to Canada is within reach. In addition to the one participant who used the word "love" to describe her attachment to Canada, others described themselves as grateful and fortunate to be living here. They embrace their sense of belonging as a continuous process that is influenced by their surroundings; it results from the interplay between state and individual, in other words, the counterpoint of macro and micro factors. Their experiences illustrate the interaction between their agency as individuals and the structure and environment in which they live. This notion corroborates what Anthony Giddens (1991) calls the "theory of structuration," in which there

exists a cyclical influence between people and society; and this is what makes it difficult to determine which causes the other.

Although the complex interwoven relationship between macro- and micro-structures makes it difficult to conceive of them apart from each other, for the purpose of clarity I intend to unravel some of these interwoven threads to explore in further detail how participants constructed and made sense of their belonging to Canada.

6.4.i *Belonging and Political Context*

The political context, or macro level, appeared to be a major influence upon the participants' sense of belonging to Canada. They feel a strong connection between how the Canadian government deals with Muslims' issues and their individual sense of national belonging.

Here, Merriam describes two significant moments in her life when she felt an especially strong attachment to Canada.

> ***Merriam***: When the Canadian government brought back Lebanese during the Lebanon war, I felt so good to be Canadian … and Maher Arar's case also. I felt I was so proud to be Canadian. Although the government made a mistake, but in front of the whole world, our Prime Minister apologized and Canada compensated the man … And honestly, there are moments when you are not feeling that great, but cases such as Maher Arar's case lift my spirit. You can feel sad and frustrated, but always I think of the positives.

It is not surprising that the two moments Merriam described involve Canadian intervention on behalf of Muslims. In the first case, our government evacuated Lebanese Canadians during the 2006 war. Although Canada has done many humanitarian missions around

the world, this particular incident touched Merriam's heart and made her feel like a "proud Canadian."

Her anecdotes suggest that Merriam's sense of locatedness is greatly influenced by how reassured she feels that her government would actually step in and help her if she were in a similarly difficult situation. Her feeling supports the notion that people's senses of locality and belonging are cognitively attached to their experience of exclusive or inclusive social and political practices (Hopkins, 2001; Barness, 2000). The second moment in Merriam's narrative recalls the Arar case, which gained international attention and set a precedent for public advocacy and subsequent compensation for undeserved personal injury committed against an individual citizen. The Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) provided false information to American officials, resulting in Arar's deportation to his birth country of Syria, where he was detained and tortured for almost a year. The Canadian government issued an apology and granted Arar $10 million as compensation.

Merriam associates her sense of belonging with how justly the state treats Muslims. She acknowledged that Canada was wrong in putting one of its own in such jeopardy, but the fact that our government took full responsibility made Merriam feel truly Canadian. For her, a just society does not mean a mistake-free society, but one whose errors are openly admitted and dealt with in a just manner. It is interesting how this particular situation affected Merriam; it appears that because Arar is a Muslim Canadian, and government dealt with his case seriously, Canadian values still exist and are cherished. I believe this event made Merriam feel safe and secure and that if she faces a similar situation, she will not be abandoned. Merriam's sense of belonging illustrates that individuals' feelings of security are intertwined with their sense of belonging (Hiss, 1990; Hofrichter 2000).

Ali echoes Merriam's experience of how societal macro levels personally affect individuals. In the following narrative, he maintains that his sense of belonging is enmeshed with how he feels Canada's government treats Muslims.

> ***Ali***: My sense of belonging, to me is who is governing the nation. Because people who govern the nation make you feel either you belong or you don't belong. To me it was at the end of Jean Chretien's era. Jean Chretien made me feel completely at home and I am part of it, he was paying attention to what Muslims were saying. He was caring about what is going on in the Middle East in a way that didn't upset his constituents here in Canada Muslims and Arabs. The moment Martin took over the policy was completely changed and suddenly I didn't matter. Not Muslims not Arabs … In those moments, I feel less in part of what these leaders embrace than I did before. And ... when he [Steven Harper] went and opened a mosque in Alberta in Calgary, he said a lot of good things about Muslim ... To me this guy is going to a mosque and saying a lot of good things, he is the prime minister; he took the time to go and say a good thing about it … Once saying that he regretted the publishing of the cartoons they were published here; he came out and said that this was not something appropriate. Again, this made me feel belonging. I have to say the way the leader views me as a member of a certain community as belonging to Canada or not. So if they tell me we really don't care about you and we are totally supporting that group and you are just here we rather kick you out of the country, how can I feel I belong?

Ali's words illustrate the strong interaction that occurs when macro factors influence micro factors, producing a specific personal attitude or response. Ali describes how political leaders' ways of relating to Muslims contribute to his sense of belonging. For Ali, Jean Chretien was a positive example of how a leader can enforce a sense of belonging within minority groups. Furthermore, the few attempts that Stephen Harper has made to reach out to Muslims conveyed a message of acceptance and inclusiveness. On the contrary, when Paul Martin became PM after Chretien's tenure, his approach to Muslims' issues made Ali feel less included in the political process and resulted in him feeling excluded. Three other participants echoed Ali's experience of

how much the current political context influences their sense of belonging. They also relate feeling accepted and included, which reinforced their sense of belonging to Canada. Ali's foregoing narrative sheds light on the connection between social equality and belonging. In his view, when he and his minority community are treated as being equal to other citizens, he feels an emotional connection to Canada.

The participants' notions of what builds up their sense of inclusion as members of Canadian society appear to influence their sense of belonging, which reflects a model proposed by McMillan and Chavis (1986). This model considers four essential elements that are closely intertwined with, and related to, any individual's sense of belonging: integration and fulfillment of needs; influence; shared emotional connections; and membership. As Ali outlined above, he feels his greatest sense of belonging when his needs as a Muslim are given the same importance and fulfillment as those of other citizens.

Although neither Ali nor Merriam were directly affected by the examples they shared, they consider their anecdotes to be influential in contributing to their sense of belonging. This suggests that their perception of how their group is treated has a direct impact on them as individuals.

6.4.ii *Belonging and Quality of Life in Canada*

In considering factors that contributed to the participants' sense of belonging to Canada, the theme of quality of life run throughout the data. Participants shared their experiences and perceptions of what quality of life means to them and how it has influenced their national feelings. A strong positive factor for them was the provision of a social safety net that provides assurance of a minimal standard of living for all citizens. They also see Canada as a land of

opportunities, compared to other countries. Moreover, the Canadian tradition of idealism as a cherished value gives the participants hope, along with the message that even though social injustice and inequities exist, there are frames of reference through which they can express opposition.

In the following quote, Diana describes her feeling towards the Canadian social safety net. She realizes that if she needs support in meeting life's necessities, the government will step in with help.

> ***Soha***: I want to ask you about a moment where you felt that you really belong to this country
>
> ***Diana***: I think it is a lot with what is happening with the Arabs and Israelis. Just realizing that the conflict over land sort of divides who they are and divides what identity they have, just makes me think that I have this land I have these people that I can count on, it is a democratic government. These people [government] who can provide me with all the necessities that I need, even if I am down on my luck, I can go to a shelter I have food, I am not in a foreign country. I think in that sense, it made me identify with Canada and made me more of a Canadian

Diana's reassurance that she is not alone and that support is available when she needs it appears to contribute to her sense of belonging in Canada. In fact, all the participants view Canada's safety net system as a benefit that is distributed equally among citizens. They assert that it has an impact on their sense of belonging to Canada. This feeling reflects T.H. Marshall's notion of the importance of social benefits for citizens. Merriam echoes Diana and provides a slightly different experience pertaining to her sense of belonging. For her, there are also a number of contributory factors.

> ***Merriam***: I feel I belong to Canada, I like Canada ... personally I do. I don't know how many people feel that way. For many reasons; first, I

> made a decision as an adult to come to Canada and become a Canadian citizen; second, Canada offers many opportunities for people. I like Canada for its big heart. Yes, there are many people from all over the world, but you need a big heart to accept and welcome them all. You can have many resources, but you can decide not to share all these resources with others. But Canada does. ... I feel that I belong to Canada because I can speak the language, my financial situation is not bad, and there are many opportunities. But if you take away these things, no, I won't be able to feel connected to this country; I will feel I don't belong. It is a give and take process.

In this response, Merriam talks about the process of "give and take." She perceives her sense of belonging as a product of a reciprocal relationship based on mutual aid. This concept is similar to what Geraint Parry (1991) called "mutual society." In such societies, the relationship between the citizen and the state is based on mutual benefit; each would give to and receive from the other.

Merriam here refers to the formation of her belonging-ness as an entity resulting from a number of factors. It is also due to a mature decision she made to choose Canada as her home, which implies a sense of control, capability and intention. Merriam talks about the opportunities that are offered to her as a citizen and these opportunities have become closely associated with her sense of belonging in Canada. If all that she enjoys here in Canada was not available (or withdrawn in whole or in part), however, her sense of belonging would be shaken. The participants' experiences in this area were similar to those of citizens in other studies, where social benefits ranked high among the factors contributing to their sense of belonging (European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working, 2005).

6.4.iii *Public Schools and Belonging*

Four of the eight participants considered public schools to be one of the most important

factors affecting their sense of belonging. For them, the public school system acts either as a focus of inclusion and a means of fostering a deeper sense of belonging to Canada, or a force of exclusion, alienation, and even at times of oppression. Public schools are often considered places where Muslim students are engaged in a struggle for cultural or religious survival.

Zainab describes how her belonging-ness in Canada has been shaped primarily by how included or excluded she felt while attending public schools.

> ***Soha***: What fostered this feeling [love of Canada]?
>
> ***Zainab***: I think being in the school system I was very fortunate in the schools that I went to, because not everybody was in similar schools. When I was young, up to grade two, I was in a school where I didn't feel that I belonged there, but then after grade three I went to a school where I was treated, equal, because you always know that.....yes, I am different from the majority..... But from my experience from grade three onwards it was amazing because the teachers and the environment was so inclusive. And high school, I think the same thing; I was very fortunate to be in a school with a large ESL population because what I heard from other friends that other schools that are more homogeneous and like white only, not very multicultural, I think the environment of that schools might have been different, it might have been pressure to conform to certain norms, whereas the high schools I went to were very diverse, not only in terms of culture .... So that fostered my love for Canada because those schools were like microcosm, micro universe of what Canada is. I think those things fostered my love of Canada.

In the foregoing narrative, Zainab illuminates the crucial role of the public school system in fostering her sense of belonging to Canada. When she was in a school where she felt excluded and her differences or minority status were emphasized, she could not identify with the rest and she felt estranged from society. For her, being included and accepted are the essential elements that fostered her "love of Canada." Zainab felt more included when she attended more diverse schools where there was a "large ESL population." In such an environment her differences and

minority status were not as visible. In fact, a large number of studies support the notion that students feel a greater sense of belonging in diverse schools than they do in homogeneous ones (Phillion, Fang He, Connelly, 2008; Maestas, Vaquera, Zehr, 2007).

To take the argument further, these studies stress the importance of heterogeneity in public schools. However, this raises other critical questions. Why does the public system flourish more in such an environment? Are teachers forced to adopt more inclusive practices? Do minority students find it difficult to construct social and academic relations with mainstream classmates? And can this dynamic create and foster the notion of racialized and/or faith based schools, which might lead to a more polarized society and fragmented communities?

6.5 Findings: A Transitional Summary

In the three preceding chapters of Section II (Findings), I discussed in categorical details the results of this study. While some of my findings are known in the literature, a number of them emerged as new to this research, due in large part to the narrative context in which they emerged. These new aspects were noted as they occurred. In the Finding section, I moved from the broad political milieu (Chapter 4), through the more intimate and individualized scenarios of freedom of expression and social acceptance (Chapter 5), and arrived at convergence of factors affecting the Canadian-Islamic identity formation and the construction of the subjective meaning of citizenship and belonging (Chapter 6). Throughout this journey of inquiry and analysis, it became apparent that all three general areas of concentration covered by the Findings chapters were deeply enmeshed and interconnected in the real-life experiences of the participants. While the discrete examination of each segment – political engagement, freedoms of expression and sense of belonging and Canadianess – was an essential investigative process in gaining deeper understanding, the outcome also underscored the importance of a holistic approach to the

multivalent essence of citizenship.

In the final section, I will provide a brief summary of the study; its implications for the practice of Social Work; some limitations of the study; directions for future research, and personal reflections from my journey through this research.

SECTION III - IMPLICATIONS AND REFLECTIONS

This section is divided into two chapters. Chapter 7 discusses the three research questions I presented and outlines my findings related to them. Included in this chapter are my implications and recommendations, an outline of further areas for research, and an acknowledgment of the limitations of this study. Chapter 8 comprises my personal reflections.

