# INTERNATIONAL SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION
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## Research Committee on Racism, Nationalism and Ethnic Relations

## RC05 NEWSLETTER


## Spring 2011


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### Editorial

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Since the beginning of this year, we witness the political uprisings in North Africa/ the Middle East. It is the amazing bravery of the people of Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria and elsewhere that challenges any idea of 'the end of history,' reminding us that freedom from oppression only can be achieved collectively. Further, socially and economically unjust national orders are embedded in a wider global trajectory of international capitalism and racialised systems.

It seems that local resistance, regional outlooks and global ideas of redistribution connect timely with the topic of the 2012 ISA Forum in Argentina 'Social Justice and Democratization'. Ann Denis is going to explain in her address some issues related to the Forum that is going to take place in Buenos Aires next year.

Since the last Newsletter we have received some suggestions regarding it's format. Members would like to see updates on RC 05, reports on new books and conferences and a forum where members express and exchange opinions on particular themes. In this spirit, the next Newsletter will take up the issue of racism. If you would like to organise a contribution on a particular theme please let us know and we can put this in place for the 2012 Spring issue.

We would like to thank those of you who have contributed and encourage others to do the same.

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**The upcoming ISA Forum and RC05 mid-term meeting**
Having completed our very successful set of RC05 sessions in Gotenburg, Sweden (in July 2010) – and our particular thanks to Peter Ratcliffe and Zlatlo Skrbis (respectively president and secretary of RC05 for 2006-2010) for all their work – the RC05 board moved almost immediately to the planning of our next major conference – our participation, for **RC05's mid-term conference, in the ISA Forum in Buenos Aires, Argentina on 'Social Justice and Democratization'**, to be held **August 1-4, 2012**. Although that seems a long time in the future, **now is the time to propose sessions for our mid-term conference and volunteer to organize them**. **The deadline for proposals sent to me – [adenis@uottawa.ca](mailto:adenis@uottawa.ca) - is May 31 2011**. **We've had some exciting proposals already, and are looking forward to receiving more – from you!** Shortly after the call for session deadline, there will be the call for papers, informed by the sessions members of RC05 have proposed.

Just to refresh your memories, the theme of our midterm conference is **Constructions of Contemporary Racisms, Social Inclusion and Democratization,** and the call for papers is reproduced elsewhere in this newsletter, along with the notice about the Forum which ISA Vice President for Research, Margaret Abraham recently circulated.
We feel that racism, nationalism and ethnic relations, the fields of interest of our RC, lend themselves very well to the broader ISA Forum theme of Social Justice and Democratization. As with the Forum theme, our RC05 theme speaks to both the negative (racisms, religious absolutism, xenophobia, social exclusion and other forms of unequal treatment in their various manifestations) and the positive (inclusion, social justice and democratization, all of which may take varied forms). Tensions among various constituent social groups – indigenous groups, early settlers, more recent (but fairly permanent) immigrants, temporary migrants, diasporas – often persist, but not always. How and under what conditions is social inclusion the outcome of the varied combinations of ethno-racial-linguistic-religious-national diversity which make up most of our contemporary societies? And how may these dimensions intersect (and interact) with other bases of difference, such as gender, social class/social status, age, (dis)ability….?

These are very grand questions that we are proposing. To some extent they invite comparative studies, and we certainly would welcome such a focus. Sometimes, however, the answers to our questions are to be found in more detailed studies of particular cases, and we welcome these as well. We might also wonder about the impact on our questions of the (relatively) new techniques of communication, of other types of new technologies, of the globalized spread of consumer goods and expectations on the one hand (more social inclusion?), and the social inequality and exclusion which have also become more evident, if not more pronounced, within our neo-liberal, globalized world economy, on the other.
We are eager to include in our mid-term conference sessions that address questions which are of particular interest within one or more parts of Latin America and their diasporas (especially Argentina, although it seems that ethnic relations and racism have not been very salient there), as well as other themes which interest our members. One of the objectives of an ISA Forum (as distinct from an ISA World Congress) is to strengthen links between sociology and the public

sphere, and RC05 is eager to contribute to this as well: your suggestions about how we might do so (including your proposals for sessions) are welcome. I hope that your trip to Buenos Aires will include an opportunity to learn more about this vibrant city and, more broadly, about Argentina and its social questions, and I look forward to seeing you there in August 2012.

**Upheavals, both physical and social**
The last few months have been tumultuous times – our sympathies and feelings of solidarity go out to Japan hit by both natural (earthquake and tsunami) and human-made (nuclear reactors) disasters. We also feel for other parts of the world, most recently the Middle East and Africa, where one can only hope that the present instability leads to more peaceful democratic societies…

**Using our listserv**
Finally, I would like to encourage you to use our listserv. Any RC05 member can post a message /announcement to everyone else on the listserv and this CAN be the beginning of a collective exchange of views with everyone on the list. If, in subsequent exchanges, you want to limit these to particular members, at that point please send your message to them only, not to the whole list. Unfortunately we cannot afford to have a moderated list at the moment, although these do offer dynamic possibilities. On the other hand, we can use our listserv more extensively than we do at the moment, in order to exchange information and views. I encourage you to take advantage of this resource.

**Canadian Ethnic Studies Association (and Canadian Studies Association) call for papers and sessions on 'Multiculturalism Turns 40: Reflections on Canadian Policy'**
Elsewhere in the newsletter you'll find a call for papers and call for sessions by the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association (and the Canadian Studies Association), whose conference will be held in **Ottawa, September 30-October 1, 2011**. I would like to organize a joint session of RC05 with Canadian Ethnic Studies, for this conference and look forward to your paper proposals around the following theme:

**Multiculturalism – its pitfalls and promise**
Is multiculturalism a route to imposed assimilation or an acknowledgement of and respect for difference? What are its implications for francophones in Québec, minority francophones outside Québec, those of non-French, non British origin both inside and outside Québec? Are the implications the same for racialized groups as for European origin groups? What are the implications in our neo-liberal economy with multiculturalism's changed criteria for funding (and changing admission criteria for immigrants to Canada)?
**If you are interested in participating in this sesssion, please contact me, and (preferably) send me your proposal - [adenis@uottawa.ca](mailto:adenis@uottawa.ca) – well be before the CESA deadline of June 1, 2011.**
**Best wishes for the coming months, and looking forward to hearing from you.**

Ann Denis

## Margaret Abraham's address

The Second ISA Forum of Sociology
Social Justice and Democratization
Buenos Aires, Argentina
August 1-4, 2012
The times in which we live call on sociologists to engage in research that strengthens links between our discipline and the public sphere. The Second ISA Forum is devoted to "Social Justice and Democratization" and will take place August 1-4, 2012 in Buenos Aires, Argentina. It will provide an array of opportunities for a global dialogue about transformative change.
**Objectives**

- The most important objective of the Forum is to provide a meeting place for the various Research Committees (RCs), Working Groups (WGs), and Thematic Groups (TGs). Organizers will be provided as much flexibility as possible in designing their respective programs within the scheduled time slots (guidelines to be provided).

