

Encountering Multiculturalism in Suburban Ontario: Sacred Hindu Space, Citizenship, and Canadian Multiculturalism

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Abstract

July 2007 saw the opening of Canada's largest Hindu temple. The monumental structure, located in a suburban-industrial neighbourhood of Toronto, Ontario, cost nearly forty million dollars to build, every dollar of which was raised by the temple's congregants, and was constructed largely through the efforts of volunteers. Built according to ancient architectural principles prescribed in Hinduism's oldest sacred texts, and made almost entirely of marble stones individually handcrafted in India, it is the fourth temple of its kind in North America, and the fifth in the Western World. Prime Minister Stephen Harper attended the opening, and declared Canada's new "architectural wonder" a symbol of our country's ethnic and religious pluralism. As the Canadian public celebrated the construction of the BAPS Mandir, they simultaneously chronicled the story of another Hindu community in the Greater Toronto Area in a much less reverential tone: the campaign led by the Hindu Federation to secure a waterfront site in one of GTA's parks for Hindu funeral ceremonies. The campaign was roundly criticized in the name of environmental concerns and multiculturalism's failure to promote integration. This thesis explores the complex and often contradictory ways in which Canadian multiculturalism is constructed in official and public discourse with these two sites as a focusing lens. Determining how, in one moment the Hindu community is a source of pride, and in another, a source of pollution and anxiety, I look at the role of emotions and feelings in processes of inclusion and exclusion, and I trace the emergence of a new articulation of the relationship between ethno-cultural minorities, the nation and national citizenship. Further, I explore the way in which these two sites mediate discourses and articulations of multiculturalism by addressing the suburban locales in which they are situated, and the modes of urban citizenship these sites make possible. I develop the concept of "suburban multiculturalism" to account for the new realities and challenges posed by the transformations in Canada's urban, cultural and political environment.

En juillet 2007 le Canada a vu l'ouverture du plus grand temple Hindou. Cette structure monumentale qui se trouve dans un banlieu industriel de Toronto (en Ontario), a coûté presque quarante millions de dollars pour construire. Cette somme assez spectaculaire a été recueillie par les congregants du temple et le bâtiment a été construit en grand parti par les efforts des bénévoles. Construit suivant des principes architecturaux prescrits par les anciens textes sacrés de l'Hindouisme, et bâti presque entièrement de pierres marbrées faites individuellement par la main en Inde, c'est le quatrième temple de ce type en Amérique du Nord et le cinquième dans le monde occidentale. Le Premier Ministre Stephen Harper qui était présent à son ouverture a déclaré le temple la nouvelle "merveille architecturale" du Canada, un symbole du pluralisme culturel et religieux du pays. En même temps que le public canadien célébrait la construction du BAPS Mandir comme un testament du succès du

multiculturalisme au Canada, les demandes d'une autre communauté Hindou dans le *Greater Toronto Area (GTA)* ont reçu un traitement considérablement moins révérentiel: la Fédération Hindou de la *GTA* cherchait à établir un site au bord du lac dans un des parcs publics de la ville pour ses cérémonies funéraires. Cette demande a été extrêmement critiquée au nom de préoccupations environnementales et a suggérée l'échec du multiculturalisme dans la promotion de l'intégration. En mobilisant ces deux exemples phares dans les communautés Hindou à Toronto, cette thèse considère les façons complexes et souvent contradictoires dont le multiculturalisme est construit au Canada dans le discours public et officiel. Considérant comment, dans un instant, la communauté Hindou est une source de fierté, et dans un autre, une source de la pollution et de l'anxiété, j'examine la place des émotions et des sentiments dans les processus de l'inclusion et l'exclusion et je trace l'émergence d'une nouvelle articulation dans les relations qui se manifestent entre les minorités ethno-culturelles, la nation, et la citoyenneté nationale. De plus, ma thèse considère les façons par lesquelles ces deux sites négocient les discours et les articulations du multiculturalisme en étudiant les quartiers des banlieues dans lesquels ces discours se situent, et les modes de la citoyenneté urbaine que ces sites rendent possible. Dans cette thèse je développe le concept du "multiculturalisme des banlieues" pour répondre à des nouvelles réalités et défis posés par les transformations dans l'environnement urbain, culturel et politique au Canada.

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Chapter One: Multicultural Beginnings, National Identity and Hinduism in Canada

Introduction

July 2007 saw the opening of Canada's largest Hindu temple. The monumental structure, located at Highway 427 and Finch Ave. West in Toronto, Ontario, is an architectural and aesthetic achievement. Composed of 26,000 hand-carved pieces of limestone from Turkey, Carrara marble from Italy and pink sandstone from India, the new temple, built by the Canadian Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS) sect of Hinduism cost more than 40 million dollars, and is expected to last for more than 1000 years¹. The funds were raised entirely by the BAPS community, and more than 400 community volunteers assisted in the 18-month-long construction. Built according to ancient architectural principles prescribed in Hinduism's sacred texts, it is the fourth temple of its kind in North America, and the fifth in the Western world. Prime Minister Stephen Harper attended the opening alongside Premier Dalton McGuinty, Toronto's then Mayor David Miller, and Liberal leader Stephane Dion, declaring Canada's new "architectural wonder" a symbol of our country's ethnic and religious pluralism (Pajamadeen, 2007).

As Canadian newspapers celebrated the construction of the BAPS Mandir, heralding it a triumph of multiculturalism and religious diversity, they simultaneously chronicled the story of another Hindu community in the Greater Toronto Area in a much less reverential tone: the campaign led by Pandit Sharma of the Hindu Federation, to secure a waterfront space in one of the Greater Toronto Area's (GTA) parks for Hindu funeral (Antyeshti) ceremonies. The ceremony, generally taking only fifteen minutes, necessitates a moving body of water in which the cremated remains of loved ones are to be submerged. Knowledge of the now eight-year-long campaign came to light in 2007 – as the BAPS Mandir was preparing to open – and was roundly criticized and opposed by both private citizens and public figures, including public commentators in the mainstream press, non-Hindu residents of the GTA and some representatives of

¹ I explain and discuss this form of Hinduism on pages 12 through 14.

local governments and conservation authorities. Criticisms ranged from environmental concerns and the fear of pollution on the one hand, to multiculturalism's failure to promote integration on the other. After unsuccessfully petitioning the cities of Mississauga, Brampton, and Niagara, the Hindu Federation received word, in October of 2009, that Pickering Mayor Dave Ryan would grant a space for the ceremony in Brockridge Park, much to the chagrin of many Pickering residents. The Hindu community remains in limbo, however; the expected date of July 2011 for the formal institution of the space has come and gone and the proposal for the space has yet to pass council².

Both of these spaces have been read as symbols or manifestations of multiculturalism. They have been constructed in the media, by public officials, and in representations by non-Hindu Canadians as extensions of the "fact" of multiculturalism; however, they exist on either side of a sliding scale of multicultural permissibility and pride. The BAPS Mandir is depicted as an authorized and contained space of cultural diversity and a cause for celebration, while the space for Hindu funeral ceremonies is rendered a dangerous site of pollution. It is a site where the real and imagined body of the nation is perceived to be immediately at risk, at the same time as it serves as a metaphor for larger concerns about the pollution of the public body and the dilution of its cherished ideals, by and through immigration and multiculturalism. How is multiculturalism constructed in and through public discourse with "multicultural space[s]" – like the BAPS Mandir and the Antyeshti site – as a focusing lens? How are the divergent responses to these sites implicated in larger controversies, histories, and national narratives? And what do these two spaces tell us about the way in which citizenship and belonging are imagined, adjudicated and achieved?

This thesis explores the complex and often contradictory ways in which Canadian multiculturalism is constructed in public discourse, and to some degree, the role of religious pluralism therein. As multiculturalism refers in part to a tradition of cultural pluralism and tolerance, religious diversity falls within

² I provide a more detailed history of the Hindu Federation's campaign on p.14 of this chapter.

this conception. In the Canadian Multiculturalism Act, the respect for religious difference and the recognition that Canada is a religiously diverse country is on par with the respect for and recognition of “the diversity of Canadians as regards race, [and] national or ethnic origin” (Canadian Multiculturalism Act, 1988). Thus multiculturalism encompasses religious, cultural, national, ethnic and racial diversity – and as Will Kymlicka suggests, existing multiculturalism policies have been designed to enable immigrants to retain and express their unique cultural, ethnic and religious identities, “if they so desire... to reduce some of the external pressures on them to assimilate” (1995, 41). Supporters of multiculturalism believe that allowing individuals to retain and articulate their cultural and religious identities is not only just and fair, consistent with Canada’s liberal democracy and tradition of tolerance, but that it also assists in “the integration of immigrants, removing barriers to their participation in Canadian life and making them feel more welcome in Canadian society, leading to a stronger sense of belonging” (Kymlicka, 2010, 1).

Thus, religion has traditionally been “discussed in the context of culture”. More recently, however, issues of religious diversity and its accommodation have come to the forefront of the public debates regarding immigration and multiculturalism in Canada (Kunz, 2009)³. The most widely cited of these concerns is that some religious minority groups partake in illiberal practices or uphold certain beliefs that are inconsistent with Canadian culture and values, and that such practices are allowed to continue in the name of multiculturalism and its respect for diversity. We have seen emerge in these debates some attitudes and discourses that villainize and condemn religious minorities – attitudes which are typically drawn from cultural stereotypes and assumptions about those communities. As a result of these developments, many scholars have suggested that we need to rethink “the place of religious diversity within multiculturalism,” and develop “effective mechanisms of advice, consultation, and decision-making that stakeholders can turn to,” so that we can proactively manage issues as they arise (Kymlicka, 2010, 11).

³ I discuss these issues in greater detail in Chapter 2.

Despite the fact that religious diversity is becoming an increasingly prominent (and controversial) domain of multiculturalism, the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation's campaign have been primarily understood within the broader framework of multiculturalism, and they have been less implicated in the contemporary discourses concerning religious diversity than I had anticipated. This is likely because of the somewhat ambiguous place of religious diversity within the concept of multiculturalism; while religion has historically been understood as part of one's cultural heritage it is gaining new and controversial prominence as something that must be considered distinct from culture. As I began the research for this thesis, I thought I would find in the criticism of the Hindu Federation's campaign a concern that the Hindu community was imposing their religious customs and beliefs on what should be a public, secular space. However, there were no such criticisms. Instead, these discourses have treated religion as a constitutive part of culture in a manner that is historically consistent with how multiculturalism has been understood. Thus, this thesis is more an exploration of the way in which multiculturalism is lived, represented, tested and defined than it is an analysis of the articulation between religious diversity and multiculturalism.

Throughout this thesis I take up multiculturalism in a plurality of ways. Will Kymlicka has usefully distinguished between three broad aspects of multiculturalism, which are helpful in disentangling the contemporary debates and discourses in which the concept is implicated. These are multiculturalism as fact, policy and ethos or ideology (Kymlicka, 2007, 138). Multiculturalism as "fact" refers to the presence of ethnic, cultural and religious diversity in Canada – a result of our immigration policies that draw newcomers from all over the world⁴. From this perspective, we very plainly *are* a multicultural society. As a policy, multiculturalism functions to recognize and accommodate "ethnocultural diversity within our public institutions, and to celebrate it as an important dimension of our collective life and collective identity" (138). Multiculturalism

⁴ Of course, it was not until the 1970s that our immigration policies were liberalized, opening the country to immigrants from non-European countries. I discuss the liberalization of immigration and citizenship on page 17 of this introduction.

policies exist at national, provincial and municipal levels and are designed to address a variety of issues, including cultural sensitivity, anti-racism and equality, and ethnic representation in public and private institutions. These policies also provide funding for programs and organizations that further these commitments such as academic research hubs, multi-ethnic festivals, and employment equity initiatives (139).

That multiculturalism has been enshrined in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act of 1988, and is recognized in section 27 of the constitution, is evidence of our commitment to multiculturalism as both an official policy and an abiding ethos underpinning Canadian life. Michael Dewing refers to Canada's spirit of multiculturalism as consisting of "a relatively coherent set of ideas and ideals pertaining to the celebration of Canada's cultural diversity" (2009, non paginated). As Kymlicka describes, our multicultural ethos "is one of inclusion: organizations reaching out to members of ethnic groups, inviting them to participate, taking their interests and perspectives into account, and reconsidering any norms or practices that are perceived by minorities as unfair or exclusionary" (139). That multiculturalism is repeatedly cited as a source of national pride, and as a defining feature of Canada identity, is further evidence of this ethos.