CHAPTER 7 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

This chapter discusses the findings of my study and suggests directions for future research. The chapter is divided into three subsections. In the first section (7.1), I reiterate the purpose of the study and methodologies employed in light of the findings. While some findings of this study are unique, others are known in the literature. I start by shedding light on the unique findings of the study and then move to those findings already known in the literature. To further elaborate and clarify the material, I outline my research questions and present findings pertaining to them. In the second subsection (7.2), I step back from the research and present its broader implications for practice and policy making. I also discuss merits and challenges of multiculturalism in light of these findings. In the third subsection (7.3), I outline recommendations for future research and the limitations of the study.

7.1 Discussion

The purpose of this qualitative study is to explore how Muslim Canadians make sense of their Canadianess, in both its objective and subjective meanings. To do so, it was necessary for me to adopt a unique blend of different methodologies to capture the complexity of the studied phenomena. Grounded theory was utilized to open up the text and allow themes to emerge; critical theory was used as the lens through which my data were filtered to unravel macro and micro interactions; and reflexive methodologies were employed to examine how knowledge and reality are co-constructed. Furthermore, in an effort to delve deeply into participants' experiences and narratives I have borrowed from broader social science disciplines such as psychology, sociology, political science, and feminist theories.

In this study, I explored how the participants make sense of the objective meaning of their citizenship, in light of Marshall's Theory of Citizenship. Perhaps the major contributions to the production of knowledge of this study include:

First, the participants' sense-making of their objective dimensions of citizenship revealed that their feelings of Canadianess are blended with how they see Canadian values, ideals and principles applied in real life. Second, results of this study suggest that the participants do not see their rights as citizens fully realized, due to a number of factors or barriers. These barriers are intertwined and interconnected as a product of the interplay between macro- and micro-structures – an interconnection which I believe is unique to this study. In other words, both systemic structures and the participants' agency have a reciprocal role in the sense-making of their Canadianess. Third, the participants drew clear boundaries between their Canadian identity and their belonging to Canada. This distinction in fact suggests that their sense of belonging and identity formation are two separate entities that do not substitute for each other. Fourth, another important finding of this study is that the notion of differentiated or undifferentiated citizenship rights is superficial and creates unrealistic boundaries; I have found that citizenship is far too multilayered and multifaceted to be captured within two rigid categories. Finally, the study draws attention to the intersection of religious identity with combined forms of other oppressions, a relationship found to be virtually absent in the literature.

It is important to note that a number of the finding in this study relate to existing and accepted theories. First, the political engagement of the participants relates to and employs critical theories pertaining to the application of democracy in diverse societies. Secondly, participants' narratives on their sense-making of freedom of expression tie into their experiences with the realities of power relationships, whiteness, internalization of oppression, actualizing of

selfhood and other concepts. Third, participants' experiences of Islamophobia are related to theories that attempt to explain the psychological impacts of oppression and marginalization upon minority groups.

7.1.i *Research Questions in Depth*

First research question:

How do Muslim Canadians make sense of being Canadian in light of their rights as citizens?

The participants in this study attest that the political engagement of Muslims in Canada is very low. This study provided a unique perspective on this issue through its focus on micro-macro interactions, whereas most studies look at citizens' low level of political engagement from just one perspective. For example, there are theories that analyze the system and examine the structural barriers that influence citizens' political engagement (Powell, 1986; Jackman, Robert and Miller 1996), and there are theories that examine and analyze individuals' experiences and the psychological factors contributing to their political engagement (Pettigrew, 1964; Putnam, 1993; Teixeira 1992; Uslaner, 1995). Yet my participants' responses reveal that *both* micro and macrostructures influenced their experiences and that their levels of political trust, their sense-making of democracy, their religious beliefs, and faith practices all contributed to their level of political engagement. The study also revealed that citizens' political engagement should be viewed and assessed in relation to the functionality of systemic structures and citizens' micro agnatic power.

My research identified three factors contributing to participants' sense-making of their political engagement: trust, their perception of democracy, and combined intrinsic and external

factors. It is important to note that in real life these factors are so closely interwoven as to be virtually inseparable. Political engagement is a complex process and there is no single contributing factor that can fully explain it. For the purpose of analysis, however, I have partially unravelled them in an attempt to understand each component.

Factors that participants related to the most are those found to be deeply enmeshed in their Islamic identity, as well as social and structural influences. It was not surprising to learn that participants who identified themselves as conservative Muslims tended to be more sceptical of government institutions and the Canadian social system; moreover, the extant literature supports this finding. For example, Saeed, a conservative Muslim, feels that politicians have their own agendas which are often in conflict with his Islamic principles; this makes it difficult for him to trust that his voice will be heard, resulting in his reluctance to vote and become politically engaged. In fact, conservative Muslims those who strongly oppose the separation between religion and state (Sanneh, 1997), therefore finding it difficult to engage in a non-Islamic system. It was striking to learn, however, that even those who identify themselves as moderate Muslims expressed little difference from conservatives when it came to their level of political trust.

The participants in this study challenged a fundamental principle of democracy -- namely the rule of the majority. Because the essence of democracy is to serve the majority, their minority voices do not have much influence. Tocqueville's popular theory of the "tyranny of the majority" in fact validates my participants' experiences (Pierson, 1996). They expressed serious concern with the democratic system, believing that it should address the goal of reaching equality for all citizens.

Adding another layer to the complex process of political engagement was the

participants' Islamic identity and their perception of the effects of Islamophobia. Four participants believed the Canadian government deliberately excludes them from the political process, due to embedded Islamophobia in the system. Merriam, for example, stated that governmental fear shapes its policies pertaining to Muslims.

In reference to Marshall's theories on citizenship rights, the study findings suggest that not everyone is a truly equal citizen. These rights are perceived to be owned by the powerful, who can access them without fear or intimidation. The participants in my study conveyed a strong sense of being excluded from the boundaries of Canadianess as a result. Ahmed (2003) argues that ownership comes with power and acts as an exclusionary factor; it clearly excludes those who do not have it. Her findings suggest that the participants' sense-making of their citizenship is that a person must be considered worthy, or fit to access this right. In other words, access to citizenship rights depend on whether one meets certain societal criteria, rather than whether these rights theoretically exist.

Although a number of theorists tend to view religion as a source of much political and civic engagement (Tocqueville, 1945; Putnam, 2000, Verba, Schlozman, Brady, 1993), this study reveals otherwise. It is important to note here that the scholars consulted based their studies on adherents of mainstream religions – especially adherents of Christianity in nominally Christian majority countries. Nevertheless, the findings of this study show that the situation varies greatly for Muslim Canadians who struggle daily between protecting their Islamic identity and establishing their Canadian identity, which suggests that religion becomes a driving motive for integration when it is secure and not threatened.

The study also revealed that freedom of expression is often only a theoretical right and that a number of systemic barriers impeded participants from gaining full access to it. In an

effort to counterbalance constant silencing, members of minority groups bond in strong relationships with one another, further distancing them from building relationships with mainstream citizens. The participants as a result conveyed a strong sense of otherness and exclusion from their citizenship rights.

As regards participants' sense-making of their social rights, I chose to include this issue in another chapter that explores their issues around belonging. However, the participants in this study reported having predominantly positive experiences regarding social provisions. It struck me to learn that their positive attitudes about social equality enhanced their sense of belonging to Canada. This may suggest that because there are specific criteria for social provisions which do not greatly depend on personal judgment, equality is more likely to be the result.

Second research question:

How did September 11, 2001 impact Muslim Canadians?

The study suggests that the 9/11 attacks had a significant role in spreading Islamophobia within Canada. One of the major findings of this study is that the participants' perception of Islamophobia affected their sense-making of Canadian citizenship; in fact, the theme of Islamophobia ran throughout their experiences and narratives. It is important to note that there is very limited literature available so far about the impact of Islamophobia on Muslims. As a result, I had to draw connections between Islamophobia and racism. This study unravels the complexity and the construction of Islamophobia. Due to the diverse nature of my sample, I expected to hear varied narratives about participants' experiences after 9/11; in fact, I expected that overlapping forms of oppression would produce different responses. Yet the participants shared very *similar*

experiences of Islamophobia, regardless of their class, race, language ability, level of acculturation, and even gender. I did not expect, for example, to hear similar experiences from white males *and* black females, which strongly suggests that Islamophobia cuts across race, gender, class and sexual orientation.

Third research question:

How do Muslim Canadians make sense of their Canadianess at the emotional level?

While exploring how research participants make sense of the subjective aspects of Canadianess, two areas stood out for me as unique contributions of this study.

First, I was surprised by the way participants distinguished between their identity and their belonging. They love Canada as a country, but they cannot fully identify with it as Canadian citizens. This suggests that their level of national attachment is greatly influenced by what they experience in their social and political contexts. Furthermore, it appears that their way of interpreting the criteria for Canadianess makes them feel excluded from it. On the other hand, their sense of attachment or belonging to the country is affected by how secure they feel, the equality of social provisions, and the level of inclusion they experience in mainstream society.

A second area of significance for me was the participants' highly appreciative attitude toward Canadian ideals, despite the contradictions they have observed from time to time between these ideals and how they are applied. This suggests that idealism is a strong enough factor to be a significant reference point for Canadian values when participants call attention to their demands for true equality.

The findings of this study pertaining to one's sense of belonging suggest that citizens' emotional attachments to Canada cannot be attributed to one factor, but rather are formed by the

interaction of multiple factors and influences. The study shed new light on how political, social, and public school systems all play a crucial role in citizens' sense of belonging.

7.2 Implications and Recommendations

In this section, I will step back from my study to look at the bigger picture and its broad implications, while still keeping the findings central to my discussion. Two main areas are explored in order to provide added insights for politicians, social work practitioners, school teachers, and Islamic leaders. First, I explore the benefits and challenges of maintaining a multicultural society; secondly, I move beyond multiculturalism to emphasize Canada's Charter of Rights and Freedoms – with all discussion in both areas being based on the findings of this study.

7.2. i Multiculturalism Merits and Challenges

It is important to note that the backdrop for the discussion below is my belief that arguments pro or con the merits of differentiated-versus-undifferentiated citizenship rights are superficial and serve only to create unrealistic boundaries. I have found that citizenship is far too multilayered and multifaceted to be captured within two rigid categories.

There is little question that multiculturalism has numerous merits that contributed to making Canada one of the most diverse countries in the world. Over the past century, we have been transformed into an ethno-culturally diverse and economically prosperous nation. The Multicultural Act of the mid-1970s ensured that minority groups would have access to both their Canadian constitutional rights and the right to preserve their distinctiveness. All three levels of government -- municipal, provincial and federal -- are committed to promoting that groundbreaking multiculturalism policy. Kymlicka (2007), one of the strongest advocates for

multiculturalism, argues that among the merits of multiculturalism is the fact that minority groups are accorded self-worth and need never be ashamed of their ethnic heritage. He asserts that multiculturalism has succeeded in reducing the stigma attached to minority ethnic status. My study supports this fact, as a number of participants considered multiculturalism to have played a key role in the mainstream acceptance of their presence in Canada.

Indeed, multiculturalism presents Canada as the most inclusive and tolerant country in the world, where all individuals are valued for who they are and where universal equality for all citizens is safeguarded by our government; this image is accepted worldwide. For example, former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan declared that "the world needs more Canadas" (Coelho, 1998; Anderssen, Valpy, Gzowski, 2004; Lopes, Thomas, 2006). Unsurprisingly, this reputation attracts people to this country from all over the world (Cooper, Rowlands, Paterson, 2006). Those study participants who are first-generation immigrants asserted that Canada's excellent reputation of inclusion and multiculturalism was one of the main reasons why they chose this country. Studies in fact confirm that nations adopting multiculturalism policies have higher levels of tolerance and higher levels of immigrants' economic integration than those who do not embrace official multiculturalism (Weldon 2006, Kymlicka 1998).

At both the practical and theoretical levels, multiculturalism has a number of merits and advantages for citizens of those countries that embrace it. Nevertheless, it is important to discuss the challenges of multiculturalism as well as its merits, to assess what this study revealed about its impact on both society and individuals.

The findings of this study draw attention to the fragmentation of Canadian society. Both my participants and I see it as a country made up of groups who share little in common; yet paradoxically, they must coexist in an environment that emphasizes their differences over their

commonalities. This notion has been articulated in the literature as "groupism." Groupism imposes "the existence of discrete, sharply differentiated, internally homogeneous, and externally bounded groups as the basic constituents of social life" (Schaefer, 2008). This results in a fragmented, severely polarized society that becomes a fertile environment for the rise of ghettos.