- The second objective is to develop a socially significant theme involving public actors and to which different areas of sociology can contribute. Social Justice and Democratization, the selected theme for the 2012 Forum, offers RCs, WGs and TGs the opportunity to learn from public actors as well as contributing to the Forum's main theme.

- The third objective is to hold the interim Research Council Business Meeting attended by the Delegates from all Research Committees.

The Vice-President of the Research Council and the Local Organizing Committee (LOC) assume responsibility for preparing the scientific program. Planning and preparations are underway.
The Forum provides not only an excellent venue for the different Research Committees and groups to hold their respective interim meetings but also an important opportunity to foster greater synergies between research committees as well as among the research committees, working groups and national associations. The discussions and dialogues should provide the basis for collaborative and comparative research projects.
The Forum promises to be a lively occasion for considering the challenges to and possibilities for promoting social justice and democratization in the 21st century.
I look forward to a second exciting Forum of Sociology!

Margaret Abraham
Vice-President, Research Council

**Conference Reports**

*Secularism, Racism and the Politics of Belonging;* **Conference organized by CMRB and Runnymede Trust;** **University of East London, 27 January 2011**

The conference took place at the University of East London and both the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Patrick McGhee, and the Dean of the School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Professor Steve Trevillion, welcomed the 200 participants who came from a variety of backgrounds, academic and activist, secular and of different religious orientations.

**Dr Rob Berkeley**, the Director of Runnymede Trust opened the conference, remarking on the importance of continuing to struggle against racism and not to fall into the meaningless rhetoric of 'post-racial Britain'. Dr Berkeley illustrated this important point with various findings of Runnymede's current research activities which have exposed the high rate of exclusion and discrimination against Blacks and ethnic minorities in various public spheres like education and employment.

Dr. Berkeley posed the important question of what equal society might mean and how it might relate to the partially overlapping but not identical question of community uplifting. He pointed out that equality involves not just issues of class but also of race, gender, sexual orientation and other intersectional dimensions of inequality, and how this might be complicated by the effects of globalisation on communal identities. While Dr Berkeley was not sure what the meaning of the notion of 'Big Society' might be, there is an urgent need for a politics of solidarity which would involve up lifting of different communities but would challenge internal and external issues of inequality. This is the context in which the issues in the conference have to be debated.

**Opening Plenary – Raising the Questions**

Focusing on a gendered lens, **Baroness Prof. Haleh Afshar** (York University) questioned the notion of secularism and to what extent it can help people in general and women in particular achieve equal rights. Prof. Afshar brought the example of France as a secular society and pointed out that President Sarkozy appointed Muslim women to his cabinet, including a Minister of Justice. However, these appointments were short term and no such woman was included in the cabinet reshuffle towards the next elections, nor did such a secular approach sensitise the French

public to the needs of the Muslims in their society. Thus, the daughter of Le Pen is gaining much popularity for articulating a fear of Muslims praying on French streets. Prof. Afshar pointed out that the French society is not neutral but rather a Catholic nation.

Prof. Afshar also rejected the notion of Britain as a secular society and pointed out that the House of Lords include Bishops and that each session of the House starts by a Christian prayer led by a Bishop. And thus, Muslims are the national 'others'. Since 9/11 and especially 7/7 Islamophobia has been growing and all Muslims are being homogenized and defined by their faith. In such a case, Muslims have only two choices – to abandon their religious identity or to embrace it and be proud of it. Rashida Dati, the French Minister of Justice, abandoned it – she was a single mother and a declared secularist but this did not prevent her from being labelled as an 'other' who does not belong. Prof. Afshar, thus, prefers the other option as a response to anti-Muslim racism – embracing one's Muslim identity.

**Gita Saghal** (writer, film-maker and one of the founders of Women Against Fundamentalism) began by arguing that the fight for a new vision of equality should not extend blasphemy laws to other religions, but rather, the much preferred way is an end of discrimination to all. However, this should also mean joining other struggles for equality around the world and looking at the role of the British government in either promoting or denying equality in such global context.

Ms Saghal argued for the preservation of secular spaces as places for open debate and for moving towards the separation of religion from state since this would enable both the protection of people with religious beliefs from discrimination, as well as the freedom for others to exit their faiths without discrimination, allowing them the option to remain culturally Muslim, Christian, Hindu or Sikh. Ms Saghal went on to argue that the 'Big Society' (a continuation of Labour policy) is a measure that destroys the state's role as an enabler and safety net. Furthermore, as more faith based institutions become providers of services, secular providers experience funding cuts. There is also a danger that evangelical and extremist religious groups can exercise worst types of practice and influence policy, e.g. involvement in the Equalities Act. Religious groups and their leaders are selected by the Government rather than by those within the faith communities themselves and more research needs to be done into how some Muslim leaders have benefited through alliances with both the Government and the Left (Stop the War coalition). Those fighting within a secular framework, including many Muslims, have been marginalised and shut out as a result.

The existence of blasphemy laws particularly impact women and can also be deeply divisive within religious groups themselves. Ms Saghal concluded by saying issues of offence need to be taken up in civic debates, but more importantly, when Islamophobia is used by Muslim groups, the Government and the Left to shut down internal debates around religion then it is a

dangerous, not least for Muslims struggling against discrimination.  Insults and harsh words cannot be seen as more serious than the killing of thousands.