My primary sources for this research consist of news articles and blog posts that feature and report on these two spaces, as well as their online comment sections (if applicable), in-depth interviews with community members and public officials associated with these spaces, and photographs circulating alongside news articles or otherwise within the public domain. I analyze these sources with theory drawn from a wide variety of fields and disciplines. In particular, I explore historical and contemporary critiques of multiculturalism as a mechanism of inclusion/exclusion despite its pretense of diversity, tolerance and equality (Burman 2010a, 2010b & 2006; Mackey 1999; Thobani 2007; Bannerji 2000; Abu-Laban 2007; Mahtani 2002), alongside critiques that highlight the affective dimensions of multiculturalism policy and discourse. I look at the ways in which multiculturalism articulates and proscribes relationships between the

nation, its inhabitants, and citizenship, and involves “the management of physical, cultural, [and] emotive” identifications “between inhabitants”, towards the nation, and to real physical spaces (Fortier, 7; Ahmed 2000, 2004 & 2010; Watson 2006). Finally, I explore the intersections of urban theory, spatial belonging, and multiculturalism, considering the ways in which multiculturalism is, or has largely been conceived of as, an intensely urban phenomenon. I develop the concept of “suburban multiculturalism” to account for the new realities and challenges posed by multiculturalism, urban citizenship and the Canadian city.

Presently, I undertake a brief history of Hinduism in Canada, tracing the immigration of Hindus from India, East Africa and the Caribbean and the emergence of collective Hindu worship in the 1970s. I provide some background on the BAPS Swaminarayan sect of Hinduism, and an introduction to the Hindu Federation’s campaign. I follow with a discussion of the evolution of Canadian immigration policy, which leads me into an analysis of the emergence of multiculturalism as official policy in 1971.

Hinduism in Canada

The development of Canadian Hinduism can be traced back to two distinct phases of Indian, East African and Caribbean immigration to Canada. The first phase, between 1904 and 1909, saw a small group of independent, male migrants from the Indian subcontinent settle in Southwestern British Columbia. Mostly Hindi speaking farmers from the Uttar Pradesh province and surrounding region, they hoped to make enough money with which they could return to India and buy farmland (Coward, 34). As the population of South Asian migrants grew – from about 100 in 1904 to nearly 5,000 in 1908 – so too did their experiences of racism and discrimination (Jain, 191). By 1908 the British Columbia legislature had removed the privileges associated with their British citizenship, including the right to vote. In addition to removing these privileges, all Asians were barred from “serving as school trustees, on juries, in public service, holding jobs resulting from public works contracts, purchasing Crown timber, or

practicing the professions of law and pharmacy” (Coward, 33).⁵ In the same year, Canada instituted the Continuous Passage Requirement in an attempt to completely ban further South Asian immigration. The legislation mandated that all migrants purchase a through passage ticket to Canada from his or her country of origin. As Coward explains, “since no shipping company covered both the India-Hong Kong and the Hong Kong-Canada legs of the trip, the purchase of a continuous ticket was impossible, effectively cutting off immigration to Canada” (90).⁶ For a brief moment in the 1920s some spouses were permitted entry under a restricted Indian immigration act, and in 1924 the act was amended to bar East and South East Asian immigration altogether (Seka, 62).

The original 1910 Immigration Act which “legislated prohibitions on the grounds of race”, and which was the “principal instrument for the ‘Keep Canada White’ policies”, remained in place for the following fifty years (Thobani, 92). In 1947, following India’s independence, the federal government acted to restore franchise to Indian migrants, and in 1951 allowed a “token number of non-sponsored immigrants” admittance to the country “in the interest of forging good relations with the newly independent Commonwealth countries of South Asia” (Seka, 68). Under a special agreement with India, a fixed quota system for Indian immigration was instituted, admitting 150 Indians each year (Jain, 192). In 1957 the quota increased to 300, and remained in place until the introduction of the “points system” in December of 1968. Immediately preceding the formal institution of the points system, the government abolished admission policies that expressly discriminated on the basis of race, religion, or country of origin.

⁵ This was a period of intense racism and discrimination generally. The prevailing attitude was that those of Chinese, Japanese or Indian origin were just “too unalterably foreign ever to be assimilated” (Beyer, 13). The Canadian government took drastic measures to deny Chinese, Japanese and Indian immigration to the country.

⁶ The legislation was aimed at barring Indian and Japanese immigration. As Hawkins explains, “in those days steamships made a stop in Hawaii in their passage from ports in Asia across the Pacific to BC. The requirement of a continuous journey could be used as a way to close the Pacific migration route. Later, when direct journeys by sea from Calcutta, Hong Kong, and other Asian ports to Vancouver became commonplace, this method of exclusion was abandoned” (17).

It was this period in the 1960s and moving into the 1970s that saw the second major influx of migrants of Indian descent; their population grew from 2,200 in 1951, to more than 9,000 in 1961 and eventually up to 45,000 in 1970 (Jain, 193). No longer evaluated by an expressly racist and discriminatory immigration policy, the new immigrants to Canada were admitted based on their skills, training and education, instead of their cultural, religious or racial origins. The majority of migrants admitted under the new regime tended to be highly educated professionals, semi-professionals, skilled laborers and entrepreneurs, usually accompanied by their families and hailing predominantly from the Punjab and Uttar Pradesh regions of India (Jain, 193-194). This period also saw the arrival of migrants of Indian descent from some of the newly independent British colonies of Kenya, Uganda, Guyana, Fiji, Trinidad and Tobago where they were either pressured to leave or forcibly expelled by their new governments. The majority of East Africans Hindus were of Gujarati origin⁷. It is generally understood that these new migrants precipitated the establishment of formal religious gathering sites. As Vertovec explains, the large majority of these migrants, particularly those of East African origin, came with “experience and skills relevant to community development and the formation of religious institutions” (92).

Historically and presently, new immigrants to Canada have tended to settle overwhelmingly in cities, with Toronto, Montreal and Vancouver seeing the highest concentration of immigrants (Graham and Phillips, 155), a trend which I discuss in detail in Chapter 3. It is thus no surprise that these three cities also contain the highest concentration of Hindus. Of the 217, 560 Hindus living in Canada at the time of the 2001 census, 91, 305 lived in Toronto, 27, 410 lived in Vancouver and 24, 075 in Montreal (Statistics Canada, 2001)⁸.

⁷ Gujarat, a state in Western India, is where the BAPS sect of Hinduism first originated. Diasporic BAPS temples (of which there are many), almost exclusively serve Hindus of Gujarati descent, many of whom migrated from East Africa. They are therefore very different from other Hindu temples in Canada, the US and Britain which tend to be serve an ethnically, ritually and linguistically diverse community.

⁸ The latest Statistics Canada data on religion is from the 2001 census; information about religion is collected every ten years.

Diasporic Temple Life

It was not until the mid 1970s that Hindu communities began to set up formal prayer gatherings and sites (Coward, 155). Gatherings initially began in homes for a weekly, congregational style worship. This practice departed significantly from traditional Hindu practice in India where prayer and ritual were relegated to the home of one's immediate family, and tended to be largely individual in nature. As Coward explains, "being used to having religious ritual focused at home, Canadian immigrant Hindus at first felt no pressure for a public place of worship" (155). These early, weekly, gatherings "often remained ethnic specific" and were motivated by a whole host of reasons: to temper feelings of isolation in a new environment, to gather together with others who shared a similar cultural and religious history, and often times, to host a visiting Hindu teacher or guru from India. According to Coward, the growing needs of this early community eventually intersected with the rise of larger secular issues pertaining to marriage and death in Canadian society: "in Canada, unlike India, marriage or death rites were public occasions, and a Hindu community without a temple had nowhere to celebrate them. This need drew diverse groups of Hindus together [into] larger centers, and buildings were constructed" (155). The majority of temples erected were quite eclectic as a result of their attempt to satisfy the divergent needs of an ethnically, regionally, ritually and linguistically diverse Hindu community – thus combining different traditions of sectarian worship under one roof.⁹

As Canadian Hindu communities moved out of homes and makeshift places of worship into established temples, their sacred spaces began to take on much expanded roles than ever before. The majority of diasporic temples contain kitchens for the serving of meals en masse, offices, meeting rooms and other multipurpose spaces for yoga practice and the hosting of large events. Many

⁹ As I discuss on pages 12-14, the eclecticism characterizing the majority of diasporic temples does not extend to the BAPS Swaminaryan community, which is a highly organized and systematized form of Hinduism. While the community is composed of individuals of many different nationalities, the majority trace their ancestry to the Gujarat region of India – and Gujarati is the primary language spoken among temple congregants and in services.

contain classrooms for language instruction and cultural history. The Vishnu Mandir in Toronto's Richmond Hill is nearly finished the construction of a senior citizens' home that adjoins the temple. Diasporic temples are thus much more than places of worship: they are loci for cultural activity, community support, and for the articulation of identity.

The BAPS Mandir includes an "Exhibition" that functions as a kind of cultural museum where, as the BAPS website describes, "the public can see the universality of Hinduism, discover the Origins of Hinduism, understand the Hindu people and the Beliefs, marvel at India's contributions...experience the continuity of Hinduism, and enjoy the Peace offered by a traditional Hindu Mandir" (Kim, 371). Nilesh Mehta, a volunteer at the temple, explained that the Exhibition is as much for Hindus inquiring about their faith as it for those who are unfamiliar with Hindu/Indian history and culture (Mehta, 2011). Diasporic temples enable and provide the framework for the political, cultural and social activities of the community. This secondary function is inscribed in the space – it is structured or renovated to accommodate the organization of individuals to participate in activities other than religious worship – and inflects traditional beliefs and devotional practices.

In her study of Hindu temples in northern California, Reena Mehta writes:

"the addition of a cultural centre has been a major transformation in the way in which contemporary immigrants experience their new environments, highlighting a new need. The establishment of such religious and cultural institutions is recognized by the Indian community as a means of retaining an Indian identity. One immigrant who had been raised in Kenya and moved to the United States in the early 1960s explained that her community would probably have lost its culture had it not been for the physical presence of the temple" (48).

I found these statements echoed in conversations I had with devotees of Toronto's BAPS Mandir. Aarti Patel, who immigrated with her parents from the

Gujarat region of India at the age of 16, expressed that the construction of the mandir has allowed her to transmit a Hindu identity and culture to her children in way similar to how she would have in India. At the same time, Aarti was aware of the new possibilities opened up by the temple. Her children would imbibe Hindu-Indian culture from a distinctly Canadian perspective, in a distinctly Hindu-Canadian way. Steven Vertovec has explored the ways in which participation in the diasporic temple is, on the one hand, “an expression of the performance of duty, and on the other... a portrayal of religious and cultural solidarity and retention of tradition” (124).

Thus, diasporic Hindu temples function, in a sense, as technologies for the navigation and construction of Hindu-Canadian identity for Hindu-Canadians. And they have also served to communicate a sense of presence in the social and geographic fabric of the nation. They enact a “spatialization of identity” that is both a site for identity formation and a spatialized signal for inclusion in the real and imagined geography of the nation. In their discussion of urban citizenship and the building of Muslim sacred space in “diasporic Toronto”, Isin and Siemiatycki argue that “a building can be a symbol of citizenship and identity for new immigrants” (206). Linking claims for and expressions of citizenship with claims for space and expressions of identity, they argue that, “citizenship is about making a place, about identifying with markers, boundaries, and identities of a place, but it is also about investing in the fate of that place, inscribed and materialized in space as memory” (208).

In this way Isin and Siemiatycki fall into a tradition of scholarship that distinguishes between a formal kind of citizenship and a substantive one. In its formal aspect, citizenship refers to a “nationally defined bundle of rights (voting) and obligations (paying taxes)”, in a substantive sense, citizenship involves feelings of belonging and inclusion in society, and the right to express ideas, identity and culture (Gilbert and Dikec, 261). Moreover, expressions of and claims to substantive citizenship take symbolic and spatial forms (Chapter 3). Throughout this thesis I treat both the BAPS Mandir and the Antyeshti site as expressions of identity and manifestations of citizenship and belonging in the

nation. I examine the complicated and contradictory ways in which these expressions are represented as announcing, questioning or testing the limits of Canada's "proudly multicultural profile" (Bannerji, 91).

The BAPS Sampradaya¹⁰ and the Hindu Federation's Campaign

The Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha belongs to a particular form of devotional Hinduism known as Swaminarayan Hinduism originating in the Gujarat province of India, in 1801. There are many different Swaminarayan sampradyas, all of whom recognize one founder, the historical person of Sahajanand Swami (1781-1830) (Kim, 2010, 362). The BAPS sampradaya distinguishes itself from the larger Swaminarayan tradition through their interpretation of this historical person, whom they consider "neither human nor an *avatara* of Krishna, but the all-knowing and all-pervading creator...Bhagwan Swaminarayan, or 'God'" (362). The BAPS sampradaya believes that Bhagwan Swaminarayan remains present in one living, human guru. This figure, always a celibate male and chosen by his predecessor, acts as both the spiritual and administrative head of the community (Kim, 2007, 362). The current guru, Pramukh Swami Maharaj (born in 1921), became the fifth in the lineage of gurus in 1971.

The BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha stands apart from the majority of Hindu communities in the diaspora: it has grown from an "indigenous, local Hindu tradition" into highly organized, codified and centralized organization, attracting support "almost exclusively" from those "hailing from the Gujarat region of India" and transnationalizing Hinduism in a way no other form of the Hindu religion ever has (Kim, 2010, 362)¹¹. That it is growing faster than any other Hindu sect owes significantly to its flourishing in diasporic contexts, and "to a carefully thought-out and evolving plan that is intended to insure its long-term survival," – a plan which involves extensive temple building and the

¹⁰ "Sampradaya" is a difficult word to translate. It is not quite the same as a school, a community or a sect, although many conceive of it in this kind of way. Raymond Brady Williams describes it as a "tradition handed down from a founder through successive religious teachers and which shapes the followers into a distinct fellowship with institutional forms" (Williams, 3).

¹¹ Save, perhaps for the Hare Krishna movement, see Nye, 2011.

meticulous systematization of Swaminarayan principles and beliefs (Kim, 2007, 60).

Like most diasporic Hindu communities, the temple life of the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha began in homes and converted buildings. Beginning in 1995, however, the community began building “several traditional carved stone and marble temples outside of India” (the first of which is located in London). In 2004 the sampradaya inaugurated two of these traditional mandirs in the United States, one in Houston and one in Chicago. And in 2007 two new temples of this kind opened their doors, in Toronto and Atlanta. These mandirs represent 5 of the 500 temples located in the Swaminarayan diaspora (Kim, 64). Of the 700 temples worldwide, 32 are traditional mandirs like the one found in Toronto. The BAPS community has gained significant prominence worldwide as a result of its temple building efforts.

Hanna Kim, one of the foremost scholars on BAPS Hinduism argues that the “Swaminarayan organization, preoccupied with the needs of its followers both ‘home and away,’ is, at this historical moment, actively engaged with the assumptions and expectations of what constitutes a ‘religion’ in the Western context” (60)¹². Some scholars of Hinduism have criticized the BAPS community as presenting itself as a “monolithic”, “essentialized” form of Hinduism, and as a “disturbing indication of the ‘rich Gujarati’ immigrant’s effort to camouflage an authoritarian and fundamentalist Hinduism in the guise of striking architecture, modern technology and spectacle”. From the perspective of their diasporic publics however, the BAPS community is received as “implicitly knowable and approachable” and is “seen to be a part of the universal family of world religions” (2010, 358). As Kim writes, Swaminarayan temples

¹² This is an intensely interesting development, as Hinduism has historically eluded most definitions of “religion”. It is largely non-institutionalized, has no central authority, does not “claim a founder or specific origin story” and contains “no common creed that must be believed” (Banerjee and Coward, 31). The BAPS community’s engagement with Judeo-Christian notions of “religion” can be seen in the Toronto temple’s cultural museum, in the language of temple volunteers and throughout the promotional literature disseminated to the global network and their diasporic publics. In this way it is a very unusual form of Hinduism.

“can be approached and understood not simply as responses to diasporic longings and immigrant needs or as concrete representations of an influential organization: they are also a means by which to be recognized as a ‘religion’ in the West” (2001, 61). The BAPS community’s carefully cultivated public presentation of itself has been crucial to way in which it has successfully mobilized support among its diasporic publics (Chapter 2).

The campaign to secure a site for the scattering of ashes in Hindu funeral ceremonies is an initiative led by the Hindu Federation, a GTA based but Canada wide amalgamation of Hindu temples and organizations. Established in 1999, it seeks to represent the Hindu community in Canada to federal, provincial and municipal levels of government “in all matters relating to Hindus” (The Hindu Federation, 2011). It produces guidelines for Hindu temples and priests on matters of faith and culture, organizes cultural and religious events aiming to unite the Hindu community and promote the Hindu faith in Canada, and distributes various informational material about the Hindu community and faith directed for the larger Canadian public. It seeks to establish itself as an authority on Hindu issues and as a liaison between the Hindu community and the wider Canadian community. The Federation’s president, Pandit Sharma of the Shri Ram Mandir in Mississauga, Ontario, has headed up the campaign to secure this site.

Ontario’s Hindu community identified a need for a space to conduct funeral ceremonies in the late 1990s –the Hindu population was growing rapidly, and the older practice of returning the ashes of loved ones to their place of origin (whether India, Guyana, Trinidad or East Africa – where these religious rites are common practice) was becoming increasingly unrealistic for long-term Canadian residents and citizens, as well as 2nd and 3rd generation Hindus who no longer had practical and emotional connections to such locales (Gosyne & Ramnauth, 2011). As Pandit Sharma explained to me, the issue came “to a crunch” when non-Hindu residents of Mississauga’s Credit River region and Brampton’s Fletcher’s Creek area began issuing complaints with the Credit Valley Conservation Authority (CVC) that “items such as flowers, coconuts, jewelry

and clothing were being deposited” into local waterways (TRCA, 29). The Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) determined that such objects were used in Hindu rituals and funeral ceremonies, and they approached the Hindu Federation in order to “establish a working relationship with the Hindu community... to learn more about the Hindu practices and in turn share [their] knowledge regarding watershed health” (ibid).

As a result of these complaints, the Hindu Federation decided it was time to seek firm clarity on the matter, and to see whether they could establish a specific site for the practice. It was unclear what the government’s position was regarding the scattering of ashes – or even if it had any¹³. Armed with numerous reports confirming the negligible environmental impact the disposition of ashes would have on waterways, Sharma, with the help of then Minister of Government Services, Gerry Phillips, began identifying appropriate spots for the practice and approaching the municipalities in which they were located. Knowledge of the campaign came to public attention in 2007 with an article published in the Toronto Star. The reporter, Phinjo Gombu, articulated the contradictory perspectives which have come to frame the trajectory of the campaign up until today: “the province’s environment ministry says that it has no problem with the practice so long as it is carried out with ‘dignity, decorum and consideration of other members of the community’” while “conservation authorities argue it is not allowed and is subject to local bylaws” (2007)¹⁴.

¹³ Indeed it was not until 2009 that the Minister of Government Services, Harinder Takhar, announced that the scattering of cremated remains may be conducted on “occupied or unoccupied Crown lands, and those Crown lands covered by water” including provincial parks and conservation reserves, and the Great Lakes (TRCA, 32)

¹⁴ As I will explain in greater detail below, the history of the campaign is full of inaccurate and misleading information regarding a seemingly endless number of things. Gombu’s remarks are an example of this. Conservation authorities never said the practice was “not allowed”, nor have they publicly confirmed that it is permissible or environmentally safe. A TRCA report from 2009, states that “it is the opinion of the TRCA staff at this time that there would be little impact from occasional scattering” on water quality (33). However, Joanne Jeffrey, a staff member of the TRCA, told me in a recent communication that the board “deferred the report...and [they] are now waiting to receive direction from the Province on this matter” (Jeffrey, 2011). I attempted to figure out what the TRCA was expecting from the province, but my numerous e-mails

Brampton, Mississauga and Niagara all turned down the request for space. In 2009, however, Mayor Ryan of Pickering announced that he would grant the Hindu community a site. Since the announcement, Pickering's Devi Mandir has largely taken over leadership of the campaign. The Devi, like the Shri Ram Mandir, is in many ways the quintessential diasporic Hindu temple. Aspiring to provide "more than just a place of worship" the temple seeks to fulfill both the "spiritual and cultural needs" of the Hindu community, "irrespective of their place of birth" (Devi Mandir, 2011). Sunday congregational worship draws between 500 and 700 people from the city of Pickering and the surrounding Durham region; services are conducted in English, Sanskrit and Hindi (Gosyne & Ramnauth, 2011).

Mayor Ryan's announcement precipitated the second major wave of media attention and criticism the campaign received – drawing significant opposition from Pickering residents. Criticism grew so large that the Hindu community and Pickering's politicians together decided to forgo the proposed site in Brockridge Park – a very centrally located and popular park in the city – and to seek out a site along the city's lakeshore. According to Pickering's bylaws, in order for such a site to be established, it must be proposed to council and pass unanimously. When I spoke to Pickering's CAO, Tony Prevedal, in May, he expressed some concerns that the proposal would pass, but hoped that, with a little extra effort on his part, he would have approval by July of this year. I have yet to receive word on the outcome of Prevedal's efforts.

The history of the campaign is a complex and at times frustratingly confusing story¹⁵. In the course of my research I uncovered an abundance of misinformation as well as inaccurate and contradictory details regarding the

and phone calls were never returned. Other interviewees speculated that the TRCA did not want to come out one way or another regarding the practice.

¹⁵ For example, when I spoke to Mark Guinto, the City of Pickering's Coordinator of Public Affairs, in March of this year, he was still unaware that the Hindu community had decided to choose another site. According to Guinto, Pickering was still awaiting approval from the TRCA that the practice posed no negative environmental impacts. Whether the city actually *needs* approval from the TRCA to institute a space for this practice anywhere other than Lake Ontario, has also been unclear. I discuss these issues in more detail and with more clarity in Chapter 3.

environmental impact, the history of the campaign, the practice itself, the position of the provincial and municipal governments, and the conservation authorities. These inaccuracies and confusions were often reproduced in the press, espoused by local governments, and further complicated by the views of the many different people I interviewed for this thesis. I have tried my best not to reproduce the confusion, but in some ways, it is part of the telling of this story. The chronology of events I have just provided here is brief, I have decided to let the trajectory of the campaign, in all its intricacies and complications, unfold throughout this thesis.

Multiculturalism: The “Incipient Stage”¹⁶

The liberalization of immigration and citizenship policies which began in 1962, and the introduction of the point system in 1967, which emphasized skills, training and education over racial distinctions marked a watershed moment in Canadian immigration policy, and ushered in new ways of thinking about and articulating national identity.¹⁷ While these changes can partly be attributed to the rise of a new global consciousness that could no longer rationalize politically sanctioned racism, domination, and discrimination in the wake of the devastation of WWII, and the end of European colonization, many have argued that the removal of racial distinctions in immigration policy and citizenship during this period was actually a “pragmatic response to changing global conditions”, that “had less to do with idealistic commitments to a cultural utopia and more with the country’s growing need for labour” (Thobani, 146). In point of fact, during the early part of his term as Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker (1957 – 1963)

¹⁶ In a document co-produced by the Canadian Library of Parliament and the Parliament and Information Research Service, the authors refer to an “incipient stage” of multiculturalism to describe the larger trend of liberalization occurring within Canada and other modern liberal-democratic countries during the 60s and into the 70s.

¹⁷ While overt racial discrimination was removed from Canada’s immigration policy in 1962 European immigrants were allowed to sponsor a much wider range of relatives than their non-European counterparts. Hawkins explains that this clause was inserted “at the last minute” because of a fear of “an influx of relatives from India” (39). The clause was eventually removed in the 1967 Immigration Regulations. However, the unequal allocation of resources for immigrant recruitment and processing, favoring developed, European countries over non-European and developing countries, remained in place (Thobani, 97).

proclaimed that Canada “must populate or perish” (Hawkins, 38), and by 1962 the White Canada policy “was virtually dead” (39).

As Freda Hawkins points out in her exhaustive account of the history of Canadian and Australian immigration from 1900 to the present, the policy changes occurring at this time were not a result of “parliamentary or popular demand, but because some senior officials...saw that Canada could not operate effectively within the United Nations, or in the multiracial Commonwealth, with the millstone of a racially discriminatory immigration policy round her neck” (39). And so spurred by the twin motivations of labour and a strong global image, Canada set out to re-imagine its national identity in a way that complimented its national objectives.

Trudeau’s Multiculturalism and the new Canadian Identity

A now significant body of scholarly work has addressed the ways in which Canada’s policy of multiculturalism – introduced by Pierre Trudeau in 1972 and subsequently enshrined in the Charter in 1982 – functioned as a tool for nation-building, emerging at a crucial time in the country’s social, political and imaginary history. In these accounts, multiculturalism was thought to address three inter-connected objectives: the development of a public policy consistent with Canada’s need for labour (labour which would increasingly come from previously “non-preferred”, i.e. non-white origin countries), the building of a strong national identity distinct from Britain and the United States, and a way of addressing – or as many have argued, muting – Quebec’s claims for separation, the mounting demands by Aboriginal communities for self determination, and the growing political organization of immigrant communities and their calls for greater social and economic inclusion (Thobani, 2007; Kymlicka 2001; Bannerji, 2000; Mackey, 1999).

As Hawkins astutely observes, multiculturalism was not “a movement which [was], to any substantial extent, self-generated and spontaneous, or which [had] strong roots in the community in a collective sense” (215). It was, in fact, “an artificial creation” (215), emerging out of the recommendations of Lester B. Pearson’s Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. The

Commission was designed to respond to the “assertion of a newly invigorated French-Canadian nationalism” (Abu-Laban, 366) and to recommend what steps “should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by other ethnic groups” (Hawkins, 218). Those, “other ethnic groups” protested the “hierarchy of differences implicit in the terms of reference”¹⁸ (Mackey, 64), and it was “largely as a result of pressure from these alternative discourses that the Canadian government adopted its policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework” (Karim, 442).