Along with others, I argue that ghettoization pushes minorities further away from mainstream society, creating in each ethnic community a need to "withdraw behind the boundaries of its own group, its own groupist identity, with no need to acknowledge a larger common culture. Citizenship is then reduced to an aggregate of sub national ghettos" (Beiner, 2003). Groupism also resembles Brotz's 1980 notion of an "ethnic zoo" where the government acts as zoo-keeper, gathering diverse specimens to put on exhibit, where one can "go from booth, sampling pizzas, wonton soup and kosher pastrami."

At a personal level, I feel forced or coerced to belong to a group and this feeling is indeed a product of how I internalized the reality of Canadian society -- a society where, if you are classified as a minority, you need a group to belong to. Society at large does not willingly accept me without that all-important group affiliation tag; this is the way I am categorized. So I am obligated to choose from a long list of hyphenated identities; that is, to identify myself as Muslim-Canadian, Egyptian-Canadian, visible-minority-Canadian, etc. etc.

Hyphenated identity is often cherished and encouraged among those who are minorities; Canada allows minorities to keep and preserve their heritage, as this is the reputed "beauty" of Canada. A quick look at who carries hyphenated identities would reveal how "fortunate" they are. In Canada, only non-western immigrants are hyphenated (Cerroni-Long, 1999).

I argue, however, that hyphenated identity is in itself a powerful exclusionary tool that draws an even heavier boundary line between the Self and Others. Cerroni-Long (1999), points out that "it is not clear how hyphenated identities destabilize existing hierarchies, since they do not strike against the minority-majority dualism based on unequal power relations" (p. 216). Cerroni-Long et al further argue that the use of hyphenated identities creates a sense of alienation and exclusion from the mainstream. The hyphenated identity is as much a disservice to those who are hyphenated as to those who are not. Hyphenated Canadians are at times mistakenly put in categories to which they do not necessarily belong, and where their presumed differences are highlighted. On the other hand, the cultural differences of those who are not hyphenated go unacknowledged and unaccommodated, the assumption being that they are not so "different."

Along with others I believe that Canada as a multicultural country needs to identify a common ground where all citizens can live in harmony. Many scholars attest to the crucial need for this common "glue" to hold Canadians together (Bibby, 1990, 1992; Banting, Hoberg, Simeon, 1997; Hillmer, Chapnick; 2007). In times of adversity and hardship, Canada needs citizens who can put aside their self-interest for the collective good.

The traditional focus on embracing multiculturalism at the expense of alternative options ignores other important aspects of diversity, as it is the only culture that is acknowledged and cherished (Grant, Millar, 1992; Grant, Sleeter, 1985). For some Muslims, however, multiculturalism has proven to be limited and exclusionary in nature. In fact, one of the most ignored aspects of diversity is religion (Spinner-Halev, 2000; Guinn, 2006; Spalek, 2002). I believe that the struggles described by some participants in this study are mainly due to the limited definition parameters of multiculturalism.

My forgoing argument is by no means intended to devalue multiculturalism; however, while

still acknowledging its essence, I have come to view multiculturalism as a description of Canadian society, rather than a politically enshrined policy. In fact, the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedoms should be embraced and adopted as the primary frame of reference for all social policies and practices. Moving beyond the specificities and particularities of culture, ethnicity, religion, ability, gender, sexual orientation, and other marks of identity, will do far more to ensure universal equality while acknowledging the intrinsic differences between citizens as human beings.

Those who advocate for multiculturalism already struggle to find one model (if such is possible) that fits all. Let me use counselling as an example. Numerous studies have attempted to resolve the dilemma of providing culturally sensitive therapies to those who are from "different" ethnic backgrounds; none of these studies was successful in providing one model to fit all. The existence of such a model was shown in fact to be an impossibility. This highlights the complexity and impracticality of putting people into boxes and attempting to attach and ascribe labels and descriptions as a means of deciding how best to deal with them.

Alternatively, a universal human rights approach would accommodate, acknowledge and embrace people along with their unique differences. This model, I argue, moves beyond differentiated-versus-undifferentiated citizenship rights. Working from within a human rights frame of reference would ensure that underprivileged citizens – whether they suffer from lack of education, poverty, discrimination, language barriers, etc. -- will be supported by the state and thereby reach their potential. Along with Eisenberg (2003) and Okin (1999) I argue that the adoption of a universal human rights citizenship policy will ensure not only the well-being of all, but also the protection of oppressed minorities within minority groups. All members of society would be included, based on their right to membership. It is not clear to me why there should be

so much emphasis on differences, while the commonalties among citizens are ignored. In light of the findings of this study, I contend that more balanced views and policies should account for differences *and* commonalties.

Kymlicka's call for differentiated citizenship rights for minorities can be accommodated under the human rights umbrella without singling out individual groups and further polarizing our society. I am not claiming, as some others do, that multiculturalism should be abolished and replaced with something else. On the contrary, I see a number of merits and benefits in retaining multiculturalism. I do argue however, that our society needs to embrace a wider range of human diversity and treat individuals in light of their uniqueness, rather than forcing them to choose groups to belong to, or holding individuals within any given group responsible for the actions of their entire community. The participants in this study shed much light on how stressful it is to feel responsible, not only for oneself, but for an entire group as well.

The study also highlighted the social injustices and inequalities felt by participants and I can argue that a large number of Muslims feel similarly discriminated against in many aspects of their lives. Therefore, dealing with social injustice and discrimination through government remedies and initiatives is paramount in addressing the root causes of this phenomenon.

Tackling the systemic discrimination faced by some Muslims requires serious commitment. While multiculturalism has been successful in fostering recognition of citizens' own cultures and beliefs, it has done little to address discrimination and social injustice (Kennedy-Dubourdieu, 2006). Problems around discrimination were well documented by the 1997 National Capital Alliance on Race Relations. Islamophobia has become part of Muslims' lives and an important step towards dealing with it is to identify this condition as a form of social pathology. In 1997 the Runnymede Trust in Britain published a pioneering report compiled by

eighteen researchers entitled, Islamophobia: A Challenge for Us All. Islamophobia must be openly identified so that problems associated with it are adequately addressed by all three levels of government (Haddad, 2002). The Runnymede Report provided comprehensive and concrete recommendations for dealing with the growing tide of Islamophobia in Britain. It describes anti-Muslim discourses in the media, in employment, and in political and social life. A study on this scale is urgently needed in Canada to motivate a fuller understanding of this serious issue and provide recommendations applicable to this country.

Emphasising discrimination as the sole source of Muslims' problems, however, is far from the answer. Highlighting social injustices without encouraging minority citizens to take full responsibilities as individuals serves only to disempower them and take away their agency. Indeed, a sole emphasis on religious discrimination can lead Muslims to believe that their problems lie entirely with mainstream society – the Others -- and that they themselves do not play a crucial role in overcoming social injustices and discrimination (Klausen 2005). I contend that Muslims need to reconsider their dependence on Islamic states such as Saudi Arabia for importing their understanding of Islam. Just as Tariq Ramadan calls for a European-style Islam, I call for a Canadian Islam that takes this nation's social and political contexts into consideration. I do not propose complete rejection of the Islamic heritage; but I do urge a new interpretation using a more critical lens to filter Islamic knowledge and practices to fit the Canadian way of life.

This would entail a review of certain practices that do not conform to Canadian values and principles. For example, arranged marriages done in the name of Islam should be looked at in a different light, acknowledging women's rights as Canadian citizens. Muslims should also be engaged in a process of reforming and reshaping their understanding of the Islamic texts. This

must be done from within the Muslim community; it cannot be imposed by external forces. This will pose a major challenge for educated Muslims to enrich Islamic scholarship and fill the vacuum created by a severe shortage of Islamic knowledge based on Canadian values. It is important to note that such initiatives must be motivated from the top down. In other words, Imams and leaders of Islamic organizations must negotiate ways of gradually substituting imported knowledge with a contemporary, national, and unique understanding of Islam.

In fact, this pattern of reformation is not new to Islamic history. In the past there were a number of established schools of legal thought in Islam -- Hanfi, Shafi, Ibn Hanbal Malki, and Shi'ites, all of whom developed their own understanding and interpretation of Qur'anic texts based on the prevailing socio-political environment of the states in which they were founded. While they were all located in Islamic states, present-day Muslims can draw helpful examples from the fluidity and flexibility of their interpretations, which varied widely due to being based on different circumstances; such an approach could be fully adapted to the Canadian context.

7.3 Future Research

The current study is by no means a comprehensive illustration of the citizenship experiences of Muslim Canadians. Rather, it is a foundation for future research that can explore each of my discussed themes in more depth. There are a number of issues that deserve further investigation: for example, the psychological impact of religious discrimination has received very limited attention in the literature and this study illustrated that the problem cuts across all forms of oppression, making its impact unique among all other "isms."

Furthermore, greater consideration of the impact of public school education on Muslims' sense of belonging and on their Canadian identity will enhance our understanding of the role it

plays in the lives of all minority children.

As I noted previously, there is also a crucial need for more comprehensive study about the impact of Islamophobia on Canadian Muslims, as well as an exploration of effective remedies.

My study also shed light on how social provisions affect citizens' sense of belonging. It is important to explore this aspect in more detail to understand the strengths of the system, since most studies focus only on systemic barriers. A greater understanding of what *does* work will give policymakers something positive to build on.

Also, it is important to explore Muslims' sense-making in a global as well as national context, since it appears that Muslims living in the west still have strong emotional ties to Islamic countries, which in turn influences their sense-making of citizenship.

Future research might also explore gender differences in relation to understandings and feelings around citizenship.

7.4 Limitations of the study

Throughout this study a number of factors limited the outcome of my research. First, due to the complexity of the issues raised by the participants, it was not feasible to fully explore all of them. As a result, this study cannot be considered a definitive or exhaustive exploration of the issues it raised. A second limitation, one which was beyond the researcher's control, was an inability to give voice to those who were fearful and/or sceptical of the system.

Another limitation was the inability to go back to the research participants to check for clarity; and due to the qualitative methods used, the findings of this study cannot be generalized

as being necessarily applicable to all Muslims living in Canada.

Furthermore, as noted earlier, my focus was to explore all three of Marshall's citizenship rights in depth. However, not all participants, surprisingly, wanted to elaborate sufficiently on all of these right; and as their responses were sometimes very limited, all three were not explored fully as desired in relation to one another.

CHAPTER 8 – PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

8.1 Background

This chapter is derived from a personal reflexive journal that I kept throughout the entire process of this study to document my reflections, experiences, interpretations, and often, my puzzlement. In order to write this chapter I went back to this journal, examined and observed the gradual transformations that happened within me at both professional and personal levels.

I have approached this chapter in three sections. First, I reflect on the period before this research journey (8.1). In this section I present my social location in society and in subsections reflect on my Visible Minority Self, my Muslim Self, and my Colonizer Self. In the second part (8.2), I explain the recruitment process of my research participants; I also reflect on the tension and contention between my Personal Self and Researcher Self during this journey, a dichotomy that placed me in a paradoxical in-between space. In the third section (8.3) I reflect on my completion of this journey by presenting two transformative moments that have impacted me at a very deep level.

In conducting this study, I have been very deeply affected, since being a cultural and religious "insider" helped me to engage with the research participants beyond the levels of superficial study and analysis. During this study, I shared their path of self-discovery -- a process in which we mutually felt one another's experiences. Personally, I went through moments of transformative disruption in which my beliefs, values, and principles were challenged,

questioned, and at times, completely altered. Along the way, I observed my Self and wondered how fluid that Self is becoming; I was even undergoing change to the point where I longed to have my old Self back for comfort and the safety of the familiar.

8.2 Getting into the Field

In this section, I reflect on my social location in Canada, my Visible Minority Self, my Muslim Self, and my Colonizer Self. Both before and during this experience I had internalized inner and outer discourses about who I am as an individual. By outer or external discourse, I mean what the wider Canadian society tells me about myself; by internal discourse, I mean what my faith community understands by the term "a good Muslim."

8.2.i *My Location in Society*

I am viewed in Canada as a visible minority immigrant Muslim woman and so it is important to reflect on each aspect of this multi-part label and explore the range of meanings attached to each one. One aspect of my identity that I believe deserves further exploration is my Colonizer Self: what I mean by that is my social location in relation to the Aboriginal peoples of Canada.

But I will start with the day I officially became a Canadian citizen. From this moment, I truly "felt Canadian," yet I was not treated as a Canadian, but rather as an immigrant who was born somewhere else. The immigrant label remained with me even after I received a Canadian passport. To my knowledge, "immigrant" is a word describing an individual's legal status in Canada; it designates someone who does not have (or does not meet the criteria for) Canadian citizenship. Since it was still being applied to me after I could prove my full citizenship, being labelled an immigrant obviously has a deeper meaning than the standard legal definition.