**Session One – Faith Communities and Racism**

**Dr AbdoolKarim Vakil** (Kings College London) began by responding to some of the points made in the previous session and questioned to what extent state measures should be used to deal with issues of civil society.  He argued for analysis of the Muslim Brotherhood's involvement with the Government and the Left to be contextualised in terms of power and socioeconomic forces at work and to include, for example, the complicities and entanglements of people within the Left.  Dr Vakil also argued against exceptionalising Islamophobia, comparing it to other contested concepts such as racism and anti-Semitism that can also be used to both shut down and open up debates.

The targeting of Muslims is regarded by Dr Vakil as the important issue of the hour and one that is closely connected with the concept of belonging.  He drew attention to important flows of social force such as the relationship between the attack in the street of a woman wearing a niqab, comments by Jack Straw about the niqab and communication, and debates in various European countries about banning the niqab.  The targeting of Muslims has different expressions from denigration and vilification to attacks on people and buildings, all of which is underpinned by the war on terror.

Dr Vakil also argued that it is problematic to regard ethnicity as primordial but faith as something that comes late to the field.  There is a need for rational discourse about religion in the context of history rather than confining it to a private matter of conscience.  Dr Vakil argued that the notion of the secular as a neutral space is a problem since this ignores the power relations at work within it.  He concluded by saying, that at the present moment anyone interested in anti-racism and greater social justice for all cannot be blind to Islamophobia and the targeting of Muslims and therefore there is a need to ask where does power lie, where does marginality lie, and what is being used to oppress?

**Cassandra Balchin** (Muslim Women's Network) argued that the question of how to advance the family law rights of women in Britain's Muslim communities is bound up with the problems of racism and sexism.  Ms Balchin made four main points, firstly, discussion of what is mistakenly called 'Sharia law', Sharia councils, and religious arbitration in Britain is founded on gross misunderstandings about formal and informal law in Britain and misinformation about Muslim family laws here and globally.  Secondly, the claims and counter-claims of all parties to this debate are founded on a significant lack of empirical evidence.  Thirdly, plural legal systems are neither the ultimate solution to the lack of access to justice for minority women nor are they the

embodiment of all legal evil. And finally, Ms Balchin brought suggestions for constructive ways to go about considering culture and women's rights.

Ms Balchin highlighted it is women in Britain's Muslim communities who are the primary users of the non-state Sharia councils. Because the system is unregulated and flexible, the women are free to choose whichever council they fancy, and to ignore their pronouncements in the end if they want. And because the councils depend *not* upon the state for their legitimacy but as non-state orders they depend upon their standing in the community, however slowly and unwillingly, they are responding to women's increasing demands for fairness and justice. Change in attitudes in the past 10 years is significant. Ms Balchin argued the way to support and encourage this change is by supporting and encouraging the women and men within the community who are taking this route, and to build the capacity of women – the primary users' – to push the limits of this non-state system. Ms Balchin is strongly against *any* form of state recognition and regulation – including religious arbitration under the Arbitration Act. In her experience those authorities within the community who are demanding state recognition are the *minority*. Those who do are largely those who have a political stake in being seen as the legitimate representatives of an essentialised Muslim community: they are *themselves* both racist and sexist.

Coming from the perspective of the Anglo-Jewish community, **Dr Ben Gidley** (Centre on Migration, Policy and Society, Oxford University) used historical research to illuminate current debates. Up until the 1990s, Anglo-Jewish community leaders had followed an assimilationist and communalist approach whereby they viewed themselves as essentially Englishmen who had a different faith. However, there is evidence ordinary Jews understood themselves differently, relating to other Jews as kin as opposed to co-religionists; or in today's language, as an ethnic community. The leaders had followed a 'strategy of security' logic and as gatekeepers for the Anglo-Jewish community cautioned against activism and protest, even blaming the ostentatious behaviour of lower class Jews for problems of racism. This changed in the 1990s when the leadership under chief rabbi Jonathan Sachs began to highlight sources of insecurity and risk facing the community, although this initially manifested itself in concerns with religious non-observance and declining numbers – the result of the assimilationist ethos being too successful. In contrast with earlier denial of anti-Semitism, the leaders then turned their attention to external issues and the rise of anti-Semitism in Britain.

Dr Gidley acknowledged the past contribution of radicals within the Anglo-Jewish community who, from the 1930s to the 1970s, had led the fight against fascism but argued that there is now a tendency for the left wing to minimise and deny anti-Semitism. He quoted David Hirsh who calls this 'the new conservatism' which echoes the attitudes of past community leaders. It has

given rise to a common trope that Islamophobia is the new anti-Semitism, a narrative that Dr Gidley regards as problematic as it ignores differences and is an ahistorical mode of analysis of racism; it relegates anti-Semitism to the past ignoring present racism and promotes a zero sum approach to different racisms, measuring the importance of one type of racism against another. Dr Gidley concluded that this is bad policy for anti-racists and argued for an approach that attends to the commonalities, distinctions and specificities of racism experienced by all including both Jews and Muslims.

**Session Two – The Debate on 'the Veil'**

**Prof. Sawitri Saharso** (VU University, Amsterdam) has been involved with a project that conducted comparative research in several European countries regarding the debates on the veil. Results revealed that controversies are centred around national identity and about European states reconfiguring themselves as they become increasingly multicultural and multi-religious in a context of globalisation. Prof. Saharso used the examples of the Netherlands and France to demonstrate that there is a convergence of hardening attitudes towards the wearing of the veil throughout Europe and this is related to discourse about problems of cohesion and parallel societies.

Prof. Saharso argued that politicisation of the veil has coincided with the polarisation of mainstream and Muslim communities, and the veil has become a marker of group identity for both. For Muslims the wearing of the veil signifies pride in being a Muslim with superior moral values compared with mainstream society, something that has resulted in increased community pressure for Muslim women to wear the veil. Whereas for mainstream society, the veil is a symbol of alienation and proof of Muslim rejection of Western values and consequently veiled women are excluded from national identity. The politicisation of the veil is problematic in that it leads to a decrease of the space for Muslim women to choose whether or not to wear the veil.