While it is widely accepted – though not uncontested – that multiculturalism appears to be a “permanent, dynamic feature of [Canada’s] national endeavor” (Bramadat, 10), that it grew organically out of a history of Canadian tolerance is a popular representation not without critique. Unsettling this representation is central in Eva Mackey’s study of Canadian cultural politics and national identity, *The House of Difference*. Mackey argues that the introduction of multiculturalism as official policy was represented as being on “a natural continuum with Canada’s history, even heritage, of tolerance” (24). This idea of a historical, national tolerance is a –if not the – “central foundational myth of Canadian nationhood and identity” (24). From “early versions of Canadian history through to the Quebec referendums of 1980 and 1995...official definitions of English-Canadian history and identity present the past as a ‘heritage’ of tolerance” (2). This is a myth that depends on obscuring the country’s brutal and protracted confrontation with and disenfranchisement of aboriginal communities, and on rendering opaque a long history of virulent racism towards non-white immigrants, most notably captured by Japanese internment, anti-“third world” immigration policies and the White Canada campaign. Multiculturalism did not grow out of a (largely false) history of tolerance, but rather, out of an attempt to “redefine the symbolic system of

¹⁸ The majority of the opposition came from second and third generation Canadians – in particular, the Ukrainian community – who, “pushed for an expanded conception of Canadian society” (Abu-Laban, 366). That these communities were sure to organize into a powerful voting block was not lost on the liberal government at the time.

Canada”, installing it in place of Britain as Canada’s central symbol, and as a way of managing “a potentially dangerous political situation through the recognition and management of culture” (64).

“Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework” became official policy on October 8th 1971. In his speech announcing the policy – the only major speech on the topic that the Prime Minister ever made during his term – Trudeau asserted that although Canada has two official languages, “there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group taken precedence over any other” (Canada, House of Commons, 1971:8545). The policy would pursue four major objectives: “preserving human rights, developing Canadian identity, strengthening citizen participation, reinforcing Canadian unity and encouraging cultural diversification within a bilingual framework”. And these four objectives were rooted in four main principles, described as follows:

1. The government of Canada will support all of Canada’s cultures and will seek to assist, resources permitting, the development of those cultural groups which have demonstrated a desire and effort to continue to develop, *a capacity to grow and contribute to Canada*, as well as a clear need for assistance.
2. The government will assist members of all cultural groups *to overcome cultural barriers* to full participation in Canadian society.
3. The government will promote creative encounters and interchange among all Canadian cultural groups *in the interest of national unity*.
4. The government will continue to assist immigrants to acquire at least one of Canada’s official languages *in order to become full participants in Canadian society*.

(Trudeau, 8545-6, my emphasis)

These rather vaguely articulated principles were to be set in motion through the implementation of six programs: 1) multicultural grants; 2) a cultural development program; 3) funds for the writing of ethnic histories if requested by ethnic groups; 4) funds to support Canadian ethnic studies; 5) additional funds for the teaching of Canada’s official languages; and 6) programs by the federal

cultural agencies (i.e. “to set the record straight, so to speak, by reflecting more effectively Canada’s many cultural traditions and the contributions of Canadians of non-British and non-French origin to Canadian development (Hawkins, 220)).

The proposed policy, and the rhetoric in which it was couched, represented a significant shift in how the country was imagined by politicians: “the old political speech about the rich and variegated fabric of Canadian society, used frequently by politicians of all parties before this time, became an idealistic statement about multicultural Canada, a society to which all had contributed and from which all would receive due recognition and reward” (Hawkins, 219). Trudeau stated that, “cultural pluralism is the very essence of Canadian identity”, and that “every ethnic group has the right to preserve and develop its own culture and values within the Canadian context” (Trudeau, 8545-6). Yet, very little was actually done to explain the policy to the public, to ensure its implementation, or to define the terms of its four main principles. How would the government evaluate a cultural group’s “desire and effort to continue to develop”? How was “contributing to Canada” to be defined? Whose “cultural barriers” would need to be overcome to allow participation in Canadian society? And what were those barriers? Finally, what kind of “national unity” were Canada’s cultural groups contributing to in their “creative encounters and interchange”? None of these questions or others like them were satisfactorily addressed. It quickly became obvious that Trudeau’s government “never intended multiculturalism to be a policy departure of great significance”. Rather, “it was seen simply as a public gesture of goodwill, as well as a proper recognition of the continuing contribution of many cultures to Canadian society” (Hawkins, 223).

It was however, much more than a public gesture of goodwill. And although it was clear that Trudeau’s office had no intention of making a substantive intervention into the social and political organization of Canadian society that would meaningfully consider and address prevailing dissatisfactions, inequalities and asymmetries within the populace, official multiculturalism still performed an immense amount of imaginary and political work for the nation. As discussed above, it was a crucial “symbolic intervention”, motivated not,

contrary to popular opinion, by a desire to install a historical national tolerance and acceptance of “diversity” as official policy, but rather, by a desire to replace Britain as Canada’s central symbol, allowing for the articulation of a new national imaginary differentiating Canada from Britain and its cultural and economic rival to the south (Mackey, 64).¹⁹ At the same time, many have argued that the introduction of multiculturalism policy and the shift in discourse that emerged because of, and through it, was an intervention that sought to manage a series of claims that troubled the dominance of a white, Anglo-European “core-culture”.

Thobani, like many scholars critical of the lofty ideological rhetoric espoused by multiculturalism, describes the social, cultural and political milieu that precipitated the introduction of multiculturalism in 1971 as a “crisis of legitimacy”. A crisis

“sparked by the increasing demands of francophones in Quebec; the continuing struggles of Aboriginal peoples for self-determination; the class and gender based political movements of the period; and the increasing demands of people of colour for full citizenship. Seeking to transform itself from a settler colonial state into a liberal-democratic one, and hence claim legitimacy as guarantor of the interests of all these various sectors, official multiculturalism became a ‘diffusing or a muting device’” (150).

Erasing the difference and diversity of the populace and constructing an “imagined community based on assimilation to a singular notion of culture” was not, and is not, a viable option in Canada, given the unique situation of Quebec, a large and politically active Aboriginal community, and the continued need for immigration (Mackey, 50). Knowing that racially, culturally and ethnically diverse groups of individuals would continue to diversify the country, multiculturalism became a timely strategy for managing and institutionalizing

¹⁹ As the first country to adopt an official policy of multiculturalism, many Canadians express a deep pride in the nation’s multicultural identity and often “claim to have coined the word” itself. To the question posed by a 2005 poll “what makes Canada unique?” Canadians overwhelmingly chose “our diverse, multicultural nature” over “freedom” or “geography” (Graham and Phillips, 155).

various forms of difference. As Mackey writes: “since Canada, because of its particular history, could not and cannot fit the identity model of European nationhood, it...has had to look for alternative models of nationhood and national identity...the development of a pluralist national identity was a flexible strategy developed to manage diverse populations” (13).

Many scholars have critiqued the way in which multicultural policy and discourse, in their celebration of “culture”, have reified non-White, non-European immigrants as cultural outsiders, exacerbating their difference and separation from a core-Canadian, or “Canadian-Canadian” culture (Mackey, 2002). Himani Bannerji, for example, has called attention to the ways in which non-“Canadian-Canadians” have been enrolled in narratives of national identity, accepted into the imaginary space of the nation as “picturesque and colourful helpmates...in the nation-building project” (Mackey, 66), but denied the possibility of partaking in the imaginary projection of “Canada” (Bannerji, 66). Mackey explores the way in which this relationship has been constructed through various government discourses and programs, in official depictions of national identity in national art museums and tourism initiatives, as well as in local and national Canada day celebrations and multiculturalism festivals, questioning “*who* decides *when* and *how*” racialized minorities and immigrants “are or aren’t represented, or are or aren’t managed, in the interests of the nation-building project” (7).

This thesis follows in that trajectory. While an examination of these two spaces offers insight into the way in which Canadian multiculturalism as a “heritage of tolerance” is actually a heritage of contradictions, ambiguity, and flexibility” (Mackey, 25), I am mindful of the immense changes that have occurred in multiculturalism, as a fact, policy, and ethos, since its inception 40 years ago. Determining how it is that two opposing representations of Canada’s Hindu community have emerged in the public responses to these spaces – one articulating the danger of multiculturalism, and the other its success – involves a mapping of these transformations. As such, a significant part of this thesis is

devoted to analyzing the articulations between official and unofficial forms of multiculturalism, and broader cultural, political and global dynamics.

In Chapter 2 I explore the way in which feelings and emotions have come to play a significant role in the public debates regarding multiculturalism, in the way in which it is defined, and in processes of inclusion and exclusion.

Analyzing these debates alongside the reformulation of the multiculturalism program in 1997, I argue that a new understanding of the relationship between ethno-cultural minorities, the nation, and national citizenship has emerged. In this conception, multiculturalism seeks to produce among its multicultural citizens a sense of inclusion and belonging in the nation, as well as a loyalty and attachment to its ideals. I explore how these feelings, which are the promise of multicultural citizenship, actually become the *conditions* of citizenship.

Moreover, I suggest that this privileging of feeling is an articulation of a broader trend that we are witnessing throughout Canada and Europe, where multiculturalism is increasingly becoming a highly “emotional issue”. I suggest that we must take these emotions and feelings seriously, exploring their political effects, and determining how certain manifestations of diversity become “saturated” by emotions (Ahmed, 2004, 11) as they are being defined as permissible or impermissible forms of multiculturalism.

Chapter 3 contends with another significant transformation that has implications for the way in which multiculturalism is lived, and how it is constructed in public discourse and official policy: the growth of Canada’s demographic diversity beyond the traditional inner-city reception zones into suburban sites. I complicate the idea that multiculturalism is an “overwhelming urban phenomenon” (Graham and Philips, 1) as so many scholars have suggested, by exploring the way in which it is also, increasingly, a suburban one (Good, 93). I suggest that multiculturalism is qualitatively different in suburban sites, a difference that derives in part from the spatial form of the suburbs and the social, political, and cultural commitments that are constituted by it. I develop the concept of suburban multiculturalism to address and account for this difference, illuminating the expressions of citizenship it enables and permits by

exploring the complex ways in which the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation's campaign have been represented in the media, encountered by residents of the GTA, and discussed by public officials.

Chapter Two: Pride, Pollution and the Feeling Condition of Citizenship

“The encounter with multiculturalism is always conceived as a felt experience and some of those experiences are marked as ‘problems’ of governance or as issues of public concern, while others are not. What kinds of encounters escape the government or public radar of concern, and which ones don’t? Which kinds of intimacies are allowed to endure and in the name of what?” – Anne-Marie Fortier

Part of what makes an analysis of the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation’s campaign so interesting, and telling of the way in which multiculturalism involves “a double and contradictory process of incorporation and exclusion” (Ahmed, 2000, 97), is that they became sites of public attention and concern simultaneously; as the former was celebrated as a tangible and visual testament to the success of multiculturalism and religious pluralism, the latter was rendered evidence of the potential dangers that diasporic communities pose to the body of the nation, and of the limits of multiculturalism in Canada. In the speech he delivered during the temple’s inauguration ceremony, Canada’s Prime Minister Stephen Harper declared this sacred space a “monument to faith and multiculturalism in Toronto”, a testament to Canada’s and India’s proud traditions of pluralism” (Petricevic, 2007 and Coutts, 2007). More than just an example of the “fact” of ethno-cultural and religious diversity in Canada, the temple has been held up as an achievement of the national project of multiculturalism. Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty expressed that he and his colleagues “are proud of the Hindu community, whose vital contributions have enhanced Ontario’s social, cultural and economic life in many ways” (BAPS Aksharpith Swaminarayan, 2008).

Just months following these remarks made by important representatives of Canadian government, a letter to the editor was published in the *Toronto Star* in response to an article it ran about the Hindu Federation’s campaign to secure a space for funeral rights in Ontario wherein the author advised the Hindu community to “respect the environment you live in... respect the fact that legal and environmental issues take precedence over [your] religious traditions in a

foreign country” (Perlman, 2007). One year later, as two non-Hindu visitors to the Toronto BAPS Mandir expressed that “this new temple really brings pride to all of us in Toronto”, and that “we Torontonians, we are truly multicultural” (Kim 357-358), journalist Robert Sibley argued that the issue of Hindus seeking to “dump[] their dead in Canadian Rivers” and challenge traditional “Judeo-Christian burial practices” was an example of “enclave thinking” and a result of our contemporary “postmodern multiculturalism” that fosters “tribalism” and “threatens the West’s liberal heritage” (Sibley, 2008).