Khayatt (1994) asserts that the label "immigrant woman" is loaded with exclusionary meanings that draw boundaries between the Self and Other. The Other usually refers to "[women] of colour ... from Third World countries ... who do not speak English well and ... who occupy lower positions in the occupational hierarchy" (p.3). I agree with those who argue that this label is a constant reminder of the discrepancies between the theory of full citizenship and its application (Hébert, 2002; Kasinsky, 1976), as I myself felt treated as one who is always the foreigner and whose values are different. Jiwani (2006) and Agnew (1998) also describe this label as a powerful tool that enforces racism and marginalization of the "other." For me, this label became a stigma that I have had to wrestle with. Cafferty and San (1983) argue that although immigrant groups are diverse, they all have to deal with negative stereotypes. The dominant discourse about my Self is that I am an immigrant person -- regardless of my official Canadian citizenship status, or how many years I have lived in this country. Whether I referred to myself as a Canadian or not, I was always still an immigrant in the eyes of society. So I started calling myself an immigrant too; I caved in. I believed it and used this stereotyping label to describe my identity to myself and to others.

8.2.ii *My Visible Minority Self*

Society labelled me as a visible minority. My skin colour is not black, white, or brown; it is olive, but unfortunately, olive is not included in the official list of racial colors. Whenever I have to fill out official applications that require me to specify my skin colour, it is not listed; I am excluded even from this descriptive category of who I am as a person living in this geographic space called Canada. In fact, Statistics Canada (StatsCan) classifies all Arabs as "visible" minorities. But is this classification based on skin colour? I came from Egypt, which is considered an Arab country; however, Egyptians are not Arabs by race (Hourani, 1989).

Historically, Arabs arrived in Egypt the same way as all other colonizing groups -- including French, British, and Turks.

Regardless of my personal opinion, or the facts of history, I have been categorized without my consent. And I find the term "person of colour" to be oppressive because it reinforces the normalization of whiteness: that is, white is not a colour; rather, it is an indication of superiority and therefore the norm (Khayatt, 1994). Indeed, my struggle to make sense of this is a struggle common to all women who are thus labelled. As Agnew (1998) points out, "many women insist that they [want to] have the right to name themselves and that resistance to these labels is a symbol of their struggle against the power that white middle class men and women have exercised over them" (p.14). That raises some challenging questions: Who gave people the authority to label me? And how can I resist their labels and create my own? Are labels fixed or fluid? Can they be changed or transformed? Is Canadian society ready to give those who are labelled the right to chose for themselves?

My (in)visibility illustrates just how (mis)represented I am as a person. My skin colour at times allows me to "pass as white," while at others it designates me as a visible minority. This is the official label that sets me apart as "different." Thus I question the whole notion of visibility -- Visibility in relation to what? To the invisible? And how can a person be invisible? Is it when their differences are not highlighted, and not acknowledged? The construction of differences is always linked to "assumptions about worth, superiority and inferiority ... in which they inform relations of domination and subordination" (Finn and Jackson, 2003, p.20). Ahmed (1996) points out that racialization is a means of inclusion *and* exclusion; you are "white like me," or the visible "other." Ahmed also asserts that skin colour at times can be used as a means to escape oppression, when people conceal their "real" colour; their ability to "pass" protects them

against imminent risk and threat.

For me, the struggle has been about deciding which category or group to belong to, and about choosing visibility or invisibility. My olive complexion enables me to belong visibly to both sides of the racial border; yet I am always in a paradoxical in-between space, because, in fact, I do not belong to either side. However, I *do* belong to the Muslim "other." In sum, I felt obligated to accept the "rigid definitions of race and ethnicity which do not account for the fluidity of the categories ... [They] fail to respect individual identities or to take into account lived experiences" James and Shadd (2001, p. 84).

8.2.iii *My Muslim Self*

In this section I intentionally adopt the past tense, as the mental states described are no longer applicable. I am now in the process of liberating my Self from the domination of discourses that originated with, and subsequently shaped, my Muslim Self.

Back in Egypt, I was never described as a Muslim woman; class and socioeconomic status were the primary identifying markers. The moment I came to Canada, however, I started to think in terms of my Muslim identity, as this was how I was viewed here. Before September 11, 2001, casual conversations were mainly about my religious beliefs and how they differ from mainstream faiths; so I would struggle to find similarities between Islam and Christianity in my longing for access and acceptance.

Post-September 11, however, conversations focused on my opinions about terrorism and Osama Bin Laden. I would respond by quoting numerous verses from the Qur'an to prove that Islam is a religion of peace, despite its contrary representation by the media. Because of the anti-Muslim discourse in the media and everywhere, I felt compelled to go on the defensive. I

became preoccupied with defending my "own group," proving that Muslims are humans and worthy of being accepted. In reality, I was constantly negotiating my very identity as a Muslim woman, but since the label of Islam was not positive, I searched for an alternative description. I considered a number of self-designations, including: moderate Muslim, liberal Muslim, conservative Muslim, and secular Muslim. But because of my hijab (headscarf), I did not have much freedom. I could not fit in among conservative Muslims as my ideologies and beliefs were too liberal; nor could I interact comfortably with non-Muslims because my faith visibly placed me (in their perceptions) as being religiously conservative.

Again, I was caught "in between" -- longing for a space where I truly belonged. Society had arbitrarily classified me; its message was that the identity problem is within me and I should not resist the labels others chose to apply. So if I were to cave in and accept whatever identity society ascribed to me, I would be allowed to "pass" safely and belong to its group. I kept searching for a space where my Self could live safely, but I always ended up in-between, trapped in the binary tension that is between Self and Other. Kumsa (2004) rightly argues that those in-between spaces cannot guarantee the safety I was looking for.

For me, being a Muslim woman in Canada meant fighting all the stereotypes that society attached to my identity -- stereotypes that went beyond racism or sexism and included my religion and culture. Khan (2000) points out that the label of Islam has negative meanings attached that include the oppression of Muslim women by the male figures in their lives.

8.2.iv *My Colonizer Self*

During this journey of exploring citizenship and what it meant to the study participants, the idea that Canada was established as a nation on the ancestral lands of Aboriginal peoples

caused me to struggle with feelings of shame, guilt and sorrow. In seeking and often struggling to experience a complete identity in my Canadianess, am I not also fighting to belong to those founding colonizers who stripped away both rights and property from our native peoples and brutally excluded them from mainstream society?

This feeling was, and still is, powerful to the point where I even wondered whether the whole premise of this study was oppressive in itself. Hébert (et al) argue that the notion of citizenship "universalizes the colonizer's experience and power and establishes an unrealizable norm for others" (p. 95). Hébert and Thobani (2007) maintain that citizenship, from the Aboriginal perspective, is a crucial force of oppression and exclusion. The exclusion of the Aboriginal peoples in their own land is a travesty of both social ethics and constitutional justice. Faced with the problematic record of Canada's colonial history, I felt that my citizenship also placed me in the role of the oppressor, so I struggled with the guilt of being an extension to the waves of European settlers who took over the land from its ancient inhabitants.

While exploring the low representation of Muslim Canadians in Canadian politics, I was struck also by the inherent exclusionary nature of this system as it applies to Aboriginal peoples. Kaplan (1993) reminds us that Canada's political and electoral systems were established and structured so as to push Aboriginal peoples away from the centre of public life – all part of a larger strategy to strip away their rights as indigenous inhabitants and stewards of the land.

During my path of discovering personal identity, I continued to struggle with the fact that what I call "social justice" and "citizenship rights" are being realized and enacted (either directly or indirectly) through the oppression and marginalization of Canada's Aboriginal peoples. In fact, the social justice I long for "subverts the constitutional rights of Aboriginal peoples [as being inferior to] ... the interests of the dominant immigrant groups" (Kamboureli and Miki, 2007 p.

103). It is indeed a heavy and paradoxical burden to assume the oppressor's role while advocating for the oppressed.

8.3 Entering the Field

The foregoing is an illustration of my old Self and how it was constructed by the social discourses in which I lived. I felt I had to accept all the labels ascribed to me; I was too weak back then to resist their imposition from outside. Consequently, I entered the field of this research loaded down with all the baggage of preconceived labels that I was forced to accept. I hoped to search for (and find) my Self through others, and with others. That was me *before* conducting this study. The succeeding section illustrates my reflection during this research.

My first step was to look for participants willing to walk the path of discovering our own identities together. At that time, it never occurred to me that I would have difficulty finding research participants. I was so wrong! It was frustrating to be turned down by so many people. I assumed that because the Muslim community knows me, I would not have any difficulty finding people who would trust me during this process.

My original intention was to interview 20 participants. I first approached some key contacts for referrals, but they were embarrassed at not being able to find any volunteers for me. I was told all sorts of reasons. Some replied that as my project was about Canadianess, "we do not want to upset Canada" by voicing opinions. They believed that their loyalty to Canada was already suspect and did not want to further complicate their lives or reinforce the stereotyping of Muslims and Islam. In fact, I was told that if my project was *not* about Canadian citizenship, they would have participated. Others said that mainstream society and politicians are Islamophobic; nothing will change that, so why bother? Why "waste my time and your time?" Still others said;

"We do not want you to air the dirty laundry."

So although I technically had access as a member of the community, I was denied access as a researcher. And although I was aware that "recruitment may be more challenging when the study involves people from a minority religious group," (Mohammadi, Jones, Evans, 2008 p. 393), I never thought I would encounter similar challenges, given my status as an "insider." I would add, however, that the issue of recruiting minority religious group members for social research purposes has not been well addressed in the literature (Mohammadi, et al). I finally succeeded in finding eight willing research participants and among them, I was lucky enough to have a very diverse sample that I hope reflects the broad social spectrum of Muslims in Canada.

During this research I was engaged with, and affected by, every individual I interviewed and interacted with. However, I was not certain about the right distance to maintain between the research participants and myself. According to Baszanger and Dodier (1997), establishing the appropriate distance between oneself and any given group of participants is the main challenge of any interview-based research. Nevertheless, I still asked myself: What is the right distance anyway? Who measures it, and who decides if it is a "right" or "wrong" distance? I followed my ethics and instinct as a professional to lead me to the "right" distance.

The impact of this research was profound indeed. As one participant said to me; "You made me think deeply of who I am as an individual... I trusted you with my story." Their collective trust also made me acutely sensitive to the importance of representing their voices respectfully and I found myself wrestling between honouring their narratives as I received them, and at times challenging their assertions. After consultation with my advisor, Dr. Kumsa, we agreed that social realities are multiple social constructions.

Blaikie (2007) points out that "[t]ruth and reality are embedded in the meanings that are intersubjectively negotiated between social actors from their shared, subjective life experiences. Knowledge itself is regarded as a social construction that is negotiated through dialogue" (p.49). Consequently, I validated my participants' narratives while examining and exploring other realities and truths. Theoretically, it seemed feasible, but in practice I encountered some guilt over "betraying" their trust at times in order to challenge their truths. On one hand, I would feel guilty if I did not challenge some of the things they said; on the other hand I had to uphold my ethical and professional obligations that dictate research integrity.

Before undertaking this study, I never imagined that my researcher Self and personal Self would be in conflict or competition. Here I was again, caught in an in-between space, not fully belonging to my researcher Self nor to my personal Self. My personal Self was worried about the Muslims of Canada, an already vulnerable community dealing with a number of big issues; a community that is targeted and racialized; that is branded with derogatory and dehumanizing labels. It is a community – and here I can speak from personal experience -- that is trying to carve out a space for itself in a society that seems bent on exercising domination and exclusion over it. And while its own members know this community to be diverse and heterogeneous from within, mainstream Canada views it as one homogenous hive-like collective in which everyone is held accountable for the actions of all the others. It is also a community struggling with the lure of total assimilation – of wholly embracing the values of the powerful so as to "pass" for mainstream and fit in with everyone else. In such a transitional context, some members filter their beliefs and values through the lens of the dominant mainstream; if these values pass, they are adopted and if they do not, they are rejected. Freire and Macedo (2000) remind us that the oppressed individual believes that by following the guidelines and practices of the oppressor,

they will be granted access and can pass safely through life in that society.