**Rania Hafez** (University of East London) began with a perspective of the veil as fashionable attire seen, for example, in the array of hijabs worn in East London and also recently on a catwalk in Paris. Ms Hafez used photographs of women wearing the veil to demonstrate the diversity of styles. Ms Hafez went on to give a brief biographical account about the wearing of the hijab and the association of the veil with identity and protest. Having grown up with a feeling she was suffering from colonialism and imperialism, the Iranian revolution was the moment that brought increased awareness of Islam and identity. For Ms Hafez, the veil signifies identification with protest rather than with issues of authenticity. It is a way of asserting identity for those feeling alienated, for example, immigrant groups in Europe, and as such the veil is a protest symbol. Apart from identity and protest there are other social forces at work behind the wearing of the

veil; it may be enforced by families, be a moral requisite, be a social requirement in order to be accepted, as well as something used by forces of oppression.

Ms Hafez returned to the subject of veiled arguments about the veil which she associated with the crisis of politics of identity in Europe and West, and the collapse of a coherent alternative to capitalism. Attacks or bans on wearing the veil come from both the right and left in politics and she argued that over the issue of the veil, the Left has given up values of the Enlightenment and debate. A new concept of the white woman's burden has emerged whereby others are told how they should be emancipated either by supporting the ban or the right to wear the veil. Neither the state nor do-gooders should dictate about wearing the veil but rather there should be tolerance, reason, justice and debate – something that has been missing from discourse on the veil. Finally Ms Hafez appealed for an end to discussions about the veil in favour of more important issues such as education.

**Prof. Karima Bennoune** (Rutgers University) situated her perspective re headscarves in her personal and family experiences and, in particular, attacks on women in Algeria for not covering their heads. She pointed out that currently there is a contradictory development of the right for women to cover or uncover their bodies that are both justified by women's choices. Veils function as curtains of separation of women and men. Research among Muslim majority and minority populations in Africa, and eastern and western Europe shows the source of increased pressure for women to cover more of themselves is fundamentalist groups, and the debate on the veil has to be understood from that dynamic as well as racism. From a fundamentalist perspective, the idea of the veil is one of a uniform to distinguish the non-Muslim or non-practising Muslim from the Muslim.

Dr Bennoune raised the following issues as considerations in the debate on the veil. There is an assumption in the West that protecting the right to wear the veil is protecting a status quo, whereas in many contexts, more and more restrictive forms of veiling are about radical change not preserving tradition; e.g. in Cairo in the 1960s no woman student covered her head. In some places veils are not even indigenous to the place where they are deployed, e.g. Niger. One consideration, often not portrayed in the debate on the veil, is how frightening it is to women who make other choices about their dress and how they fear their daughters will have less choice. Another factor that often disappears in the debate is the fact that in Muslim majority contexts, people are as complicated as anyone else. Contestation is going on among Muslims too, e.g. some French Muslims support the ban on the wearing of the veil in schools. Although in the West racism is an important consideration, Dr Bennoune argued that the veil should also be understood in a global context and as contestation rather than just a traditional practice.

**Session Three – Faith, Racism and Education**

**Marieme Helie-Lucas** (Women Living Under Muslim Law) outlined the rise of new far right groups such as 'Bloc Identitaire' (Identity Block) in France and the impact these were having on race relations. She also highlighted the increased provocation from secular organisations such as 'Riposte Laique' (Secular Response) who called for people to have picnics with wine and pork in the Paris streets where Muslims pray. This is happening in a political climate where Sarkozy and the government of France are courting the votes of the far right, including Muslim fundamentalists, and redefining 'Laïcité' originally established in French law in 1905. Ms Helie-Lucas argued that the far right have hijacked secularism and this is the context in which national debates on the veil in schools and other public spaces need to be understood.

Ms Helie-Lucas went on to outline the situation in France for migrants, the majority of whom are Muslims from areas of conflict such as Algeria. Although France does not allow statistics on religion (because statistics on Jews were used in WWII to identify, arrest and deport Jews) some serious surveys have been conducted revealing that many migrants declare themselves as having no religion or they never practice their religion. Ms Helie-Lucas argued that this is evidence that the French Council of Muslims created by Sarkozy is unrepresentative and irrelevant to large percentages of the Muslim population. Although women of migrant Muslim descent face discrimination they still choose to support secularism because they perceive the rise of Muslim fundamentalism as reminiscent of recent history in Algeria; this is seen in attacks on women through to targeted assassinations all of which are taking place in France today. The rise of Muslim fundamentalism as a political force needs further attention.

**Jonathan Bartley** (Ekklesia) brought a political and religious perspective focusing on church schools. Along with the British Humanist Association, Ekklesia was one of the founding member of ACCORD, a coalition committed to the reform of admissions and employment in church schools. Faith schools are pulled in two directions by public policy. The first is a model of economics and competition in which the credibility of church schools is linked to how well they do in league tables. The second model is a 'spiritual' one that aims to encourage children to grow and flourish, celebrating their diversity and richness. Defining a Christian ethos is problematic and the values of justice and equality are undermined by admissions and employment policies. The response of government is to encourage those who are dissatisfied with their local school to create their own style of school and Bartley argued this will inevitably lead to a more segregated schooling system.

Jonathan Bartley argued that segregation feeds into racism citing the greater support the BNP are able to muster from areas with the least diverse populations. Although churches have a good track record of opposing the BNP and racism, Mr Bartley argued they have also unwittingly played into their hands and a conceptual confusion exists within the church. He quoted an article

by the Archbishop of York, John Sentamu as evidence of this. In an effort to reinstate perceived lost values, the church has taken up the baton to identify and defend these values and, Mr Bartley argued, this ideology is coming across in church schools and the education system. As a result, church schools will teach a cultural Christianity to justify their existence. He agreed with the Runnymede 'Right to Divide' report that faith schools are more effective at educating for a single vision than at opening dialogue about a shared vision. In addition, schools present a set of values on a 'take it or leave it' basis; they want community cohesion but on their terms.