In both cases, a homogenized image of the Hindu community in the GTA was mobilized to represent one side of the ongoing debate about the value and place of multiculturalism in Canada. In their association with the BAPS Mandir, the Hindu community was a proud example of our multicultural citizenry; and as part of the Hindu Federation’s campaign they became a “foreign” cultural and religious group – another instance of a community “pressing their cultural demands on the rest of Ontario” (Kotter51, 2009). One might be moved to critique a comparison between these two spaces, as they are, admittedly, two very different things; a grand place of worship built according to ancient religious architectural principles is quite unlike an immaterial sacralization of supposedly public space, especially considering the latter’s implication in a highly politicized lobbying effort. It could even be argued that the BAPS Mandir is cause for celebration, not because it is evidence of the success of Canadian multiculturalism but because it is so obviously an aesthetic, architectural and organizational achievement. I think, however, that there are some very important conclusions to be drawn from their comparison, no matter how empirically different they may appear to be. An analysis of these two sites shows us how “multiculturalism takes on various forms, not simply in succession, but also *simultaneously*, and [it] allows us to understand ‘multiculture’ as a key site where the politics and culture of the nation and its limits are embattled” (Fortier, 17).

In Chapter 1 I discussed how at the time of its emergence in the early 1970s, multiculturalism was represented and, by many received, as a “forward-

thinking liberal diversity management project” (Burman, 2006, 101), that was a somewhat natural outcome of a historical tradition of “tolerance”. I explored some of the academic critiques that challenged this version of multiculturalism’s origin story, and which suggested instead that it was a strategy for diffusing a whole host of political problems the nation was confronted with, including but not limited to: tensions with Quebec, Aboriginal claims for self-determination, the demands of racialized minorities for full citizenship rights, and the need to install a new national imaginary that would distinguish Canada from Britain and the United States. With these critiques in mind, I’d like to discuss some of the popular oppositions to multiculturalism that have arisen in the public debates. The concerns that were raised, especially those articulated in the 1980s and early 1990s, formed part of the impetus for the re-formulation of the multiculturalism program, undertaken by the Chretien Liberals in 1995 and put in place in 1997. I argue that the program marked a key shift in the conception of multicultural citizenship, and of the relationship between cultural, ethnic and religious minorities and the nation. Analyzing the language and direction of the new program alongside some of the major critiques and concerns regarding multiculturalism that emerged in the period proceeding its introduction, I suggest that the terms of belonging and inclusion in the nation have been redrawn according to how citizens or potential citizens are considered *to feel*.

In making this argument, I appeal to Lily Cho’s contention that there is a relationship between feeling and citizenship (2), and to the insights of Anne-Marie Fortier and Sara Ahmed, who have explored the role of feelings and emotions in the politics of multiculturalism. This history is worth exploring because it is the backdrop against which the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation’s campaign have been understood in the public realm, and it illuminates the climate in which they have been received. The shift in the rhetoric and stated intentions of the multiculturalism program has significantly impacted the way in which these two spaces have been discursively constructed, and has created new and at times impossible expectations for marginalized

communities and immigrants in their claims for full citizenship rights and inclusion.

Introducing the New Multiculturalism Program

Quebec has long challenged multiculturalism for “undermining, or at least complicating” their claims to nationhood, and reducing their status “from that of the founding people to the same rank as ‘other ethnic groups’” (Abu-Laban and Stasiulis, 367). Outside of Quebec, critics have argued that a national policy of multiculturalism destabilizes a unified sense of national identity, emphasizing differences between groups, rather than “their shared rights or identities as Canadian citizens”. Another common critique is that it promotes “ghettoization and balkanization” encouraging ethnic groups to “look inward” and avoid assimilation into the mainstream (Kymlicka, 2010, 1). These debates took a broader and more institutionalized form with the rise of the Reform Party in 1987, which called for “an end to the funding of multiculturalism support, for the preservation of cultural background only as a matter of personal choice, and for the state to promote and encourage minorities to integrate into the national culture” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel, 111).

That numerous public figures from ethnic minority backgrounds were beginning to speak out against multiculturalism further strengthened the growing conviction among many members of the public that “citizens must learn to be Canadians first” (Dewing, 2009). In 1989 for example, several Liberal MPs from minority backgrounds opposed the proposition to institute a distinct Department of Multiculturalism on the grounds that it would be a “recipe for ghettoization” (Abu-Laban and Gabriel, 112). The Citizens’ Forum on Canada’s Future established in 1991 found that

“while Canadians accept and value Canada’s cultural diversity, they do not value many of the activities of the multicultural program and the federal government. These are seen as expensive and divisive in that they remind Canadians of their different origins rather than their shared symbols, society and future” (Dewing, 2009).

Some years later, Neil Bissoondath, a Canadian author of Trinidadian descent published a widely read account of multiculturalism entitled *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*, where he argued, among other things, that the policy prohibits immigrants from cultivating a sense of loyalty to Canada (2004). Bissoondath's account was held up as evidence that multiculturalism was indeed a detrimental force in Canadian life.

By the time Jean Chretien's liberal government came into power in 1993, the critiques had gained enough ground that multiculturalism was no longer considered a "safe motherhood issue" for federal parties to endorse (Abu-Laban and Gabriel, 366). In 1995, the Liberals decided to "evaluate the effectiveness of multiculturalism programs and to plan the direction for future programming" (113). A private research company, Brighton Research, was hired to conduct the review, and the "Brighton Report" argued that while many of the popular critiques of multiculturalism "misunderstand and misrepresent Canada's multicultural policy", it was still in need of a serious overhaul. Taking into consideration the report's recommendations to focus on "identity, participation, and justice", the Liberals announced the new program in 1997. It was founded on three main goals:

"IDENTITY: fostering a society that recognizes, respects, and reflects a diversity of cultures such that people of all backgrounds feel a sense of belonging and attachment to Canada.

CIVIC PARTICIPATION: developing, among Canada's diverse people, active citizens with both the opportunity and capacity to participate in shaping the future of their communities and their country.

SOCIAL JUSTICE: building a society that ensures fair and equitable treatment and that respects the dignity of and accommodates people of all origins" (114).

This shift towards "inculcat[ing] an attachment to Canada (as opposed to cultural maintenance) and to creat[ing] what is referred to as active citizens" was coupled with a move to stress multiculturalism's benefit to "all Canadians" as opposed to ethnic groups exclusively, or to, what the report described as, "sub-groupings of

Canadians” (114). The ideas enclosed within the first two goals – “identity” and “civic participation” – marked a significant shift in the language and direction of the multiculturalism program. That multiculturalism was now to be focused on encouraging and enabling cultural communities to “give back” and contribute to Canadian society and culture, and to feel an active sense of belonging and attachment to Canada, was a new development. I argue that the shift in language that occurred as a result of the rising criticisms and concerns I detailed above has influenced the terms of belonging for those whose full inclusion in the nation may, for one reason or another, be insecure (2nd generation immigrants, aboriginals, visible minority groups), under threat (Muslims, and other religious groups), or yet-to-come (newcomers).

The Global Backlash Against Multiculturalism

Perhaps the most significant development that emerged in the public debates around the time the new program was introduced, and which gained renewed ground in the period following the attacks of September 11th has been the “specter of backlash and retreat from multiculturalism” (Kymlicka, 2010, 5). Anne Philips describes how in the late 1990s – against the backdrop of “increasing domestic worries about the economic and social integration of ethnocultural minorities, and rising world tensions over terrorism, the failure of the peace process in the Middle East, and the invasion of Iraq”— a once “uncritical consensus” in favour of multiculturalism, “at least among those regarding themselves as progressives”, swiftly “metamorphosed into a retreat” (3). Multiculturalism, she writes, “became the scapegoat for an extraordinary array of political and social evils, a supposedly misguided approach to cultural diversity” that encouraged spousal and child abuse in the name of religion, segregation in the form of ethnic enclaves, ethnic and racial stereotyping, and religious extremism (3). These initial claims that multiculturalism has amounted to societies “sleepwalking towards segregation”, while citizens “applaud themselves for their tolerance” and their “live-and-let-live attitude towards immigrants” were bolstered in the post 9/11 political climate, especially following various instances of supposedly “home grown terrorism”, in Britain,

the Netherlands, and Canada, as well as sensationalized media accounts of arranged marriages, supposed “honor killings” and acts of female genital cutting (Kymlicka, 6)²⁰.

As Kymlicka describes in a report commissioned by Citizenship and Immigration Canada on the current state of multiculturalism in Canada, this retreat from multiculturalism has for the most part been more rhetorical than real, and it has largely been confined to Europe. The most notable example has been the Netherlands, which in the early 2000s replaced its multiculturalism policy with one of aggressive civic integration. Canada, however, has not experienced the same level of racial, ethnic and religious tensions as have been witnessed in Europe, and according to a number of public opinion polls as well as official government policy, the country remains committed to multiculturalism as a national policy and ethos.²¹ However, prophecies that Europe is “the harbinger of Canada’s future” (Kymlicka, 7) have had an impact on the ways in which multiculturalism and immigration are conceived of and debated in the public sphere, and they have spurred new articulations and visions of relationship between minority groups and the nation.

The “reasonable accommodation” debates that dominated the media landscape in 2007 were interpreted by many as “the first crack in the wall – the first real sign of a European-style retreat from multiculturalism, and a harbinger of what was likely to happen in the rest of Canada” (9). The Bouchard-Taylor Commission was established by the Québec government in February of 2007 in order to respond to an intensification in conflicts regarding accommodation practices for cultural and religious minorities in Québec that were reported in the

²⁰ There have been many thoughtful and persuasive critiques of these claims. Unfortunately it is not within the scope of this chapter to discuss them here. See for example Siddiqui 2007, Razack 2008 and Kymlicka 2010.

²¹ Michael Adams, for example, President of the Environics Research Group, a Canadian public affairs and polling firm, has repeatedly argued that “multiculturalism ain’t broke” (Adams, 2007).

media, sometimes rather sensationally, from March 2006 to June 2007²². The commission was mandated to:

“take stock of accommodation practices in Québec...analyze the attendant issues bearing in mind the experience of other societies...conduct an extensive consultation on this topic and...formulate recommendations to the government to ensure that accommodation practices conform to the values of Québec society as a pluralistic, democratic, egalitarian society” (Bouchard-Taylor, abridged, 7).

The commission involved a public consultation and hearings were held throughout Québec from September to December of 2007. Québécois were invited to express themselves on matters of accommodation, and encouraged to participate in “frank, open discussions...tempered by reason and civility” (Bouchard-Taylor Commission, unabridged, 67). In the unabridged version of their report, Bouchard and Taylor reproduce the most frequently voiced oppositions that emerged in the public hearings. Four of the ten are particularly worth reiterating here:

4. They refuse to integrate, reject our society’s rules and thus break the implicit pact with the host society (mutual trust, interculturalism, reciprocity, and so on).
6. By rejecting Québec culture, those who request accommodation show that they do not feel concerned by the situation or the fate of French-speaking Québec and by the constant battles that it must wage for its survival. In other words, they are not interested in the French-Canadian collective memory and seem indifferent to the national struggle. “They are denying the French-Canadian We.”

²² The most infamous of which was the Herouxville controversy, making international news when the town (population 1338) published an “immigrant code of conduct” directed at potential immigrants interested in moving there. The code included prohibitions against stoning women, and the “masking” of one’s face in public except during Halloween, among other directives steeped in cultural stereotypes (as cited in Beaman and Beyer, 1).

8. Through seemingly trivial incidents...our society's core values are being undermined.

10. The result of all these infringements of Québec's values and traditions is a feeling of humiliation. The increase in the number of accommodation requests basically reflects a lack of respect and is a sign of contempt for the host society (67-68).

There is an argument to be made that the "threat" of immigrants and the potential "infringements" they might make has been more deeply felt in Québec, where the province's language, culture and "collective memory" have always been understood as under the threat of loss. However the concerns articulated in these four excerpts have not been unique to Quebec and have cropped up persistently in many of the other debates over immigration and multiculturalism, as I will discuss below. The demands for accommodation made by cultural and religious groups – demands which threaten Québécois values and traditions – are seen to be the result of a lack of respect and consideration for the host society, a refusal to return the nation's/society's generosity and accept the terms belonging, and an indifference to the values of mutual trust and reciprocity. "Those who request accommodation" fail to demonstrate the right kind of orientation to the nation, and are thus out of step with the vision of citizenship that the Canadian multiculturalism program imagines. Take for example the following remarks made by Jason Kenney, Canada's minister for Citizenship, Immigration, and Multiculturalism: Canadian citizenship, argues Kenney, "is more than legal status, more than a passport... We expect citizens to have an ongoing commitment, connection and loyalty to Canada" (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007). The salience of Kenney's statement will become more acute as my discussion continues. Presently, it is important to point out that the arguments from the Bouchard-Taylor commission reiterated above suggest that there are appropriate feelings and orientations towards the nation that immigrant communities are expected to embody. Such feelings – identified also by Kenney – are respect, loyalty, acceptance of the rules and, trust. It is assumed that, if these orientations are cultivated and (importantly), demonstrated, then cultural

and religious minorities would not be moved to “press their demands” on the host society.