Thus the Muslim community keenly feels a dichotomy of extremes between those who favour visible and outward compliance with the dominant secular lifestyle and the polar opposite of rejecting each and every practice of mainstream Canadians. Members of the latter group base their faith practices and lifestyle choices on approval by Imams (spiritual leaders) in Arab countries. Ramadan (1999) argues that even today, the majority of Muslims are dependent on *fatwas* (legal pronouncements) pertaining to Islamic issues, which are decreed by scholars in Muslim countries; they in turn derive the pronouncements and interpretations in their fatwas from precedents established in the tenth century. Present-day Muslims who accept these fatwas as having ultimate authority in their lives are those in the community who are most concerned to draw rigid boundaries between themselves and others outside their faith.

Yet in the midst of these opposing polarities, there are also those occupying a middle ground, or in-between space, who continually negotiate between the obligations of their Islamic identity and the requirements of living in Canada, a country that is Christian, despite its secular facade. This group in particular embraces the progressive European scholar, Tariq Ramadan, as its hero. Ramadan (1999) calls for a new version of Islam; in other words, a European Islam that takes into consideration the environmental context in which contemporary Muslims actually live. Ramadan believes that Muslims need to find a way of protecting their core values while participating fully in non-Islamic societies; thus his views apply equally well to Canada and North America.

Taken as a whole, all three groups within the Muslim community are in constant negotiation with their Canadianess and Islamic identity. As well, they find themselves at odds from within, as each group opposes the other's approach. Thus my personal Self worried about

loading more stress on Canadian Muslims, as they struggle with external oppression and internal issues; I felt that I cannot "air the dirty laundry."

However, my researcher Self protested against suppressing what I considered to be eye-opening findings. Looking at fellow Muslims with a researcher's point of view entailed a major paradigm shift for me. Observing and engaging as a researcher enabled me to see and question issues not previously questioned or negotiated – uncomfortable issues, such as injustices among Muslims themselves. Minorities within this minority group are oppressed and silenced by those who have a higher status. Ironically, my observation of the participants revealed that members of this community are often simultaneously both oppressed and oppressors, a social phenomenon referred to as "internalized oppression and domination." As Kauffman and New (2004) explain, when "oppression becomes internalized, members of an oppressed group turn the invalidation and discrimination that they have individually felt from the oppressors on themselves and on each other (p. 77)." I concur, and would argue that the Muslim community is very hierarchically structured, so its power relations -- which are determined by levels of religious observance, class, gender, ability, sexual orientation, and (ironically) race – go largely unchallenged.

My researcher Self observed that internal Canadian Muslim minorities are silenced by the same dynamics utilized by the majority (non-Muslim) mainstream to silence our entire community. My observations revealed that the most vulnerable group within this community is women. This is due to a number of reasons. First, their oppression is justified by misinterpreted verses from the Qur'an. Thus, if they protest systemic injustices, they are viewed as protesting Islam itself. Second, they are caught in the middle between patriarchal power within and oppression and marginalization from without (Kincheloe, Steinberg, 2004). When they move towards liberating themselves, they are then accused of blindly following un-Islamic feminist

ideologies, which only exacerbates their plight. I contend that women are even further restricted from engaging in society for fear of being brain-washed by secular values. Consequently, women are forced into a position where they have to negotiate both their loyalty to fellow Muslims and to society in general.

8.4 Exiting the Field

In light of the conflict between my two Selves, I had to negotiate my location: Was I to be a total insider, or a total outsider? My personal Self was, and is, totally immersed and enmeshed with its inside location. My researcher Self was, and is, out of that context; it does not belong to the community's inside space. I realized once again that my location was to be an in-between space. I found my Self in a space that might "provide a location for elaborating strategies of self-hood -- singular or communal -- that initiates new signs of identity" (Bhabha, 1994, pp. 1-2).

While the binary nature of my location was both imaginary and fluid it was also, paradoxically, tangible. From this in-between location, I had to negotiate my movement from one space to the other. Fortunately, during this confusion and uncertainty, I experienced a number of transformative moments, and have chosen to describe two in particular that were very significant during my journey. Both of these moments marked my exit from this journey and occurred in separate interviews with two different research participants. In these moments, I saw myself through the eyes of the research participants themselves, and found myself questioning my own voice, beliefs, and dogmas; I felt as if I had been presented with a reflexive mirror with which to see deeply inside myself.

8.4.i *Situation / Moment One:*

On my way to a scheduled interview with one of the participants, I stopped at a coffee shop. As I was about to enter, I saw a woman in typical Muslim dress stop to help an elderly lady who was struggling to get a walker out of her car. The Muslim woman assisted her and walked with her into the coffee shop. On their way, I overheard her telling the elderly woman that "this is Islam," and she wanted to show her that Muslims are good and helpful citizens, and that she should not believe what she hears from the media. It seemed, however that the old lady was not paying much attention; she was nodding, but did not say a word. As the two of them stood in the coffee shop line, the Muslim lady kept telling how beautiful Islam is and how it encourages Muslims to be kind to others. I thought to myself; 'why don't you stop talking and let the lady get her coffee instead of lecturing her about your religion?' I purchased my coffee and left, but that scene never left my mind; it typified so many situations where Muslims try desperately to prove that they are "good" citizens.

When I arrived to speak with my research participant, she greeted me with a smile, saying she hoped I would make a difference with this study. We started the interview and she seemed keen to elaborate on my questions and answer them in full; I was thrilled with her enthusiasm and open attitude. She even consented to having our conversation recorded. She shared her experience of being a second-generation Canadian and a proud Muslim. She also spoke about the negative side of being Muslim; the labels one is given and how she feels responsible for fighting against the bad image of Muslims in society. Then she said:

> I seek the opportunity to show people how Muslims are good people. When I go shopping with my family and talk to the cashier, and be open and be myself, and 'how is the swimming?' people would say, 'oh she went swimming,' she must be an active person; she is dressed like a Muslim but it doesn't mean that she is stuck in her house.

In that moment I saw myself through the participant's eyes. Yes, I too sought every opportunity

to represent my "group" in a positive light. I went out of my way to "fit in;" I swallowed pain and humiliation, just for the sake of presenting a good image of Muslims. During this moment, all the discourses I had heard and absorbed about my community from mainstream society flooded my consciousness. In my mind's eye, I saw again the scene of the two ladies in the coffee shop. Along with it came those messages from society that hold me personally responsible for all Muslims; messages from Muslim leaders who insist that individual Muslims are all "messengers of Islam"; and messages that remind us always to "show them how a good Muslim behaves."

At that moment I realized how heavy a burden I had been carrying on my shoulders all these years. Because of it, I had become socially homogenized to be defensive and to believe I was ethically responsible for the behaviour, and even the faults, of others. In return, I behaved accordingly; I wanted to show the world how good Muslims are and admittedly I had a role in this dynamic. Jun and Sherwood (2006) tell us the social construction of responsibility is a product of the reciprocal relationship between society and citizens. They argue that "learning responsibility is an ongoing process of interaction among people through externalization, objectifation and internalization within [the] cultural context." (p.197). Certainly social conditioning has an important role in forming an individual's identities (Vincent, 2005; Hall, 1989).

It was in this moment that I experienced a strong urge to liberate my Self from the captivity of unjust discourses. I wanted to break down the societal assumption that I must represent all Muslims and decided then and there to protest and refuse all the ascribed labels. By applying Wright's (1997) analysis of the homeless body, I contend my identity as a Muslim Canadian was generated from dualisms created through the dominant social imageries in our society. My social location and identity in society comprised externally imposed dualisms of

good/bad, moderate/conservative, integrating/segregating Muslims. Thus, I had to draw upon my Self-hood to break down and resist the existence of those binaries. However, I also took inspiration from Wright et al who assert that the "collective nature of bodies resisting together [is] one of the most powerful tools for challenging established identities" (p. 300). Thus I am exiting this journey with a new-found rebellious Self who seeks liberation through resistance. Now I represent my Self, am responsible about my Self, and refuse to carry the burden of being responsible for other associated bodies.

8.4.ii *Situation / Moment Two*:

I acknowledge that this second revelatory moment is highly sensitive for most Muslims, as it concerns the hijab (the headscarf worn by many Muslim women). This is a hot issue that can cause Muslims to become very defensive when it is raised; most feel strongly about it, one way or the other. I will begin this part of my reflection with a quote from Diana, one of the research participants.

> ***Diana***: Now, being a convert and being widely engaged in the community before I wore hijab and before I was a Muslim, I know a lot of people who knew me without hijab and who knew me before I became Muslim. When I see them now, it is sort of, I am afraid to show my face because I don't want to get in a huge conversation where, 'oh you are Muslim; you are married; in your religion you have to get married; or, is he enslaving you in a house; you wear a chain or do you have hair under there?' I just shy away from them; it is getting ... excessive so if I see someone I knew from high school on a bus, I will actually get off of the bus and take another bus or like turn around and face one direction for the whole bus ride; and I've missed my bus stop a couple of times, just because I don't want to look at that person; I am sort of embarrassed, but I don't understand. Still I cannot understand myself, how I can be embarrassed about this and be really passionate about it? It is more so that [this] is what society has treated me to become, that I have to be embarrassed with my religion just because they won't accept it.

In reflecting on the above quote, I do not need to discuss how a society that prides itself on inclusiveness causes citizens embarrassment over the lifestyle they have chosen for themselves; this issue has been covered in detail elsewhere in my study. However, I want to illuminate some deeply personal resonances here, for I was in Diana's situation many times in my life; times when I felt ashamed because of my Muslim appearance and dress. I went through periods where I felt I was pressured to choose between religious commitment or freeing myself from all the humiliation I encountered. Diana's quote reflects my experiences and those of many other women. I questioned why I cannot practice whatever I chose in a "free" society without incurring shame and guilt. Conversely, I also questioned why it is a religious duty to dress this way anyway and why some Muslim men are adamant that their women cover their hair.

Diana's experience stirred many emotions inside me. I saw the dilemma of Muslim women in the global community, internally within local communities, and in mainstream society. Those who wear the hijab are seen as a minority in the general population of Canada, while those who do not wear it, or choose to take it off, are minorities within their Muslim communities.

This symbolized the dilemma of the first question; my guilt and shame arose from the realization that I knew I could not fit in. I am the Other from the very first moment of any encounter. Britt and Heise (2000) point out that when individuals display stigmatized behaviour, shame and guilt will likely result. Diana's eyes watered as she shared her narrative. I engaged with her on a deep emotional level, feeling her pain as my own. Diana's puzzlement as to why she is embarrassed by her identity when she knows she should not be reflects my own concern and that of others with whom I interacted. We become angry at ourselves because we are ashamed, then ashamed of our anger, and so the cycle continues. Britt and Heise (2000) cite Scheff (1990) who calls this cycle the "shame-anger spiral." Diana's narrative brought many

emotions and feelings to the surface; I had been spinning in this cycle for so long and my inner Self was screaming to get out.

Islam clearly teaches (it is everywhere throughout the Qur'an) that God gave people the freedom of choice. But I, along with other scholars whose research I consulted, have encountered many women who stated that the men in their families forced them to wear the hijab for "protection" (Hasan 2002; Bullock, 2002; Clarke, 2009). Hasan (2002, citing Riff Hassan) states: "Nothing perhaps illustrates men's deep insecurities ... so well as the sternness and strictness with which they compel their women to cover themselves from head to foot" (p. 114). I would add that men who feel they own the women in their lives feel threatened when others look at their "property." Although , nothing in the Qur'an, Islam's holy scripture, particularly commands women to cover their hair, numerous other Muslim women who wear the hijab by personal choice believe it is God's command, they drive their convictions from the Islamic scholarship's interpretation and understanding of the text rather than clear command.

My concluding questions are: how can a Canadian Muslim woman free herself from the suspicion and marginalization of a society that does not easily accept the hijab - or in other words her lifestyle choice- and from her own community that pressures her to conform to specific life style? How does this struggle, which I undergo in common with the rest of the women in my Muslim community, fit in with our political and civil rights as Canadian citizens? I am exiting this journey with these unresolved thoughts.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Acker, J. (2005). Class Questions: Feminist Answers. Rowman Altamira

Agnew, V. (1998). In Search of a Safe Place: Abused Women and Culturally Sensitive Services. University of Toronto Press

Angus, L. (1993). Education, Inequality, and Social Identity. Routledge

Ahmed, S. (2000). Embodying strangers. In S. Ahmed, Strange Encounters (pp. 38-54). London: Routledge.

Ahmed, Sara. (2003). Uprooting/Regroundings: Questions of Home and Migration. Berg Publishers

Ahmed. S. (1996). Beyond Humanism and Postmodernism: Theorizing a feminist practice, Hypatia 11: 71-93

Alcoff, L. (2006). Visible identities: race, gender, and the self. Oxford University Press US

Alvesson, Mats. Skoldberg, Kaj. (2000). Reflexive Methodology: New Vistas for Qualitative Research. Sage Publications Ltd

Amaro, H., Russo, NF and Johnson, J. (1987). 'Family and work predictors of psychological well-being among Hispanic women professionals', *Psychology of Women Quarterly,* 11, pp.505-521.