**Dr Rob Berkeley** (Runnymede Trust) reflected on the speed of change in politics and that the issue of community cohesion is not a priority of the new coalition government. He went on to say that the debate about faith schools chimes with much said earlier about faith and the state. Faith schools represent about a third of the school system in England and Wales, and education policy cannot be made without taking into account the role of faith schools. Dr Berkeley recounted the circumstances of his niece who did not get into the Catholic school 400 yards from her home because her family were not deemed to have been active enough in the Catholic church. He commented that the faith school system requires people, not just to profess a particular world-view, but also to act in a certain way.

In the much-needed debate about what education is for, Dr Berkeley questioned the ability of faith schools to respond to some of the issues of racial inequality in society and to adequately prepare young people to operate in a multi-ethnic, multi-faith society. The Runnymede report on faith schools, 'Right to Divide' (available on the Runnymede website) has sought to address this and Dr Berkeley outlined some of the report's recommendations. Dr Berkeley acknowledged that faith schools often start with a desire to address inequalities in parts of society but invariably move to teaching a more privileged group. Schools have a duty to challenge all forms of discrimination and value all young people going beyond faith identity. If the recommendations of the report are followed then there is a role for faith in our education system. Dr Berkeley concluded by expressing concerns about the new education bill published that day and the way the policy of 'free schools' is going ahead without proper consideration of race relations and community cohesion. He fears the ability to influence change in faith schools in order to make them more accommodating to diversity, is likely to diminish rather than increase.

**Closing Plenary – Outcomes of Discussions / Continuing Initiatives**

**Prof. David Feldman** (Pear's Institute for the Study of Anti-Semitism, Birkbeck College) highlighted that throughout the day's discussions, different meanings had been ascribed to 'secularism'. Prof. Feldman outlined a brief history of secularism in the UK. Secularism did not begin with Enlightenment atheistic thinkers and as an anti-religious movement. It began with Protestants outside of the Church of England whose objective was the disestablishment of the

Church of England and the state as a religion-free zone. Consequently, secularism was against state funded religious education.

Prof. Feldman argued that understanding the background to secularism sheds light on multiculturalism and its relationship to different faiths in the UK now. One of the dynamics behind multiculturalism is the way in which the Anglican Church has shared its privileges with other religious minorities as a way of retaining its own privileges. This is the origins of faith schools today; firstly Catholic schools, then Jewish schools and more recently a variety of other schools have taken money from the state to establish their own schools. Although multiculturalism is not inherently conservative, the model developed in the UK has an important conservative dynamic both in terms of society as a whole in which the privileges of the church are being entrenched, and in the context of minority groups within the community whereby certain leaders and groups are given money and recognition by the state which results in their own position being further entrenched.

Prof. Feldman argued the background to secularism has a bearing on a key opposition that came up in the conference discussions. This opposition was between those who emphasised the ways in which a legacy of racism, colonialism, exclusion, and Islamophobia bears on minority groups within the UK today, and others who emphasised the ways in which other forms of disadvantage are obscured. Prof. Feldman contended there is a need to develop forms of understanding that both encompass how we got here and what we should do now, thus combining the two perspectives. It is not an 'either or' between emphasising racism, exclusion, Islamophobia and the legacy of colonialism, and on the other hand, hierarchies, sexism, economic privilege, and entrenched institutional privilege inside minority communities. It is necessary to understand both in a dynamic interaction as only in this way will we stand a chance of breaking free of them.

**Prof. Sami Zubaida** (Birkbeck College) focused on the question of unity and diversity particularly in relation to Islam. He argued there is a general trend, both on the part of Muslims and in public discourses about Muslims, to try to unify the idea of Islam as a category. He pointed out there is great diversity of Muslims including a large number of secular Muslims who often become invisible as Muslims. Furthermore, it is problematic and politically incorrect to conceptualise conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan, for instance, as America waging war on Muslims. This diverts attention from real issues of geopolitics, imperialism, land and resources, and control and domination. More Muslims are in fact being killed by other Muslims than by America.

Prof. Zubaida argued that throughout the twentieth century, the Middle East countries became highly secular in many ways and there were important native movements that were progressive, liberal and secularist. He argued that secularists were not without faith but that crucially they wanted to get rid of religious authority. In places in the Middle East with religious dominance,

minorities such as Arab Jews and Arab Christians have been ousted despite being ardent Arab nationalists. Secularism on the other hand helps protect minority groups such as the Alavis in Turkey and Christians in Syria because it is the condition under which religious persecution is minimised. Prof. Zubaida contends that the current retreat of secularity in much of the region has been accompanied by an increase of sectarianism; for example, despite previous co-existence Sunni and Shia differences now result in lots of violence.

Prof. Zubaida regards the crucial issue today is not whether people have faith nor how they practice their religion, but whether religion can be imposed on communities and others in that society. He argued for resistance of any attempts to impose authority on people who are called Muslim community and he sees the secular state as the condition under which all kinds of religion can flourish without coercion and the imposition of somebody's belief on another.

**Prof. Nira Yuval-Davis** (Director CMRB, University of East London) linked last year's conference with this year's, claiming that last year's conference highlighted the fact that religious organisations can play both supportive and exclusionary roles vis-a-vis migrants and ethnic communities. During the discussion in this year's conference it became clear that secularism can also be used to both protect diversity and minority rights as well as becoming an exclusionary tool against racialized minorities.

Prof. Yuval-Davis emphasised the crucial importance of education in affecting the politics of the next generation and warned against constructing faith schools as non-political, quoting as examples state-funded religious schools in Israel and India which proved to be crucial in the rise of both the extreme right settler movement in Israel and the Hindutva in India. She pointed out that under the Blair government, with Blair's vision of British society as 'post racist' and 'post class', religion became the only legitimate signifier of social diversity and the different 'faith communities' were constructed with fixed naturalised boundaries, assuming homogenous attachment of all members to the same 'faith'. Importantly, however, it is not just government and religious leaders who gain power under such 'multi-faithism' but it also often becomes a way for youth gangs to impose their domination on particular neighbourhoods, and especially on girls and women who do not follow the proper 'dress codes'. In this context the coalition government's move, under the label of 'Big Society', to largely expand the creation of academies and faith schools, can have a very adverse effect on the next generation's ability fight against exclusions, discriminations and racism in society. Prof. Yuval-Davis concluded by emphasising the importance of situational politics, which views social and political issues, including secularism and religion, within specific 'glocal' contexts in which local as well as global issues are connected, and what happens in particular locales affect what happens in other corners of the globe. This is the context in which issues of religion, secularism, racism, migration are intersected and

contested in contemporary politics of belonging in contemporary UK have to be seen and analysed.