A similar set of debates, although perhaps less explosive, emerged in Ontario in 2003 when the newly founded Islamic Institute of Civil Justice announced that they intended to apply Islamic principles of family and inheritance law to resolve these disputes within the Muslim community in Canada – in other words, they sought to apply Sharia law for such arbitrations (Razack, 150).²³ The proposition was met with a fury of criticism. As Sherene Razack explains, news headlines warned of “‘legal apartheid,’ and suggested ominously that ‘religious law undermines loyalty to Canada.’ Sharia Law was declared, above all, ‘un-Canadian’”, and multiculturalism was deemed the culprit (151). Only a country with specific policies and procedures in place to encourage communities to retain their religious and cultural traditions could find itself in such a grave predicament. One of the leaders of the opposition movement argued that the proposal exposes one of multiculturalism’s major flaws: “ghettoism”. Allowing Muslim communities the opportunity to apply Sharia law would enable them to remain isolated from the rest of society (Guelph Mercury, 2005).

The public criticism, fuelled significantly by feminist organizations, grew so large that the Ontario government decided to appoint Marion Boyd, a Minister of Parliament well respected by feminists in the mainstream anti-violence movement, to inquire into the matter and to discern “the impact that using arbitration may have on vulnerable people”. Boyd recommended that the *Arbitration Act*, which allows the resolution of private disputes according to religious law, “remain unchanged”, and concluded that the “safeguards recommended by feminists worried about vulnerable Muslim women were not necessary” (Razack, 151)²⁴. Despite Boyd’s findings, and the fact that the province had supported religious based tribunals (at the behest of Jewish and

²³ Razack usefully points out that Sharia Law is not “a codified set of laws but rather a framework for interpreting laws based on the Qu’ran and the Hadith” (150). It is thus not an alternative legal system that would be operating alongside Canada’s system – but a framework for judges to consult in making determinations about these disputes.

²⁴ Razack explains that the report suggested feminists and others were “misinformed as to the extent to which such arbitrations could contravene Canadian law” (156).

Catholic communities) since 1991, the McGuinty government suddenly reversed its position, declaring there would no longer be allowed any kind of faith-based arbitration. McGuinty proclaimed that “religious courts threaten our common ground” (CTVNews, 2005). The reversal was, for the most part, met with enthusiastic support²⁵. One *Toronto Star* journalist remarked that “the time has come for Canadians to be weaned off the teat of multiculturalism as a primary source of sustenance and self-identity”, and celebrated the government’s “daring” in “champion[ing] the secular over the infantilizing religious” (as cited in Razack, 156).

There have been many excellent critiques of the feminism vs. multiculturalism and culture clash-paradigms (where the cultures and value systems of immigrant communities are considered to be fundamentally at odds with the liberal-democratic tradition of the west). I refer specifically to the work of Sherene Razack (cited above), Anne Phillips (2007), Sara Ahmed (2004 & 2010), and Fortier (2008), among others. My imperative is not to reiterate these critiques here, however much I value them and hope that they become heard in these debates. Instead, I am trying to illuminate the backdrop against which the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation’s campaign have been received, and to point out how the many conflicts and concerns that were publicly debated in this period focused on the *feelings* of immigrants and minority groups. More than that, when a particular group was charged with challenging or threatening the cherished commitments of the host society, they were understood as being disloyal to, alienated from, disrespectful towards, and/or unattached to the nation. As I will argue in the second part of this chapter, through an analysis of the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation’s campaign, demonstrating your

²⁵ There was some criticism by those who suggested the furor over the request was a result of Islamophobia and who argued that the discourse of the debates disempowered Muslim women. There was also criticism on the behalf of Christian and Jewish groups who would no longer have access to faith-based arbitration. As well, the McGuinty government was criticized for involving the public in a lengthy and volatile debate only to hastily and without warning “draw the line” on the matter. For the most part however the media was focused on the support the decision drew from the public.

attachment and sense of belonging to the nation actually becomes a *condition* of your belonging in the nation. I call this the “feeling condition of citizenship.”

In 2006, *The Walrus*, Canada’s leading and predominantly left leaning literary and culture magazine published an article by Allan Gregg entitled “Identity Crisis: Multiculturalism: a Twentieth-Century Dream Becomes a Twenty-first Century Conundrum”. Gregg argues that the recent violence witnessed across Europe was “rooted in visible minority second generation groups who feel little fealty to their adopted state” and suggests that there is “growing concern that a similar sense of alienation is developing among the same class of people in Canada” (3). By “recent violence” Gregg is referring not just to acts of terrorism like the London bombings of 2005 but also to the so-called “race riots” that occurred in Britain and France. And he attributes the violence to feelings of disloyalty and alienation, despite the fact that the confrontations were “prompted by racists groups...attacking Asian individuals and communities, and by the failure of the police to provide protection from this threat” (Fortier, 71).

A scholarly article written by University of Toronto Professors Jeffrey Reitz and Rupa Banerjee that received an immense amount of national press confirms Gregg’s identification of a “growing concern” among Canadians that a potentially dangerous “sense of alienation” is developing among cultural, racial and religious minority groups. Reitz and Banerjee found that second generation immigrants feel lower levels of belonging than do their first generation parents, and that their feelings of “discrimination and vulnerability” have inhibited their “integration”. Covering the study in her front page *Globe and Mail* article entitled “How Canadian are you?” Marina Jimenez wrote that,

“the sense of exclusion among visible-minority newcomers is not based on the fact that they earn less than their white counterparts. Instead, the researchers found integration is impeded by the perception of discrimination, and vulnerability – defined as feeling uncomfortable in social situations due to racial background and a fear of suffering a racial attack” (Jimenez, 2007).

The title of the article, “How Canadian are you?”, in conjunction with Jimenez’s interpretation of Reitz and Banerjee’s findings, is telling. The implication is that experiences of vulnerability, alienation and discrimination not only lead to feelings of un-belonging and to a sense that one is not entirely Canadian, but that such feelings simply *are* un-Canadian. Instead of understanding them as the result of prejudice and racism (that might be rooted in the notion that immigrants are not Canadian or do not belong) these feelings mark the failure to integrate and *become* Canadian. Moreover, Jimenez constructs such emotions as dangerous, as a “warning that Canada, long considered a model of integration, won’t be forever immune from the kind of social disruption that has plagued Europe” (2007).

From the late 1990s onwards, the criticisms of multiculturalism articulated in the public sphere, and the various debates over its value as a national policy and ethos took many forms. As I have detailed, there was a new emphasis – both in public discourse and within official policy – on the feelings of those individuals whose Canadian citizenship and “fealty” to the nation was, for some reason or another, not guaranteed. In addition to the increased attention paid to the feelings of these individuals and their emotional orientations towards the nation, multiculturalism, it seemed, was beginning to ignite a particular “intensit[y] of feeling” within the public, previously unseen before (Fortier, 1). As Bouchard and Taylor wrote in their report, “emotion has entered the picture, creating tensions that we must now resolve” (5). The demands made for accommodation were generating feelings of “humiliation” among Quebecers (Bouchard-Taylor, 68b). Canadians were “disturbed” by the growth of so-called “ethnic enclaves” (Gregg, 2006). Journalist Robert Sibley warned of the “dark side of multiculturalism”, symbolized in the image of a veiled Muslim woman arousing “curiosity, hostility, and maybe even a tincture of fear” among her passers by (Sibley, 2006).

I argue that it is not merely that “emotion has entered the picture” and that multiculturalism has become an “emotional issue” for the Canadian public, as if emotions played no substantive role in the realm of politics. Instead,

following recent scholarship by Sarah Ahmed, Anne-Marie Fortier, and Lily Cho, I argue that we need to take emotions and feelings seriously, that we understand them as having political effects, and that we attend to the specific associations that are wrought between emotions and objects/subjects. In the following section, I explore how the politics of multiculturalism in Canada has become “intimately implicated with the management and circulation of feelings for, and within, the nation” (Fortier, 87) by focusing specifically on the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation’s campaign to secure a space for funeral rights. I look at how particular kinds of emotions “get stuck” (Ahmed, 2004) to forms of multiculturalism as they are being defined as permissible (and celebrated) or impermissible (and denigrated) manifestations of difference, attending to the ways in which, events, objects and people become, as Sara Ahmed has argued, “saturated with affect, as sites of personal and social tension” (2004, 11). I explore how the BAPS Mandir and the community it represents are seen to materialize the right kind of feelings for and orientation towards the nation; as such it is cast as an object of good feeling – a happy form multiculturalism (Ahmed, 2007, 123). By contrast, the Hindu Federation’s campaign is seen to be the result of a dangerous set of orientations towards and feelings for the nation; framed as a source of pollution, it arouses suspicion, fear and anxiety. This discussion reveals how emotions play a key role in the symbolic inclusion and exclusion of subjects in the nation.

Pride, Pollution and the Feeling Condition of Citizenship

The language with which the BAPS Mandir has been discussed, in news articles, blogs, and press releases, in declarations and announcements made by public figures and politicians, and in the community’s literature and promotional material, emplaces it firmly within the appropriate model of citizenship I discussed in the first part of this chapter. The community’s very carefully constructed public presentation of itself certainly played a significant role in this. A PDF linked to the BAPS Toronto’s website that explains the history and role of the temple and its cultural museum repeatedly references the positive contribution the temple will make to Canadian society. It further describes how

the temple complex represents and aims to cultivate cherished Canadian ideals, using language familiar to official representations of multiculturalism and diversity. According to the BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha's spiritual leader and inspirer Pramukh Swami, "this unique spiritually and architecturally beautiful project will represent a celebration of the Canadian values and spirit. It will contribute to this beautiful country's mosaic and commitment to multiculturalism, pluralism, diversity, and the respect for all" (Canadian Museum of Cultural Heritage, 1). One of the temple's stated goals and activities is to "inspire all Canadians in the uniquely Canadian values of cross-cultural understanding, inter-cultural tolerance and inter-faith harmony and respect for values, beliefs and faiths of all communities" (3). Further to this, the BAPS community states that the temple, and its Museum of Indo-Canadian Heritage, will "create pride for first generation Indo-Canadians through a greater understanding and awareness of their roots. It will communicate how a distinct ethnic community made its way to Canada and established itself as a vibrant part of Canada's large multi-cultural mosaic" (3). Here the temple is seen as absorbing, promoting and celebrating central tenets of the Canadian spirit and culture, positively contributing to Canadian society and serving as a space for all Canadians.

The media and the larger public readily took up the community's presentation of the temple as a space that will benefit "all Canadians". The temple was repeatedly invoked as a gift, a positive addition to, and a "contribution back" to Canada and Canadian society that would enhance the country's cultural and aesthetic landscape (Dobrota, 2007). The CEO and Director of the Royal Ontario Museum – an important cultural and agenda setting institution in the city of Toronto – described the temple as a "marvelous and stunning addition to Ontario's architectural and cultural landscape" a "truly magnificent gift to Canada" (Canadian Museum of Cultural Heritage, 1). Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty expressed that Canadians "are proud of the Hindu community, whose vital contributions have enhanced Ontario's social, cultural and economic life in many ways" (BAPS Swaminarayan News, 2008). Aarti

Patel, a volunteer and devotee at the Mandir declared at the opening: “the temple is our contribution back to the country of Canada... I’m extremely proud to be an Indian, to be a Canadian and to be an Indo-Canadian” (Dobrota, 2007). If the fact that it has been built to last for 1,000 years is alone not testament enough to the community’s commitment to Canada, that it was regarded as a gift to the country, an inspiration for all Canadians, and a fusion and celebration of “Canadian values” most certainly does. I think we can understand “the gift” as the ultimate act determining a community’s worthiness of citizenship and inclusion in the nation. Sarah Ahmed’s following remarks on love and multicultural Britain are germane here:

“a crucial risk posed by migrant cultures is defined as their failure to become British, narrated as their failure to love the culture of the host nation. The failure here is the failure of migrants to ‘return’ the love of the nation through gratitude. One tabloid headline after the burning down of a detention centre for asylum seekers read: ‘This is how they thank us.’” (Ahmed, 2004, 137).

It is not so much the nation’s *love* that is being returned in the gift of the BAPS temple but its generosity towards, welcoming of, and respect for its diverse peoples. I would suggest that in the contemporary Canadian context, the failure to become Canadian is narrated as a failure to become attached to the culture of the nation and demonstrate a sense of belonging within it (recall the public upset over Reitz and Banerjee’s findings that second generation immigrants admit dangerously low levels of belonging, discussed above). The failure is the failure to return the generosity of a nation that – to echo the language of the multiculturalism program – “recognizes, respects, and reflects a diversity of cultures”.