Ansari, H. (2004). The Infidel Within: Muslims in Britain Since 1800. C. Hurst & Co. Publishers,

Armitage, Andrew. (1995). Comparing the Policy of Aboriginal Assimilation: Australia, Canada, and New Zealand. UBC Press.

Avery, James. (2004). Racial Differences in the Foundation of Political Trust. Unpublished PhD thesis, College of Arts and Science, University of Kentucky

Babbie, Earl and Benaquisto, Luica. (2002). Fundamentals of Social Research. Nelson Thomson Learning.

Bachrach, P. Botwinick, A. (1992). *Power and Empowerment: A Radical Theory of Participatory Democracy* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press

Banting, K. Hoberg, G. Simeon, R. (1997). Degrees of Freedom: Canada and the United States in a Changing World. McGill-Queen's Press – MQUP

Barbalet, J.M. (1989) Citizenship: Rights, Struggle, and Class Inequality. University of Minnesota Press.

Baszanger, I. & Dodier, N. (1997) Ethnography: relating the part to the whole. In: Qualitative Research: Theory, Method and Practice (ed.) Silverman, pp 8-23, Sage, London.

Baumeister, A. (2003). Ethnonational minorities and models of 'differentiated Citizenship. Ethnicities. Vol 3(3): 393–416

Beiner, R. (2003). Liberalism, Nationalism, Citizenship: Essays on the Problem of Political Community. UBC Press

Berger, P. L. and T. Luckmann (1966), The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge, Garden City, NY: Anchor Books.

Bernal, G. Trimble, J. Leong, F. (2002). Handbook of Racial & Ethnic Minority Psychology. SAGE

Bhabha, H. K. (1994). Frontlines/Borderposts. Displacements: Cultural Identities in Question. A. Bammer. Bloomington, Indiana University Press. 15: 269-272.

Bibby, R. (1990). Mosaic madness: The Poverty and Potential of Life in Canada. Toronto:

Stoddart Publishing Co.

Blaikie, N. (2007). Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge. Polity

Boyle, C. MacCrimmon, M. Martin, D. (1999). "The Construction of Knowledge" in The Law of Evidence: Fact Finding, Fairness, and Advocacy. Toronto: Edmond Montgomery Publications Ltd.

Brewer, M.B. (2003). Optimal Distinctiveness, Social Identity, and the Self. in M. Leary and J. Tangney (eds.), Handbook of Self and Identity. (pp 480-491).

Britt, Lory, and David R. Heise (2000). "From Shame to Pride in Identity Politics." pp 252-268 in Self Identity, and Social Movements, ed S. Stryker, T, Owens, and White. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota

Brown , C. Nock, D. (2006). With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada. UBC

Brotz, H. (1980). Multiculturalism in Canada: A Muddle, Canadian Public Kingdom. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bullock, K. (2002). Rethinking Muslim Women and the Veil: Challenging Historical & Modern Stereotypes. IIIT

Bullock, K. (2005). Muslim Women Activists in North America: Speaking for Ourselves. University of Texas Press

Cafferty, San. (1983). The Dilemma of American Immigration: Beyond the Golden Door. Transaction Publishers.

Carens, Joseph. (2000). Culture, Citizenship, and Community: A Contextual Exploration of Justice as Even-handedness. Oxford University Press.

Catt, H. (1999). Democracy in Practice. Routledge

Catterberg, G, and Moreno, A. (2005). The individual bases of political trust: Trends in new and established democracies. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research* 18 (1): 31-48.

Cerroni-Long, L (1999). Anthropological theory in North America. Greenwood Publishing Group

Cesari, J. McLoughlin, S. (2005). European Muslims and the Secular State. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd

Clarke, P. (2009). The Oxford Handbook of the Sociology of Religion. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Clayton, L. Clayton, S. Opotow, S. (2003). Identity and the Natural Environment: The Psychological Significance of Nature. Boston: MIT Press.

Cochran, P. (1999). Corporate ethics practices in the mid 1990. An empirical study of Fortune. Journal of Business Ethics, 18: 283- 94

Constantine, M. Wing- Sue, D. (2006). Addressing Racism: Facilitating Cultural Competence in Mental Health and Educational Settings. John Wiley and Sons.

Cooper, A. Rowlands, D. Paterson, N. (2006). Canada among Nations: Minorities and Priorities.

Cox, J.C., 2004. How to identify trust and reciprocity. Games and Economic Behavior 46, 260–281.

Crabtree, Benjamin. Miller, William. (1999). Doing Qualitative Research. Sage Publications Inc.

Creswell, John. (2002). Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches. Sage Publications Inc.

Dalton, R. H, Klingemann (2007). The Oxford Handbook of Political Behavior. Oxford: Oxford University Press

Denise, Helly. (2004). Are Muslims Discriminated Against in Canada since September 2001? Canadian Ethnic Studies. Vol. 36, 1; p. 24.

DePasquale, P. (2007). Natives & Settlers, Now & Then: Historical Issues and Current Perspectives on Treaties and Land Claims in Canada. University of Alberta

Dion, K.L. (1975). Women's reactions to discrimination from members of the same or the opposite sex. Journal of Research in Personality, 9, 294-306

Dion, KL, Dion, KK, & Pak, AWP (1992). Personality-based hardiness as a buffer for discrimination-related stress in members of Toronto's Chinese community. Canadian Journal of Behaviour Science. 24-4, 517-536

Dyer, Colin. (2006). Research in Psychology: A Practical Guide to Methods and Statistics. Blackwell Publishing

Eisenberg, Abigail (2003) "Diversity and Equality: Three Approaches to Cultural and Sexual Difference," *Journal of Political Philosophy* 11; 1 (March) 41-64.

Ersson, S. and Lane, J. (2000). The New Institutional Politics. Routledge

European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working. (2005). First European

Quality of Life Survey, Life Satisfaction, Happiness, and Sense of Belonging. Retrieved from http://www.eurofound.eu.int/areas/qualityoflife/eqls.htm

Fanon, Franz (1967). Black Skin White Masks. Trans. Charles Lam Markmann. New York: Grove Press, Inc

Faulks, K. (2000). Citizenship. London: Routledge.

Finn, J. Jackson, M. (2003), Just Practice; Steps toward a new social work paradigm; Journal of social work education, 39 (1), 57-79

Fleras, A. and Kunz, J.L.(2001). Newscasting: "Problematizing" Minorities. In A. Fleras, J.L Kunz, Media and Minorities: Representing diversity in a Multicultural Canada (pp. 65-86). Toronto: Thompson Educational Publishing.

Fortier (2008). Multicultural Horizons: Diversity and the Limits of the Civil Nation. Routledge

Foucault, Michel (1976). Two Lectures. in Gordon, Colin (ed.) (1980) Power/ Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972-1977 by Michel Foucault, pp 79-108, New York: Pantheon Books

Freire, P. Macedo, D. (2000). Pedagogy of the Oppressed: 30th Anniversary Edition. Continuum International Publishing Group

Galabuzi, Grace (2006). Canada's Economic Apartheid. Toronto: Canadian Scholars Press.

Giddens, Anthony (1991) Modernity and Self-Identity. Self and Society in the Late Modern Age. Cambridge: Polity.

Goldhill, Simon (1986). Reading Greek Tragedy. Cambridge University Press.

Goulding, Christina (2002). Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide for Management, Business and Market. London: Sage Publications Inc.

Graham, R. Graham and Swift, Karen J. & Delany Roger (2003). Canadian Social Policy. Toronto: Pearson Education Canada.

Grant, C. Sleeter (1989) Turning on Learning: Plans for Race, Class, Gender, and Disability. Columbus, OH: Merrill

Grant, C. and Millar, S. (1992). Research and Multicultural Education: Barriers, Needs and Boundaries, in C.A. (ed.). Research and Multicultural education: From the Margins to the Mainstream (pp. 7-18). London: Flamer.

Green, Judith and Thorogood, Nicki (2004). Qualitative Methods for Health Research. Sage Publications Inc.

Grugel, J. Hout, W. (1999). Regionalism Across the North-South Divide. Routledge

Guinn, D. (2006). Handbook of Bioethics and Religion. Oxford University Press US

Gupta, A. and Ferguson, J. (2001) Culture, Power, Place: explorations in critical anthropology. Baskerville.

Haddad, Yvonne. (2002). Muslims in the West: From Sojourners to Citizens. Oxford University Press US.

Hall, M. (1989) 'Private Experiences in the Public Domain: Lesbians in Organizations', in J. Hearn, D. Sheppard, P. Tancred-Sheriff and G. Burrell (eds) The Sexuality of Organization. London: Sage. 125-38

Hammersley, Martyn. Atkinson, Paul. (1983). Ethnography: Principles in Practice. Routledge

Hardin, R. (1993). "The Street-level Epistemology of Trust." *Politics and Society*, 21 (December): 505–529.

Hasan, A. G. (2002). American Muslims: The New Generation, New York: Continuum Press.

Hébert, Y. and Wilkinson, L. (2002). The Citizenship Debates: Conceptual, Policy, Experiential and Educational issues. In Y. Hébert (ed.), Citizenship in Transformation in Canada (pp 3-36). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Held, D. (2006). Models of Democracy. Stanford: Stanford University Press

Hesse-Biber, Sharlene and Leavy, Patricia. (2006). The Practice of Qualitative Research. London: Sage Publications Inc.

Hetherington, M. (2005). Why Trust Matters: Declining Political Trust and the Demise of American Liberalism. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Heywood, Andrew. 1994. Political Ideas and Concepts. An Introduction. New York: St. Martin's Press.

Hildebrand, Leanne (2007). Canadian Cosmopolitanism: Youth Perspectives of Citizenship for the Postmodern Era. Unpublished master's thesis. Calgary, Alberta.

Hillmer, N. and Chapnick, A. (2007). Canadas of the Mind: The Making and Unmaking of Canadian Nationalisms in the Twentieth Century. McGill-Queen's Press – MQUP

Hiss, T. (1990). The Experience of Place. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

Hoeveler, D. and Boles, J (2004). Historical Dictionary of Feminism. Scarecrow Press

Hofrichter, R. (2000). Reclaiming the Environmental Debate: The Politics of Health in a Toxic Culture. Boston: MIT Press

Honohan and J. Jennings (2006), Republicanism in Theory and Practice. London: Routledge.

Hopkins, N. (2001), 'National identity: Pride and prejudice?', British Journal of Social Psychology 40, 183-6

Hopkins, Peter. (2007). 'Blue squares', 'proper' Muslims and transnational networks. Narratives of national and religious identities amongst young Muslim men living in Scotland. Ethnicities. 2007 SAGE Publications (London, Thousand Oaks CA and New Delhi) 1468-7968 Vol 7(1): 61–81;073917

Hourani, A. (1989). History of the Arab Peoples. Grand Central Publishing

Howard, Rhoda E. (1998) 'Being Canadian: Citizenship in Canada', Citizenship Studies, 2:1, 133 – 152

Huntington, Samuel P., 1996, The Clash of Civilizations and the Remaking of World Order.

New York: Simon and Schuster.

Hussain, Ahmed. (2001). The Canadian Face of Islam: Muslim Communities in Toronto. Unpublished Thesis. University of Toronto.

Hussini, Zohra. (1990). Muslims in the Canadian Mosaic: socio-cultural and economic links with their countries of origin. Muslim Research Foundation.
International Labour Office. (2006). Discrimination at Work in the Americas. Retrieved January, 3.2008 from:
http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.DOWNLOAD_BLOB?Var_DocumentID=6810.

Iwamura, J. Spickard, P. (2003). Revealing the Sacred in Asian and Pacific America. London: Routledge

Jackman, Robert W. and Miller, Ross A. (1996). A Renaissance of Political Culture? *American Journal of Political Science*, 40, 632-659.

Jackson, S. and Scott, S. (1996) 'Sexual Skirmishes and Feminist Factions in Jackson, S. and Scott, S. (ed). Feminism and Sexuality: A Reader, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.

James, C . Shadd , A.(2001). Talking about Identity: Encounters in Race, Ethnicity, and Language. Between The Lines

Janoski, T. (2003). Citizenship and Civil Society. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press.

Jenkins, P. (2003). Images of Terror: What We Can and Can't Know about Terrorism. Aldine Transaction.