(Report by Prof Nira Yuval-Davis)

--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------On May 14 2010, a *Symposium on Understanding Diaspora: The Case of Kurds in London* was organised by Dr Ipek Demir at the University of Leicester, United Kingdom. The symposium provided a forum for reflecting on and discussing 'diaspora' by focusing on the case of Kurds from Turkey. Even though Kurds from Turkey make up a significant proportion of London's ethnic minority population, they constitute an 'invisible' diasporic community, both in terms of the current debates surrounding ethnicity and Muslim minorities in the UK, and in diaspora studies. The presentations considered theoretical and political dimensions and also heard from those who undertook empirical work. Focusing on 'Diasporic Experiences' papers were given by Umut Erel on 'Kurdish Migrant Mothers in London'; Janroj Keles on 'Community, Network and Ethnic Politics of Migrants in London : The Case of Kurds'; Issa Tozun on 'Educating Children of Kurdish Origin in Britain'. The 'Diaspora and Belonging' session included papers by Latif Tas on 'Kurds in the UK: Legal Pluralism and Dispute Resolution in the Diaspora'; Ibrahim Sirkeci on 'Diasporas from Turkey: Transnational space between the Turkish and Kurdish' and Ipek Demir on 'Battling with Homeland'. (Report by Dr Ipek Demir)

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In November 2010 a symposium entitled *Comparative Multiculturalism from Transnational and Global Perspectives* was organised by The Centre for Citizenship and Globalisation (CCG), Deakin University, Melbourne, Australia in partnership with The Audiovisual Media Lab for the study of Cultures and Societies, University of Ottawa. The convenors were Prof. Fethi Mansouri (Director, CCG) and Professor Boulou Ebanda de B'béri from the University of Ottawa's Department of Communication. The symposium featured a body of prominent international scholars who discussed and presented their latest research and reflection on multiculturalism. Among others themes, the participants explored the following key- themes:

1. Rethinking multiculturalism in/for the context of 21st century

2. Transnational and comparative multiculturalism

3. Multiculturalism and cultural representations

4. Visibility/invisibility of racial, cultural, and religious minorities in émigré societies

5. The state of multiculturalism and indigenous communities

6. The contradictory manifestations of multicultural ideologies and the ethics of political membership

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The invited speakers were:
1. Professor Shahram Akbarzadeh ‑ Deputy Director, National Centre of Excellence for Islamic Studies, Asia Institute, The University of Melbourne, Australia
2. Associate Professor Sirma Bilge ‑ Associate Professor of Sociology, Université de Montréal, Canada
3. Professor Gary Craig ‑ Professor Emeritus of Social Justice , The University of Hull, United Kingdom
4. Professor Kevin Dunn ‑ School of Social Sciences, University of Western Sydney, Australia
5. Associate Professor Michele Grossman ‑ Associate Dean (Research), Faculty of Arts, Education and Human Development, Victoria University, Melbourne
6. Professor Paul James ‑ Director, Global Cities Institute, Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT), Melbourne, Australia
7. Dr Hannah Lewis ‑ Research fellow, Leeds Metropolitan University, United Kingdom
8. Professor Paul Morris ‑ UNESCO Chair of Interreligious Understanding and Relations in New Zealand and the Pacific, Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand
9. Associate Professor Elizabeth Rata ‑ School of Critical Studies in Education, Faculty of Education, The University of Auckland, New Zealand
10. Professor Zlatko Skrbis ‑ Dean, UQ Graduate, The University of Queensland, Australia

The papers will be published by the Ottawa University Press in 2012 and there will a follow-up conference in Canada hosted by the University of Ottawa's Department of Communication in November 2011. For further details please follow this link:
http://www.deakin.edu.au/arts-ed/ccg/events/conferences/cmtgp-photos/cmtgp-symposiumphotos.php

(Report by Dr Vince Marotta
Deakin University, Australia)

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## Migration, Ethnicisation and the Challenge of Diversity: The Others in Europe and Beyond; International Conference, Universite`Libre de Bruxelles, 28-29 April 2011

As the organisers of this conference spelled out very explicitly on the conference leaflet; this was the 'closing conference of the research project entitled *Outsiders in Europe. The Foreigner and the 'Other' in the Process of Changing Rules and Identities* conducted by the center for transdisciplinary research Migration, Asylum and Multiculturalism (MAM)' at the Free University Brussels, Belgium. The projects findings are published in a small booklet, edited by Saskia Bonjour, Andrea Rea and Dirk Jacobs, 'The Others in Europe' (ISBN 978-2-8004-1506-2). The editors and some of the book contributors, Bribosia & Rorive; Groenendijk and Gregoire, for example, were presenting at the conference, too.

During the first day speakers such as David B. Oppenheimer, Nicole Gregoire, Dirk Jacobs, Bernd Simon and Alejandra Alarcon looked at possibilities and patterns of ethnic minority's collective action against discrimination in the US, Belgium and Germany while approaching choices of resistance from a political and organisation angle. On the second day of the

conference legal aspects as framed by EU anti-discrimination directives were at the centre of debate: questions were addressed as to what degree 'reasonable accommodation' could be also adopted to settle disputes about different religious practices in the private and public sector. Current negative debates on multiculturalism in Europe, somehow, delivered the background to more critical approaches to state enforced language and 'cultural' integration courses in different European countries. The latter echoed the particular national academic backgrounds of the involved researchers, who focused largely on the situation in Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and France, and for that reason are not representative to the overall situation in the European Union of 27 Member States.

The Canadian law scholar Francois Crepeau at the session 'Cultural diversity and Anti-Discrimination policies' on the second day of the conference, showed convincingly in what ways Canadian multiculturalism with its strong emphasis on a liberal notion of individual citizen rights is dogmatically and systematically different to a European framework, where ethno-collectively bounded ideas of citizenship and political community frame dominant understandings of inclusion, diversity and ethnic minority rights.