That the BAPS community is seen to return the nation’s generosity and respect is, I think, nicely reiterated in a press release prepared by the Department of Canadian Heritage wherein it declares its support for the temple complex and its Museum of Cultural Heritage of Indo-Canadians. Minister Jason Kenney states that “the Government of Canada considers Canada’s diversity to be one of

our greatest strengths, and we are committed to strengthening pluralism and national cohesion”. The “diversity” to which Kenney refers is the Hindu community, as it is the subject of the press release. He states further that the “people of Indo-Canadian heritage have brought their skills, knowledge, and talents to Canada for decades, and Canadian society continues to benefit greatly from their contribution” (Canadian Heritage, 2008). Celebrated (and acceptable) forms of diversity are those which contribute and give back to the nation, and thus return its generosity and commitment to pluralism and national cohesion. It is through the nation’s generosity that immigrants may feel a sense of belonging, attachment and loyalty to the nation. Demonstrating those feelings are *conditions* of one’s belonging.

The temple was generally cast as an object of good feeling. Stephen Harper described it as “awe-inspiring” (Guelph Mercury, 2007), a *Toronto Star* headline referenced the temple as “serenity that’s set in stone”; it was invoked as a “calming” space (Coutts, 2007), and a “monument to faith and multiculturalism in Toronto” (Petricevic, 2007). But I think, above all, and most crucially for our discussion, the temple was rendered a source of pride. As Stephen Harper remarked: it is a “source of pride not just for Indo-Canadians, but indeed all Canadians” (BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha, 2007). Importantly, it was cast as an object of *shared* pride: a space that testified to the success of multiculturalism, and one that brought the multicultural nation together. Consider the remarks of Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty: “what we build and how we build it has a profound impact on who we are and how we are together... Our destiny has always been to find strength in our diversity. This is a place where people gather to build something beautiful — a community” (CanWest, 2007).

That this temple, what Stephen Harper described as a “testament to Canada’s and India’s proud traditions of pluralism” was above all rendered an object of pride is not an arbitrary designation. As Sianne Ngai shrewdly observes, emotions have “histories and come heavily saturated with cultural meanings and values” (as cited in Cho, 11). Pride and multiculturalism have a

history of association with one another in Canada, and to feel pride in, because of, or in relation to the country is a kind of demonstration of Canadian citizenship. Sara Ahmed's model of emotions is instructive here. Ahmed rejects both the "inside-out" model of emotions which assumes the "interiority" of emotions, that they are resident within an individual and subsequently spill out as expressions, (as happiness, sadness, fear), *and* the "outside-in" model which maintains that emotions are taken on by the subject from without (a bear is fearsome, infidelity is shameful) and subsequently internalized. Instead she suggests that emotions emerge in the *encounter* between subjects and objects (8). This does not mean that a subject or an object is not *read* as being the origin of an emotion, or that an emotion is not read as being *resident* within a subject or object, indeed, they often are. Rather, Ahmed seeks to historicize and politicize emotions by arguing that the effect of the encounter – the attributing of, say, a feeling of pride to a manifestation of multiculturalism – is based on a *reading* of the object that is informed by a history of encounters, cultural associations and public memories (7). Such histories are discursively produced and constructed through various speech acts, official and unofficial declarations, public symbols and expressions, myth-making, and other forms of storytelling (2000, 98).

The relationship between multiculturalism and pride has been wrought in a variety of ways: by public opinion polls, in school curriculum, in corporate slogans and commercials, official declarations and government positions. We are told time and time again that Canadians are "proudly multicultural," that multiculturalism "has become part of the sticky stuff of Canadian identity" (Stein, 1). Michael Adams, president of the Environics Research Group, explains that multiculturalism has increasingly *become* a source of pride since its inception as official policy: "in 1985 we asked Canadians to tell us in their own words what made them proud to be Canadians. Multiculturalism was in tenth place... by 2006, multiculturalism had climbed to second place" (11). Pride is often represented as a defining characteristic of Canadian citizenship, and installed as a feeling that is worth cultivating in official government reports, programs and policies. Minister Kenney's new *Inter-Action* program (aptly

introduced on national Canadian Multiculturalism day) is “designed to foster intercultural understanding, civic memory and pride, and respect for core democratic values” – “Canada’s future is being built by Canadians of all backgrounds integrating into a proud and democratic society” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2010). In Will Kymlicka’s government commissioned report on the state of multiculturalism in Canada, he deploys the relationship between multiculturalism and pride as a defense against the criticism that multiculturalism fosters national disunity, and that it fails to adequately promote among immigrant communities an attachment and sense of loyalty/belonging to Canada:

“the fact that Canada has officially defined itself as a multicultural nation means that immigrants are a constituent part of the nation that citizens feel pride in: so multiculturalism serves as a link for native-born citizens from national identity to solidarity with immigrants. And, conversely, multiculturalism provides a link by which immigrants come to identify with, and feel pride in, Canada. From their different starting points, there is convergence on high levels of pride and identification with a multicultural conception of Canadian nationhood” (Kymlicka, 2010, 4).

This passage is significant for a whole variety of reasons, but it demonstrates two crucial points central to this discussion. Firstly, it serves as another example of the historical relationship between pride and multiculturalism, and in so doing, portrays the particular nuances characterizing this relationship in the contemporary period: pride is an *antidote* to extremism, alienation and national disunity. Secondly, and as we shall see this is related to the first, the passage exemplifies a key aspect of Ahmed’s model of emotions. That is, emotions are *relational*, they emerge in the encounter between subjects and objects, and also, crucially, they “involve (re)actions and relations of ‘towardness’ or ‘awayness’ in relation to such objects” (12). In Kymlicka’s conception above, pride involves a drawing together, the forging of a sense of solidarity between, and the linking of “native-born” citizens and immigrants. Ahmed argues that, “objects are read

as the cause of emotions in the very process of taking an orientation towards them” (6). I suggest that in their encounter, the BAPS temple materializes as an object of pride, and its public materializes as the feeling subject – and that part of the effect of the encounter is a drawing near of the object *by* the subject. If designating the temple (or reading it as) a source of pride involves a relation of towardness, then the encounter functions as an act of inclusion.

Importantly, in Kymlicka’s conception and in the discourse that surrounds the BAPS Mandir, the immigrant community becomes the object of pride *and* the subject that feels pride: “I’m extremely proud to be an Indian, to be a Canadian and to be an Indo-Canadian” (Dobrota, 2007). It is in this way that we can think of pride as a “technology of citizenship” that “binds” the nation’s inhabitants to the “national ideal” of multiculturalism and to each other (Ahmed, 2010, 133). One journalist described Stephen Harper as “tapping into” the feeling of pride that pervaded the event of the temple’s opening. I think this image of tapping is telling: on the one hand it suggests that pride was in a kind of abundant supply – confirming Ahmed’s contention that objects can become “saturated with affect” – on the other, it further elucidates how emotions are relational, pride involves an orientation of “towardness”, someone must tap into it. Later in her article, this same journalist wrote that, “the celebration, blessed by balmy weather and clear skies, also gave thousands of proud members of the Indian community the chance to add their own colours to Toronto’s multicultural tapestry” (Dobrota, 2007). Pride here involves a knitting together. In becoming the object of pride they are drawn in towards the nation, a symbol of its ideals. In expressing their own feelings of pride, they become like the “native-born” – and they satisfy the feeling condition of citizenship.

Oftentimes pride is considered in relation to shame. Indeed we would say that pride, defined as a “feeling of deep pleasure or satisfaction derived from one’s own, the achievements of those with whom one is closely associated, or from qualities or possessions that are widely admired” is the affective opposite of shame: a “painful feeling” as a result of a “person, action, or situation that brings a loss of respect or honour” (Oxford American Dictionary). The role of

shame per se is less relevant to my discussion, but the implication of disrespect – i.e. an action committed that results in a loss of respect, or, an object, person, or action that is a *sign* of disrespect – within the notion of shame most certainly is. Many of the criticisms leveled at the Hindu Federation’s campaign to secure a space for funeral rights were structured by the belief that the Hindu community lacked respect for the environment, Canadian laws, and a Canadian “way of life”. The BAPS Mandir, as a manifestation of religious diversity and multiculturalism, was seen to represent the right kind of orientation to the nation, committed to its cultural and aesthetic development, and actively invested in the “uniquely Canadian values” of “cross-cultural understanding”, “inter-faith harmony” and “the respect for all” (Canadian Museum of Cultural Heritage, 3). Here was a community that not only appreciated some of the foundational values of the nation, but actually incorporated them into their religious space (through the inclusion of the cultural museum) and mission. Read as a gift to the country and an object of shared pride, the temple was seen to return the generosity of the nation. As Aarti Patel expressed to me,

“I do embrace the warmth and the welcome that the Canadian community at large has extended to the Hindu community...this opportunity to us to be able to offer worship in this manner... I definitely feel the warmth, the welcome, and that ability, that freedom... to practice my own practices, traditions, rituals, beliefs that this mandir allows us to do” (Patel, 2011).

Conversely, the Hindu Federation’s campaign, and their soon-to-be-established space for Hindu funeral ceremonies, is thought to be the result of a problematic and dangerous orientation to the nation. Remember Ahmed’s point that “a crucial risk posed by migrant cultures is defined as their failure to become British, narrated as their failure to love the culture of the host nation. The failure here is the failure of migrants to ‘return’ the love of the nation through gratitude” (2004, 137). I argue that the Hindu Federation’s campaign is read as a failure to return the host society’s generosity and to accept the conditions of integration and belonging, evidenced by their perceived lack of respect towards the nation and the national community.

In a letter to the editor, published in the *Toronto Star* in October of 2007 (about six months following the issue's initial emergence in the media), Larry Perlman directed the Hindu community to "respect the environment you live in" and "respect the fact that legal and environmental issues take precedence over [your] religious traditions in a foreign country". He concluded that, "as long as Canadian laws are respected and legitimate advice sought, traditions from any religious faith can be respected here" (Perlman, 2007). Perlman's remarks illuminate the two primary ways in which the Hindu community was perceived to be acting disrespectfully. Firstly, they failed to "respect the environment", a sentiment that was shared by a number of wary citizens, and tacitly supported by various public officials and conservation authorities. Remember that the campaign began in earnest after leaders in the Hindu community were approached by representatives of various conservation authorities who had received complaints from residents that certain objects (coconuts, plastic statues, jewelry and other unusual or "non-traditional" kinds of pollutants) were being deposited in their local waterways. This detail was consistently highlighted in the new reports. It was therefore not only that the Hindu community desired to scatter the cremated remains of loved ones in the water, but that they were carelessly "leaving all sorts of other objects in the rivers, some of it not at all biodegradable", that was cause for environmental concern (Gagnon, 2007).

I was unable to determine exactly how many complaints were lodged regarding sightings of these non-traditional kinds of pollutants. I do know that Pandit Sharma held a special event at his temple, the Shri Ram Mandir, to which all of the GTA's temples were invited, to inform the community of the environmentally responsible way to conduct these ceremonies²⁶. Despite the fact that Sharma's attempts to stress the virtues of environmental responsibility were

²⁶ A brochure designed by the TRCA with the help of members of the Hindu Federation was distributed. It was printed in English and Hindi and can also be found on the TRCA website. It instructed devotees to only deposit a small amount of flowers and leaves in the water and nothing more. "Coconuts, lemons and other fruits may cause health and disease problems if eaten by wildlife. This is because these fruits do not grow in Canada and are not the typical food that wildlife in this country would eat" (TRCA, 2006).

widely cited in the news reports, their reputation as irresponsible polluters continued to stick²⁷. When Minister Takhar announced in 2009 that practice was permissible on “occupied or unoccupied Crown land, and those Crown lands governed by water” (TRCA, 30), he stressed that “people should be concerned about the environment and keep their rituals clean and environmentally friendly”. He said further that, “we’re giving you the privilege of doing this, but at the same time, we want you to be concerned about the environment as well” (Panjwani, 2009).

In my interview with Mark Guinto in March of 2011, the city of Pickering’s Coordinator of Public Affairs, Guinto stated that:

“we felt that by designating a space we could help self-police the environmental concerns as well. So we were saying OK, well let’s find a space where we can do the ash scattering, and because it’s a designated space you can kind of self police it and ensure if there’s any offerings put in with the ashes that they’re removed afterwards. So, it’s a twofold thing, for accommodation and for self policing” (Guinto, 2011).

While Guinto was very supportive of Hindu community’s efforts, and suggested that multiculturalism in Canada is more than “just eating food and watching cultural performances...it’s embracing [immigrants’] religious rites and practices,” he renders the commitment to accommodation, and the concern regarding the Hindu community’s environmental irresponsibility equal as motivating factors for the granting of this space.

I asked Guinto whether he thought that the “environmental concerns” were as serious as they had been made out to be and I suggested that, given all of the bad publicity they had received, the Hindu community was sure to be acting extra cautiously regarding these rituals. To this Guinto responded that,

“these are some of the concerns. Because you know we work in a political environment and it’s going to be over-scrutinized in the first place – this religious rite. So let’s work progressively and positively

²⁷ Sharma’s attempts *were* widely cited in the reports, but journalists made no effort to unsettle or challenge their image as careless polluters.

and not give critics the ammunition they need. So we're not saying everyone does it, we're not saying the majority of people in the ceremony are doing it, but you know let's not give people added fuel to the fire type of thing. All littering is wrong. Are we unfairly targeting the Hindu community? I think there might be a little bit of bias but why give people ammunition?"