Jiwani, Yasmin. (2006). Framing Culture Talking Race, Race Gender, and Violence in the New Media. In Petty, S. Sherbert. Gérin, A. .Canadian cultural poesis: essays on Canadian culture pp (99-116). Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press

Johnson-Cartee, K. Copeland, G. (1991). Negative Political Advertising: Coming of Age. Lawrence Erlbaum Associates

Joseph, S. Najmabadi, A. (2003). Encyclopedia of women & Islamic cultures. BRILL

Juergensmeyer, M. (2003). Terror in the mind of God (3rd ed.). Berkeley: University of California Press

Jun, J. Sherwood, F. (2006). The Social Construction of Public Administration: Interpretive and Critical Perspectives. SUNY Press

Kamboureli, S. Miki, R. (2007). Trans.can.lit: Resituating the Study of Canadian Literature. Wilfrid Laurier Univ. Press

Kaplan, William.(1993). Belonging: The Meaning and Future of Canadian Citizenship. McGill – Queen's Press- MQUP.

Karim, K. (2003). The Media of Diaspora: Mapping the Globe. Routledge
Kasinsky, R. (1976). Refugees from Militarism: Draft-age Americans in Canada. Transaction Publishers

Kauffman, K. New, C. (2004). Co-counselling: The Theory and Practice of Re-evaluation Counselling. Psychology Press

Kazemi, Fatem. (2007). Muslim American Perspective on The Global War on Terrorism. Unpublished Thesis. University of Texas.

Kelly, Patricia. (1997). Integrating Islam: A Muslim School in Montreal. Unpublished Thesis, McGill University

Kennedy-Dubourdieu, E. (2006). Race and inequality: world perspectives on affirmative action. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd

Kenny, A. John, A. Patrick, K. (2006). The Rise of Modern Philosophy: A New History of Western Philosophy. Oxford University Press

Khan, S. (2000). Muslim Women: Crafting a North American Identity. University Press of Florida

Khayatt, D. (1994) "Revealing Moments: The Voice of One Who Lives with Labels," in James, C. and Shadd, eds. Encounters: Culture, Values and Identity. Toronto: Between the Lines.

Kincheloe, J. Steinberg, s. (2004). The Miseducation of the West: How Schools and the Media Distort Our Understanding of the Islamic World. Greenwood Publishing Group

Klausen, Jytte (2005) The Islamic Challenge: Politics and Religion in Western Europe (Oxford University Press, Oxford).

Kristeva 1993 Kristeva, Julia. (1993). Nations without Nationalism, Trans. Leon S. Roudiez (Columbia University Press, New York).

Kollock, (1999). Communities in Cyberspace. London: Routledge. Toennies, F. (1957). Community and Society. New York: Michigan University

Kukathas 1993, Kukathas, Chandran. (1993) The Idea of Multicultural Society and Mulitculturalism and Mulitcutlrual Citizens: The philosophy and Politics of Identity (Center for Independent Studies, St. Leonard's), 19-30,145-57

Kumsa, M.(2004). Sieves and reeds: identity, cohesion and belonging in a globalized space. Young Oromos in Toronto. University of Toronto.

Kymlicka, W. (2007). Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity. Oxford University Press

Kymlicka, Will. (1989). *Liberalism, Community and Culture.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, Will.Wayne Norman. (2000). *Citizenship in Diverse Societies.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka.Will. 1998. Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada. Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press

Levine, S. Laar, C. (2006). Stigma and Group Inequality: Social Psychological Perspectives. Routledge

Lewin, L. Vedung, V. (1980). Politics as Rational Action. Springer

Lindert, H. (2004). Growing Public: Social Spending and Economic Growth Since the Eighteenth Century. Cambridge University Press.

Lopes, Tina. & Thomas, Barb. (2006). Dancing on live embers; Challenging Racism in Organizations. Toronto: Between the Lines.

MacArthur, Charles. Graham, Steve. Fitzgerald, Jill. (2008). Handbook of Writing Research. Guilford Press.

Macnee, Carol. McCabe, Susan. (2006). Understanding Nursing Research: Using Research in Evidence-based Practice. Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

Maestas, R., Vaquera, G. S., & Zehr, L. M. (2007). Factors impacting sense of belonging at a Hispanic-serving institution. *Journal of Hispanic Higher Education, 6*(3), 237-256.

Manent , M. Waggoner, J. (1996). Tocqueville and the Nature of Democracy. Rowman & Littlefield Pub Inc

Marshall, T.H. (1950). Citizenship and Social Class and Other Essays. Cambridge: University of Cambridge Press.

Marshall, T.H. (1964). Citizenship and Social Class, in T.H. Marshall Class, Citizenship and Social Development, New York: Doubleday.

Maxwell, Rahsaan. (2006). Muslims, South Asians and the British mainstream: A national identity crisis?. West European Politics. 29:4, 736 – 756

Mayer, K. Canon, M. (1999). The Dysfunctional Congress?: The Individual Roots of an Institutional Dilemma. Westview Press

McKinnon, Catriona. McKinnon, Iain Hampsher. (2000). The Demands of Citizenship.

Continuum International Publishing Group.

McKinnon, Catriona. McKinnon, Iain Hampsher. (2000). The Demands of Citizenship. Continuum International Publishing Group, in Tully, James. The Challenge of Reimagining Citizenship and Belonging in Multicultural and Multinational Societies, pp. 212-235

McMillan, D.W., & Chavis, D.M. (1986). Sense of community: A definition and theory. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, 14(1), 6-23.

Merali, A . Ameli, A. Elahi, M. (2004). social discrimination: Across the Muslim Divide. Islamic Human Rights Commission

Merriam (1997) Merriam, Sharan. (1988). Case Study Research in Education: A Qualitative Approach, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.

Mill , J. (1978). Essay on Government, in J. Rees (eds) Utilitarian Logic and Politics, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Millett, R. Holmes, J. Pérez, O. (2008). Latin American Democracy: Emerging Reality Or Endangered Species. Taylor & Francis

Mishler, W. Rose, R. (1997). Trust, Distrust and Scepticism: Popular Evaluations of Civil and Political Institutions in Post-Communist Society. *Journal of Politics.*, pp 418-51

Moghissi, Haideh. (2000). Diaspora of Islamic Cultures: Continuity and Change. Refuge, 21(2), 114-119.

Mohammadi, N. Jones, T. Evans, D. (2008). Participant recruitment from minority religious groups: the case of the Islamic population in South Australia. International Nursing Review:Volume 55(4)December 2008p 393-398

Mokbel, Madonna. (2003). Acculturation, Identity Negotiation, and Invisibility: Arab Canadian Women in the Greater Toronto Area. Unpublished Thesis. York University.

Moore, Kathleen. (1992). Law and the Transformation of Muslim Life in North America. Unpublished thesis. University of Massachusetts

Moradi, B., & Risco, C. (2006). Perceived discrimination experiences and mental health of Latina/o American persons. *Journal of Counseling Psychology, 53,* 411-421.

Mullard, M. Cole, B. (2008). Globalisation, Citizenship and the War on Terror: Citizenship and the war on terror. Edward Elgar Publishing

Munhall, Patricia. (2001). Qualitative Research Proposals and Reports. Jones & Bartlett Publishing Co.

Naber, Christine. (2002). Arab San Francisco: On Gender, Cultural Citizenship, and Belonging.

Unpublished Thesis, University of California.

Nabut, Eman. (2007). The lived Experiences of Immigrant Arab Muslim Women in the United States: Implications for Counsellors and Other Helping Professionals. Unpublished Thesis, University of New Orleans.

Nakano Glenn, E. (2002). Unequal Freedom: How Race and Gender Shaped American Citizenship and Labor, Cambridge, Harvard University Press

Nassar-McMillan, 2003 Nassar-McMillan, S. (2003). Counseling Arab Americans: Counselors' call for advocacy and social justice, Counseling and Human Development.

National Capital Alliance on Race Relations. Canada. (1997). 28, C.H.R.R.D/ 179.
Nordberg, Camilla. (2006). Claiming Citizenship: Marginalized Voices on Identity and Belonging. Citizenship Studies. Vol. 10, No. 5, 523–539, November 2006.

Norris, P. (1999). Who Suffers? New Technology, Old Voter and the Virtual Democracy. in Democracy.com. Government in a Networked World. Hollis Publishing

Nye, J. "Introduction: The Decline of Confidence in Government," in Why People Don't Trust Government? J. Nye, S. Joseph, P.D. Zelikow and DC King (eds.) Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997: 1-19.

Okin, S. (1999). IS MULTICULTURALISM BAD FOR WOMEN?. Princeton University Press

Opotow, S. Clayton,W. Clayton, S.(2003). Identity and the Natural Environment: The Psychological Significance of Nature. MIT Press

Padover, SK (1963) The Meaning of Democracy, New York: Praeger.

Palmer, H. (1997). .....But Where Are You Really From? Stories of Identity and Assimilation in Canada, Sister Version Press, Toronto.

Parkinson, M. (1987). An Urban Legend. New Society. 9 October

Pateman, C. (1970) Participation and Democratic Theory. Cambridge University Press, London

Patterson, C. J., & D'Augelli, A. R. (Eds.). (1998). *Lesbian, gay, and bisexual identities in families.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Patton, Michael. (2002). Qualitative Research & evaluation methods. Sage Publications Inc.

Peat, L. (1945). Canada: New World Power: New World Power. University of Michigan Digitized Mar 16, 2006

Pettigrew, Thomas. 1964. Profile of the American Negro. Princeton: Van Nostrand.

Phillion,J. Fang He, M. Connelly,M. (2008). The SAGE Handbook of Curriculum and Instruction. London: Sage

Pierson, G. (1996). Tocqueville in America. JHU Press.

Posner, R.(2003). Law, Pragmatism, and Democracy. Harvard University Press

Potter, N. (2003). How Can I be Trusted?: A Virtue Theory of Trustworthiness. Rowman & Littlefield

Powell, G. Bingham Jr. 1986. "American Voter Turnout in Comparative Perspective." American Political Science Review 80:17-43

Putnam, R. (2000) Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community. Simon & Schuster, New York

Putnam, R.D., Leonardi, R. and Nanetti, R.Y. (1993) *Making Democracy Work: Civic Traditions in Modern Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

Qazwini, H. Crawford,B. (2007). American Crescent: A Muslim Cleric on the Power of His Faith, the Struggle Against Prejudice, and the Future of Islam and America. Random House, Inc

Rakow, L. (2004). Feminist communication theory: selections in context. SAGE

Ramadan, T., (1999). To Be a European Muslim. Leicester: The Islamic Foundation.
Ramakrishnan, K. Ramakrishnan, B. Bloemraad, I. (2008). Civic Hopes and Political Realities: Immigrants, Community Organizations, and Political Engagement. Russell Sage Foundation

Rasmussen, B. Nexica, J and Wary, M. (2001). Introduction in Rasmussen, B. Nexica, J and Wary, M. (eds.) The making and unmaking of Whiteness (pp 1-24) Durham, NC. Duke University Press.

Rawls, John. (1971). A Theory of Justice. (Cambridge, Mass:Harvard University Press.

Razack, S. (2008). Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims from Western Law and Politics. University of Toronto Press

Razack, Sherene. (1998). Looking White People in the Eye: Gender, Race, and Culture in Courtrooms and Classrooms. University of Toronto Press

Reitz, J. (2007). Closing the Gaps between Skilled Immigration and Canadian Labour Markets: Emerging Policy Issues and Priorities . University of Toronto.

Ridley, M. (1997). The Origins of Virtue. Constitutional Political Economy. Volume 8, Number 4

Roald, A. (2001). Women in Islam: The Western Experience. London. Routledge

Robert, M. Torres, R. (1996). Does Race Matter? Transatlantic Perspective on Racism after Race Relations. In Resituating Identities: The Politics of Race, Ethnicity and Culture, Knowles, Amit and Amit eds. Peterborough, Ontario, Broadview Press

Rose, Peter I. 1997. Tempest-Tost: Race, Immigration, and the Dilemmas of Diversity. New York: Columbia University Press.

Sabato, L. Larson, B. Ernst, H. (2001). Dangerous Democracy? The Battle Over Ballot Initiatives in America. Rowman & Littlefield,

Said, Edward. (1979). Orientalism. Vintage Books

Scahill, J. (2008). Blackwater: The Rise of the World's Most Powerful Mercenary Army. Nation Books.

Schaefer, R. (2008). Encyclopedia of Race, Ethnicity, and Society. SAGE

Schildkraut, D. (2005). Press one for English Language Policy, Public Opinion, and American Identity. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Schlesinger, Arthur D., (1992). The Disuniting of America: Reflections on a Multicultural Society. New York: Norton.