It is unfortunate that recent feminist contributions[1] discussing multidimensional EU anti-discrimination law, intersectionality as well as human rights were not considered at all and thus, timely legal and sociological expertise missing, both at the conference and in the publication. (Report by Dr. Ulrike M Vieten)

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**Recent and Forthcoming Publications**

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*New Racism: Revisiting Researcher Accountabilities by* Norma RA Romm

This book was published by Springer last year. The Springer website address for the book is: http://www.springer.com/978-90-481-8727-0. It is published in hardback and as an e-book.

In the book, Norma explores different styles of social research that have been used by those studying what is called "new racism" across the globe (that is, forms of racism that are less overt than blatant expressions thereof). While offering an in-depth overview of the variety of ways in which new racism has been defined/ conceptualized, she looks into various styles of inquiry into the terrain. She does this in the context of revisiting debates around human knowing processes and their justification in the social fabric and connecting this to discussions around race/ethnicity, gender, and class issues (and their conceptualization). The focus of the book is on offering suggestions for enhancing accountable social research. The book takes forward her

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[1] For instance; Schiek & Chege, (eds.),, 2009, *European Union Non-Discrimination Law: Comparative Perspectives on Multidimensional Equality Law*, London and New York: Routledge Cavendish; Schiek & Lawson (eds.), 2011, *European Union Non-Discrimination Law and Intersectionality : Investigating the Triangle of Racial, Gender and Disability Discrimination*, Farnham: Ashgate

arguments developed in her book *Accountability in Social Research* (published by Springer in 2001), where she argues that social inquirers can display their accountabilities by being mindful of the potential impact of their inquiries on the continuing unfolding of the social worlds of which they are part. In her book *New Racism*, she offers a similar definition of accountable research in the context of considering the sometimes hidden consequences of our "ways of knowing" in relation to the field of racism. She relates this in particular to Patricia Hill Collins's understanding of personal accountability (as one criterion for evaluating knowing processes) in her writings on Black Feminist Epistemology.

The book is structured around Norma's examining closely how those exploring the arena of new racism have justified their approach (in terms of epistemological and methodological justifications). That is, she looks at the research with a view to pinpointing the explicit and implicit justifications for the manner of proceeding. At the same time she locates possibilities for how the research processes and the way of interpreting the "results" thereof, might be redesigned and/or further developed.

As she proceeds to examine different research options, Norma starts with an examination of experimental studies around modern/new racism. She takes as an example psychological experimentation in relation to White people's attitudes concerning racialized issues in society (in different parts of the globe). She tries to illustrate how these research processes can be said to unwittingly reproduce continuing patterns of new racism by taking for granted categories such as "race", "race relations", "group", etc. And she offers suggestions for how the research style can be extended/altered to take this into account and to become more dialogical (in the research process itself and in the interpretation of the products of the research). She also examines survey research with a view to showing how it can, if extended, contribute to interrupting (essentialized) ethnoracial categories. And she explores the research styles of interviewing/focus group interviewing, autoethnography/ethnography, and action research with a view to examining their potential to "make a difference" at the moment of the research process. As part of the discussion she revisits debates concerning the political import of social research in general and research around racism in particular.

In discussing the theorizing of racism, she offers an account of how one can organize structurally oriented studies by way of using retroductive logic combined with an ethic of care – as part of the process of developing a theorizing that makes provision for coalitions between people engaged in social justice projects. She offers suggestions as to how retroductive logic may be a route to examine "race" as an historically emergent concept (with attendant social institutions) – so that attendant social structures too can be regarded as capable of transformation. She delves into what this implies in terms of links with (certain) Marxist understandings of social inquiry as a political process.

For more detail on the book or to discuss any of the above, you are welcome to contact Norma at: norma.romm@gmail.com

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Kuecker, Glen D. and Thomas D. Hall. 2011. "Resilience and Community in the Age of World-System Collapse." *Nature and Culture* 6:1 (Spring):18–40.

Hall, Thomas D., P. Nick Kardulias, and Christopher Chase-Dunn. "World-Systems Analysis and Archaeology: Continuing the Dialogue." *Journal of Archaeological Research* 19:3(Sept.): forthcoming in print. Now in open access on line @

http://www.springerlink.com/content/104889/?Content+Status=Accepted  (Dec. 17, 2010), Print Sept. 2011.

Chase-Dunn, Christopher, Thomas D. Hall, Richard Niemeyer, Alexis Alvarez, Hiroko Inoue, Kirk Lawrence, and Anders Carlson. 2010. "Middlemen and Marcher States in Central Asia and East/West Empire Synchrony." *Social Evolution and History* 9:1(March):52-79.

Hall, Thomas D. 2010. The Silk Road: A Review Essay on Empires of the Silk Road: A History of Central Eurasia from the Bronze Age to the Present, by Christopher I. Beckwith (Princeton University Press, 2009). *Cliodynamics: the Journal of Theoretical and Mathematical History* 1:1:103-115. on line at: http://escholarship.org/uc/item/67z5m9d3

Hall, Thomas D. and Nagel, Joane. 2011. "Indigenous Peoples." Pp. 156-160 *Routledge Companion to Race & Ethnicity* edited by Stephen M. Caliendo and Charlton D. McIlwain. London: Routledge.

Hall, Thomas D. 2011. "Ethnogenesis." Pp. 136-138 in *Routledge Companion to Race & Ethnicity* edited by Stephen M. Caliendo and Charlton D. McIlwain. London: Routledge.

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*On Being Lebanese in Australia: Identity, Racism and the Ethnic Field*
by Paul Tabar, Greg Noble and Scott Poynting
LAU Press/Institute for Migration Studies.

ISBN 9953-461-12-0

Price: USD 25 + postage (internationally)
http://www.lau.edu.lb/academics/centers-institutes/ims/publications/

This book examines diverse aspects of the social experiences and cultural practices of Lebanese migrants and their descendants in Australia. It is available at the Institute for Migration Studies for the prices listed below. To obtain any additional information about the book please contact the Institute for Migration Studies.
http://www.lau.edu.lb/academics/centers-institutes/ims/index.php

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*The Journal of Intercultural Studies* (Routledge) would like to inform members of the upcoming special issues relevant to our research area.