Schmidt, Heather. (2001). Muslims Perception of Canadian Justice: Minority Observation of Mainstream Culture. Unpublished master's thesis. York University. Toronto.

Shachar, A. (2001). Multicultural jurisdictions: cultural differences and women's rights. Cambridge University Press

Shadid, P. Koningsveld, V. (1992). Islam in Dutch Society: Current Developments and Future Prospects. Peeters Publishers

Shaheen, J.(2001). Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People. Olive Branch Press

Sharansky, N. Shcharansky, A. Dermer, R (2006). The Case for Democracy: The Power of Freedom to Overcome Tyranny and Terror. New Leaf Publishing Group

Shaver J. Strong, W. (1982). Facing Value Decisions: Rationale-building for Teachers. Teachers College Press

Sheridan, L. (2002). Religious discrimination: The new racism. Muslim Council of Britain (MCB)

Sheridan, Lorraine. (2006). Islamophobia Pre– and Post–September 11th, 2001. Journal of Interpersonal violence, Volume 21 Number 3

Singh, R. (2003). Governing America: The Politics of a Divided Democracy. Oxford University Press US

Sleeter, CE . McLaren, P., eds. 1995. Multicultural education, critical pedagogy, and the politics of difference . Albany: SUNY Press

Smith, R. (1997). Civility, Enlightenment and Society. American Political Science Review 92:419-427

Spagnoli, F. (2003). Homo Democraticus: On the Universal Desirability and the Not So Universal Possibility of Democracy and Human Rights. Cambridge Scholars Press

Spalek, B. (2002). Muslim women's safety talk and their experience of victimization: a study exploring specificity and differences in Spalek, B (ed), Islam Crime and Criminal Justice, Cullomption: Wilan

Spencer , R.(2005). Stealth Jihad: How Radical Islam is Subverting America without Guns or Bombs. Regnery Publishing

Spencer , R.(2005). The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades). Regnery Publishing

Spinner-Halev, J.(2000). Surviving Diversity: Religion and Democratic Citizenship. JHU Press

Statistics Canada. (2001). Religions in Canada. Retrieved March 11, 2008, from: http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Analytic/companion/rel/canada.cfm

Statistics Canada. Census of Canada. 2001.

Strong-Boag, V. (1998). Painting the Maple: Essays on Race, Gender, and the Construction of Canada. UBC Press

Stryker, S. Owens, T. White, R. (2000). Self, identity, and social movements. University of Minnesota Press

Sue, Derald Wing. (2004). *Whiteness* and *Ethnocentric Monoculturalism*: Making the "Invisible" Visible. American Psychologist, vol. 59, no. 8, pp. 761-769, November 2004

Tancred-Sheriff & Tancred, P. (1988). Feminist Research: Prospect and Retrospect. McGill-Queen's Press.

Tastsoglou, Evangelia (2006). Re-Appraising Immigration and Identities: A Synthesis and Directions for Future Research. Commissioned by the Department of Canadian Heritage for the Ethnocultural, Racial, Religious, and Linguistic Diversity and Identity Seminar Halifax, Nova Scotia November 1-2, 2001. Retrieved February, 12, 2008: From www.canada.metropolis.net

Tate, Katherine (2004). From Protest to Politics. University of Michigan, Digitized Sep 18, 2008

Taylor, C. (1994). Multiculturalism and "The Politics of Recognition", in A. Guttmann, Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition (Princeton: Princeton University Press): 10-2

Teixeira, Ruy A. 1992. The Disappearing American Voter. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution.

The Council of Europe (2007). State of human rights and democracy in Europe. Council of Europe

The Runnymede Trust. (1997). Islamophobia A Challenge For Us All. Report of the Runnymede Trust commission on British Muslims and Islamophobia, London, Runnymede Trust. P. 5-24

Thobani, S.(2007). Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada. University of Toronto Press

Thompson, Vetta L. 1996. "Perceived experiences of racism as stressful life events." *Community Mental Health* 32:223-233

Tillman, L. (2008). The SAGE Handbook of African American Education. SAGE

Tocqueville, Alexis de (1945) Democracy in America (2 vols), New York: Vintage Books.

Washington Post, January 28, 1996, A: pp. 1, 6-7; February 4, 1996

Treat, J. (ed) (1996). Native and Christian. New York. Routledge

Tully, James. (1995). Strange Multiplicity: Constitutionalism in an Age of Diversity. Cambridge

University Press.

Turner, Bryan S, (1993). Citizenship and social theory. London : Sage

Tutty, L., Rothery, M Grinnell, R. (1996). Qualitative research for social workers: Phases, steps, and tasks. Needham Heights: Allyn and Bacon. (Analysing your Data pp. 89-119)

Uslaner, Eric M. 1995. "Faith, Hope, and Charity: Social Capital, Trust, and Collective Action." Presented at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association.

Verba, Schlozman, Brady, Nie, (1993)."Race, Ethnicity, and Political Resources: Participation in the United States," *British Journal of Political Science*, , 453-497.

Verkuyten, Maykel. Yildiz, Ali. (2007). National (Dis)identification and Ethnic and Religious Identity: A Study Among Turkish-Dutch Muslims. Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin. Vol. 33 No. 10

Vincent, S. (2005). Being Empathic: A Companion for Counsellors and Therapists. Radcliffe Publishing

Walzer, Michael. (1983). Spheres of Justice: A Defence of Pluralism and Equality. New York: Basic Books.

Warren, K. (2008). Encyclopedia of U.S. Campaigns, Elections, and Electoral Behavior. SAGE

Warren, M (1999). Democracy and trust. Cambridge University Press

Waugh, M, Abu-Laban, S. Qureshi, R .(1991). Muslim Families in North America. University of Alberta

Weale, A. Nentwich, M. (1998). Political Theory and the European Union. Routledge

Weldon, S. (2006). The Institutional Context of Tolerance for Ethnic Minorities: A Comparative,

Multilevel Analysis of Western Europe. American Journal of Political Science. 50, 2, 331- 49

Wengraf, Tom.(2001). Qualitative Research Interviewing: Semi Structured and Biographic Interviewing. Sage Publications Ltd

Willis, Jerry. Jost, Mukhta. Nilakanta, Rema. (2007). Foundations of Qualitative Research: Interpretive and Critical. Sage Publications Inc.

Wright. T. (1997). Out of Place: Homeless Mobilizations, Subcities, and Contested Landscapes. SUNY Press.

Young, I.M.(1990). Justice and the Politics of Difference. Princeton, Princeton University Press.

Yusuf, Ahmad. (1993). Muslims in Canada: a question of identity. New York Legas.

Zanetti, L. King, S (2005). Transformational Public Service; Portrait of Theory and Practice. New York: M.E. Sharpe

Zine, J. (2003). Dealing with September 12: Integrative anti-racism and the challenge of anti-Islamophobia education.

Zine, Jasmin (2007) 'Safe havens or religious 'ghettos'? Narratives of Islamic schooling in Canada', Race Ethnicity and Education, 10:1, 71 -92.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

WILFRID LAURIER UNIVERSITY

INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Student Name: Soha Elsayed Supervisor: Dr. Martha Kuwee Kumsa

Title of the Study

An Exploration of Canadian Muslims' sense of their Canadian Citizenship

The Purpose of the Study

My name is Soha Elsayed and I am a Master of Social Work Student at Wilfrid Laurier University under the advice of Dr. Martha Kuwee Kumsa, faculty member of Wilfrid Laurier University. I am inviting you to participate in a research study. The study is a qualitative study about Muslim Canadians living in Canada. The purpose of the study is to explore how Muslims make sense of their Canadian citizenship and what factors those contribute to shaping their Canadianess.

Information

If you agree to participate in this study, you will participate in semi–structured interviews that will be audio taped; transcripts will be made from the interview. Please note that you have the right to refuse to have the interview audio taped.

In this interview I will ask you questions about how you feel about being Canadian citizen and whether September11, 2001 has an impact on your sense of being/feeling Canadian. Also, I will ask you some questions about how you think fellow Canadians perceive you.

Also, I will ask your permission to join you at different social gatherings in order to interact with you in everyday life. For example, if I have your permission, I may join you in shopping or birthday parties, or we may have coffee at your favourite hangout or we just take a walk in the park or on the street. I will take note of my experience after I leave the event.

The length of time for the interview is about 60 to 90 minutes. However to be responsive to the uniqueness of each participant, I will not be strict about the length of the interview and I will allow for more or less time as needed.

For this study 8 to 10 participants will be recruited. You have the right to ask questions about the study and get a clear understanding about the nature of it before you participate.

Potential Risks or Discomfort

Although I do not expect that you will experience risk due to your participation, you may experience emotional distress or discomfort in the process of recalling unpleasant experiences or memories. You have the right to stop the interview at any time; thus, the researcher will periodically ask you about your feelings and whether you want to continue. Furthermore, if you feel distress as a result of the interview, I will ask you whether you need professional counselling. If you indicate that you need such service, I will provide you with contact information of local counselling agencies.

Potential Benefits

You will have your voice heard and will have the opportunity to voice your concerns. Through this study it is hoped that policy makers, educators, and media representatives will acquire a better understanding of Canadian Muslims, leading to an environment in which their needs will be more appropriately recognized and addressed.

Confidentiality

All data gathered from the interview will be kept confidential in a locked cabinet then will be destroyed after one year from the end of the project. Furthermore, the researcher and her supervisor, Dr. Martha Kuwee Kumsa, will be the only people who have access to them. Please note that your name, country of origin, race, sexual orientation, occupation, education, and language will be altered so that you will not be identified easily. Furthermore, you will select an alias in order to further assure anonymity and confidentiality.

Compensation

For participating in this study you will receive 15 $ Zehrs voucher. If you withdraw from the study prior to its completion, you will be able to keep the voucher. This is compensation for your time spent participating in the study.

Contact:

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, (or you experience adverse effects as a result of participating in this study) you may contact the researcher, Soha Elsayed Email: elsa2983@wlu.ca. Or Dr. Martha Kuwee Kumsa, Email: mkumsa@wlu.ca, professor, Faculty of Social Work, Wilfrid Laurier University, Kitchener, or by phone :_(519) 884-1970 ext. 5227

Participation:

Your participation in this study is voluntary; you may decline to participate without penalty. If you decide to participate, you may withdraw from the study at any time without penalty and without loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. If you withdraw from the study before data collection is completed your data will be returned to you or destroyed. You have the right to omit any question(s)/procedure(s) you choose.

Feedback and Publication

The information that you will provide in the interview will appear in this proposed study. It is possible that the findings from this study will be provided or presented to the following associations:

Policy makers at different government levels.

Local Islamic organizations.

Ministry of Canadian Heritage and Canadian Race Relations Foundation

School boards, and local media representatives

Also the findings may appear in conference presentations and journal articles.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the University Research Ethics Board. If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Dr. Bill Marr, Chair of the University Research Ethics Board, Wilfrid Laurier University, (519) 884-0710, extension 2468.

CONSENT

I have read and understand the information given to me. I have a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study.

Yes_____ No _____

The researcher may use a tape recorder for this interview

Yes_____ No _____

The researcher may use quotations from my interview. I understand that any quotations that the researcher uses will not include any indentifying information.

Yes_____ No _____

The researcher may join me at a social gathering. I understand that the researcher will keep any identifying information of all involved people confidential.

Yes_____ No _____

I would like the findings of this study to be mailed to me.

Yes _____ No_____

If yes: Please write your mailing address below:

Signature of the Participant: _____

Signature of the Researcher: _____

APPENDIX B

Interview Guide

What does *being* a Canadian citizen mean to you?

How do you feel about Canadian Muslims' freedom of speech and their ability to practice their religion?

What do you think of Canadian Muslims' entitlement of social benefits and privileges as society members?

How do you see Canadian Muslims' political engagement in Canada? Do you vote?

Do you have any recommendations for change at the national, provincial, or the community level in relation to the above?

How do you *feel* about being Canadian?

Do you feel you belong to Canada?

If yes, what do you think fostered this feeling?

How do you describe Canadian culture to your family members back home?

Can you describe a moment where feeling Canadian was important for you?

Are there any moments where you felt that you do not belong to Canada or you felt you were not treated as a Canadian citizen? Please describe?

Did September 11, 2001 have an impact on your sense of feeling and/or being Canadian? Please explain

How do you feel about the current situation of Muslims in Canada after September 11?

How do you see the future of Muslim Canadians in Canada?

How do you think fellow Canadians perceive you?

What image do you think fellow Canadians have in mind about Muslims?

How do you think the media portray you?

How do you feel about the public school system, the health care sector, and the justice system in accommodating Muslims' practices?

Is there anything else you want to talk about?