2010, Vol. 32. no. 3 *Does Discrimination Shape Identity? Identity Politics and Minorities in the English-Speaking World and in France: Rhetoric and Reality*

Guest Editors: Olivette Otele (Senior Lecturer in British Colonial History at Université Paris 13-Nord) and Rim Latrache (Senior Lecturer in American History at the English Department of University Paris 13-Villetaneuse).

2010, Vol. 32. no. 6 *A New Era in Australian Multiculturalism*
Guest Editors: Val Colic-Piesker (Senior Research Fellow / Senior Lecturer in the AHURI-RMIT Research Centre) and Karen Farquharson (Associate Professor of Sociology and Academic Head of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, Swinburne University)

2011, Vol. 33. no. 2 *Special Section: a discussion among leading scholars of Diversity, Multiculturalism, Citizenship, and Interculturalism:*

*How Does Multiculturalism Compare with Interculturalism?*
Contributors: Michele Wieviorka, Tariq Modood, Will Kymlicka, Pnina Werbner, Nasar Meer and Geoffrey Levey.

Dr Vince Marotta
Managing Editor
http://www.tandf.co.uk/journals/titles/07256868.asp

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*Race in the Age of Obama*
Volume editors: Donald Cunnigen and Marino A. Bruce
Series title: Research in Race and Ethnic Relations
ISBN: 9780857241672 Price: GBP £72.95/ USD $134.95
More details: please click
here<http://books.emeraldinsight.com/display.asp?K=9780857241672&cur=GBP&sf1=kword_index&sort=sort_date%2Fd&st1=obama&sf2=eh_cat_class&m=1&dc=1>
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Evie Tastsoglou has a new book in print on *Immigrant Women in Atlantic Canada: Challenges, Negotiations, Re-constructions* (Canadian Scholars' Press / Women's Press, 2011), co-edited with Peruvemba Jaya (University of Ottawa). For this book she wrote the introductory chapter on "Women, Gender, and Immigration: Focusing on Atlantic Canada." In addition, her co-authored chapter (with Alexandra Dobrowolsky) "Continuity and Change in Immigration Policy: Canada, Atlantic Canada and the Future of Citizenship", originally presented as a paper to the Royal Society Conference (March 2010), will appear in a book on *Shaping an Agenda for Atlantic Canada*, edited by Donald Savoie and John Reed (Fernwood, 2011, forthcoming).

# Multiculturalism Turns 40: Reflections on the Canadian Policy

**The Association for Canadian Studies and the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association 2nd Annual Conference**
**Ottawa, Ontario**
**September 30 to October 1 2011**

The Association for Canadian Studies and the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association invite proposals for our joint conference "**Multiculturalism Turns 40: Reflections on the Canadian Policy**" **to be held** September 30 to October 1 2011, at the Ottawa Marriot Hotel, 100 Kent Street. This conference also marks the 21st conference of the Canadian Ethnic Studies Association and the second in a series of three conferences jointly organized with the Association for Canadian Studies. The Conference will offer a unique opportunity to exchange views and ideas in the Nation's Capital on the occasion of this important anniversary.

Conference organizers welcome proposals for papers, sessions, panels, roundtables and video presentations that address the topics of ethnicity, immigration, diversity, and multiculturalism in Canada, particularly in relation to the 40th anniversary of the introduction of multiculturalism as a government policy in 1971. Such issues as the evolution of policy on multiculturalism, current debates over multiculturalism, the impact of multiculturalism on Canadian society, multiculturalism and ethnic identity, multiculturalism and immigrant integration, multiculturalism and official languages, multiculturalism and community formation, multiculturalism and social cohesion, the role of the media and multicultural policy, multiculturalism, equality and social justice, comparing the Canadian approach to other countries, etc. Organizers invite submissions from a variety of perspectives, academic disciplines, and areas of study, including the humanities and the social sciences. Travel assistance is available for some presenters, the amount to be determined based on number of participants. We will endeavor to make a decision shortly after the abstract is received in order to facilitate those who need verification of their acceptance for travel funding purposes at their own institutions. Who should attend? In addition to members of the Association for Canadian Studies and Canadian Ethnic Studies Association, the conference will be relevant to a wide range of people interested in ethnicity, race, immigration,

multiculturalism, and related diversity issues in Canada, particularly as they intersect with issues of multiculturalism. University professors, graduate students, and other researchers and teachers; policymakers and civil servants from all levels of government; those who work in various non-governmental organizations, as well as those involved as frontline workers delivering various kinds of social services – all of these will find that this conference offers them worthwhile information, challenging critical perspectives, and an opportunity to network and discuss important issues with people from across the country and from a variety of academic disciplines and institutional perspectives. A special issue of the *Canadian Ethnic Studies Journal* will showcase selected papers from the conference. Shorter papers can be submitted for consideration in ACS's *Canadian Diversity*. To be considered for publication in the either journal, papers must be submitted no later than two weeks after the conference. Papers must be written in accordance with the journal's guidelines.

All abstracts should be no longer than 250 words and will be refereed by the joint ACS/CESA Program Committee. Individual conference presentations will normally be 20 minutes in length, and conference sessions will be 90 minutes. Please visit our websites: cesa.uwinnipeg.ca and www.acs-aec.ca for more information. Presentation and poster submissions should be directed electronically to James Ondrick, Director of Programs, Association for Canadian Studies at: james.ondrick@acs-aec.ca

*The deadline for submission of proposals for papers, sessions, roundtables, and poster presentations is June 1 2011.*
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Proposed Joint Session for RC05 and Canadian Ethnic Studies Association
Session organizer: Ann Denis – adenis@uottawa.ca

## Multiculturalism – its pitfalls and promise
Is multiculturalism a route to imposed assimilation or an acknowledgement of and respect for difference? What are its implications for francophones in Québec, minority francophones outside Québec, those of non-French, non British origin both inside and outside Québec? Are the implications the same for racialized groups as for European origin groups? What are the implications in our neo-liberal economy with multiculturalism's changed criteria for funding (and changing admission criteria for immigrants to Canada)?

**If you are interested in participating in this session, please contact Ann Denis well before June 1. with your paper proposal.**