The Hindu community could not shake their image as polluters. And the danger of pollution was rendered an interminably imminent possibility.

In addition to acting disrespectfully towards the nation by polluting its environment, the Hindu community failed to "respect the fact that legal and environmental traditions take precedence over their religious traditions in a foreign country" (Perlman, 2007). It is important to note that, at the time Perlman's letter was published, there were no laws or official declarations prohibiting *or* sanctioning the scattering of ashes – a fact that was made clear in news reports. It was this lack of clarity that originally stirred the Hindu community into action. And while "environmental concerns" were widely reported in the media, there were a number of independent agencies, and provincial spokespeople who confirmed the minimal environmental impact of the practice, also reported in the media. While there was certainly confusion, Perlman stages a conflict between this practice, Canadian values and the Canadian legal system that was in reality, not at all clear-cut. What is crucial, however, is that Perlman construes this claim for space as a challenge to the legal and environmental traditions of Canada, a claim that emerges from the Hindu community's lack of respect for the country.

His final remark that "as long as Canadian laws are respected" then "any religious faith can be respected here" clearly illuminates Cho's contention that citizenship is an "affective relation" (2). Achieving acceptance and inclusion in the nation, and respect *by* the nation, is dependent on one's feeling (and demonstrating) respect *towards* the nation. The nation's generosity must be returned. It is no wonder that in their association with the campaign for funeral rites, the Hindu community becomes a "foreign" cultural group, represented as

being in opposition to and often times outside of society's "mainstream". This is in startling contrast to the "Indo-Canadians" and "Canadian Hindus" affiliated with the BAPS Mandir. That members of the Hindu community repeatedly attempted to assert their status as Canadian citizens and their emotional commitments to this country *over* their former dwelling places, or the former dwelling places of their parents, seemed to make no impact on their representation as foreigners.²⁸

With less of an attempt to substantiate his argument in the prevailing customs and traditions that characterize Canadian society to which immigrants are expected to assimilate, the author of the Canadian Immigration Reform Blog²⁹ wrote that "This is Canada. This is not India. *Asking* to deposit the ashes of deceased loved ones into Canadian rivers and streams is *not acceptable*. You can always fly the ashes back to India. That's just part of the cost of moving to Canada. If you *really respected this country then you would do it*" (my emphasis, PaxCanadiana, 2007a). And further, "Canada: it was a lovely country we once had" (ibid). We can read the declaration that "this is Canada" and "not India" as suggesting the community's failure to imbibe the shared Canadian value of environmental responsibility³⁰, thus supporting the portrayal of the Hindu community as polluters. But the author seems more preoccupied with their

²⁸ Pandit Sharma, the head of the Hindu Federation, stressed that "this is the motherland, [this practice] should be done here" (Gombu, 2007). Vishnu Sookar of the Devi Mandir was quoted in the Durham region's *News Advertiser* saying, "as good Canadian, law-abiding citizens, we need to have the scattering of ashes locations defined" (Calis, 2009). In my conversation with representatives of the Devi, Ramesh Gosyne expressed with a sort of impassive sense of frustration that, as "Canadian Hindus who are growing up here... we think that we should have [the right to scatter ashes] without being harassed by anybody" (Gosyne, 2011).

²⁹ The Canadian Immigration Reform Blog was started in 2007 by a Toronto man under the name "PaxCanadiana". A typical entry consists of a news article retrieved from a mainstream newspaper that is dissected passage by passage and held up as evidence that immigration and multiculturalism policy in Canada is "dysfunctional". Consider the following passage from his first entry: "I am a patriot. I love Canada and I am opposed to anything that I think...is harming my country and my countrymen. I support an immigration policy for Canada. I just do not support the one my country has adopted. What was once sound and reasonable has developed into an industry that benefits the few at the expense of the many" (PaxCanadiana, 2007b).

³⁰ This is, I think, a value that takes shape with a specific kind of force in the moment it is perceived as being under threat by a cultural Other (See Ahmed, 2004, 130).

“asking” to deposit the ashes of deceased loved ones into rivers and streams. As polluters, they fail to demonstrate a respect for one of the country’s core commitments (environmental responsibility), and in actively seeking to “press their cultural demands on the rest of Ontario”, as one National Post commenter expressed (Kotter51, 2009), they are perceived to demonstrate a loyalty to their own cultural and religious commitments over Canada’s values and traditions.

Remarks made by Robert Sibley – a journalist for the Ottawa Citizen and adjunct professor of political science at Carleton University – in an article entitled “A return to tolerance” support this reading:

“the *Toronto Star* recently offered an example of ‘enclave’ thinking when it reported Hindus in Canada were upset at regulations that prohibit them from dumping the ashes of their dead in Canadian rivers. Reporter Prithi Yelaja, citing a Ryerson University Study, wrote, ‘rigid provincial and municipal regulations regarding funerals and burials, created primarily to accommodate western Judeo-Christian customs, are forcing faith communities to adjust to the law rather than have the freedom to practice their final rites’. The reference to Judeo-Christian customs is telling. The reporter implies that existing regulations are culturally relative, and it is only the biases of ‘Judeo-Christians,’ who, by accident of history got here first, that are preventing Hindus from doing as they wish. Such a slant suggests that some in the Hindu community regard multiculturalism as a one-way street, a policy that allows them to accept only those Canadian laws and traditions that suit their purposes, but to otherwise avoid integration into the mainstream of Canadian society” (Sibley, 2008).³¹

³¹ It must be noted that Sibley misrepresents the issue here. As I have already mentioned, there were *no laws or regulations in place that prohibited the scattering of ashes*, and thus Hindus were not coming up against regulations that prohibited the scattering of ashes. They were coming up against criticism and the non-existence of rules and regulations regarding the practice. Sibley also misquotes Yelaja. Her piece focuses not just on Hindus but on the customs of Sikh and Muslim communities as well. Some of *these* customs have come up against existing regulations and the communities have had to “adjust to the law” – but not Hindus.

Sibley's argument is that certain laws and traditions only become culturally relative when they do not suit the purposes of a particular community, and that multiculturalism gives sustenance to these claims of relativity, which, when admitted, allow a community to "avoid integration into the mainstream of Canadian society". Thus their desire to seek a place for these ceremonies is rendered a desire to avoid integration. In the first part of this paper I explored how integration into the mainstream of society is associated with the cultivation and demonstration of certain kinds of feelings, including "a sense of belonging and attachment to Canada" (the language of the new multiculturalism program, as cited in Abu-Laban and Stasiulis, 114). The failure to integrate here is associated with their failure to accept and respect the laws and traditions of the country, aside from those that "suit their purposes." That the Hindu community's desire to "make our Holy Ganges right here in Canada" might be evidence of "their sense of belonging and attachment" was never raised as a possibility (let alone that it might be demonstrative of their right, as citizens, to political organization and contestation). Instead they were cast as a foreign cultural and religious community, disrespectful of the customs of the host society and unwilling to integrate and adjust to its ways – prepared to pollute the environment and dilute the nation's cherished ideals for the preservation of their own traditions.

In the first part of this chapter I explored the concerns that emerged in the public debates regarding the various threats that religious and cultural minorities pose to Canadian values, traditions and commitments, or to the stability and security of the social order. These threats were construed as a cause of fear and anxiety, contributing to what Banting and Kymlicak have referred to as the "global anxieties about multiculturalism" (43). The criticism that emerged in response to the Hindu federation's campaign was expressed as a fear of pollution: "I've always been lead to led to believe that our waters are sacred. That is our life force really", protested one Pickering resident, "it's not healthy and it's not cleanliness" cried another (Calis, 2009). One online blogger claimed he witnessed a ceremony, saying it left him and his family "speechless. I could

not believe this is happening in Ontario... I feel that my rights are being violated... My kids felt nauseated and they don't want to go to the beach anymore" (comments section). "I hope Canada never gives Hindus the right to pollute its rivers with the ashes of their dead", expressed another.

It is not unusual that the representation of Hindus as polluters and the practice as source of pollution continued to *stick*, no matter the lengths to which the Hindu community and its supporters tried to "raise awareness" and "educate the public" that there was nothing to fear³². As David Cisneros points out, fears of and anxieties over immigration and the proximity of cultural others have often been articulated within public discourse using metaphors of pollution, invasion or disease. Representations of nature and the environment serve as crucial building blocks for the assembly of such metaphors; a literal pollution of the environment helps to suggest the "metaphorical pollution of culture and lifestyle [that] immigrants supposedly bring" (574).³³ Consider the following two

³² The representatives of the Hindu community I spoke with stressed that that acceptance of the practice depended on awareness and education, and the dispelling of some of the myths regarding the campaign, including the idea that there would be non-cremated body parts tossed in the river, that the ashes (the result of a human body being burned at 1000 degrees or more for 1.5 to 2 hours) presented a serious environmental threat, and that the ceremony would involve hordes of people singing and beating drums in a public park. Ramesh Gosyne told me, "I'm 100 percent sure that most Canadians are accepting of things once they understand it and see that it is not threatening in any way" (Gosyne, 2011).

³³ Take, for example, the case of "Chinese boat people", when, in 1999 a series of ships transporting Chinese refugees arrived on the shores of British Columbia. Images of the "filthy" physical state of the passengers and references to the "horrendous" conditions on board were juxtaposed with Vancouver's pristine harbors, and ran alongside concerns that perhaps "Canada's immigration and refugee systems were in a 'state of crisis'" (Greenberg, 2000). A similar incident occurred in August of 2010 when nearly 500 Tamil refugees arrived in B.C., also by boat. The similarities between the two instances were striking. The mass of fatigued and sick bodies was considered to be in need of quarantine (a need that was satisfied by their being confined in holding/detention centers). We can think of the need for quarantine in two senses: the refugees threatened to spread the diseases they contracted in the course of their journey or carried with them from their home countries, and they threatened to overwhelm and swamp the country's resources and opportunities and to weaken the integrity of its values and ideals.

photographs (figures 2.1 and 2.2) printed alongside news articles that ran in Pickering's local newspaper *The News Advertiser*.



Figure 2.1: Pickering residents opposed to the ash scattering site. Source: Calis, October 16, 2009.



Figure 2.2: Pandit Roopnauth Sharma and Pandit Damodar Sharma of the Hindu Federation. Source: Calis, July 03, 2009.

Figure 2.1 shows three Pickering residents who have been vocal about their opposition to the practice (Robert and Marney Hachey and Fay Hughes) standing in front of Lake Ontario. The camera is set back from the subjects slightly, so that there is a clear view of the sky, above them. They are positioned in the right-hand side of the frame, with the lake expanding beyond them to the viewer's left. This framing gives the effect that these three command the space, but do not dominate it. They appear as the lake's guardians – it shines brilliantly beside and behind them and the sky is a rich color of blue. By contrast, Pandit Roopnauth Sharma (of the Shri Ram Mandir) and Pandit Damodar Sharma (of the Devi) fill the entire photographic space. The caption informs us that they are on a "Pickering Beachfront area" during an ash scattering announcement made by the province, a fact that might be confirmed by the sight of green trees or shrubbery behind them, but there is not any substantial view of the space. Instead the two Pandits dominate the frame, pictured with their eyes closed in concentration. It is unclear exactly what is occurring in this moment, and the quality of the photograph itself is generally rather poor. The comparison between these two photographs is striking. In the first, the lakefront appears pristine and welcoming, in the second, nature is barely visible at all (although we know the event takes place there), and is dominated by human presence.

That the fear and anxiety the campaign aroused was narrated as a fear of pollution and that the image of the practice as a source of pollution and the Hindu community as polluters continued to stick – betrays a fear of the symbolic pollution of the nation's ideals, customs and way of life: "haven't these people heard of a...cemetery... you ain't in India anymore" (mnolz, 2009). Pollution suggests a contamination of one thing by another, a proximity between or togetherness of two or more substances that should not be so. It may occur when an object, substance or thing that should be contained or controlled spills out and over, or becomes out of control, permeating an environment or space from which it ought to be kept separate. Pollution is often understood as icky, dirty, filthy and unclean. Importantly, the substance or thing thought to be the source of contamination may not be dangerous or insidious on its own. A pop bottle is

benign in the hands of someone consuming it. Crude oil residing beneath the earth's surface is merely a part of nature in this form. Such things become pollutants and contaminants when they "appear where [they] shouldn't be" or in their relation to something else. As Tim Cresswell argues, the meaning of dirt, filth and pollution "is dependent on [their] location"; they are "matter out of place" (38). Thus there is something relational about pollution and what counts as pollution or dirt is both contextually and historically specific. What I'm getting at is, immigrants, immigration, multiculturalism, diversity, or, the Hindu community, etc., become "pollution" in moments of undesirable proximity, when they relate to a space, a body, or object in an unacceptable way, when they "appear where [they] shouldn't be". Pollution is about relations and orientations between things. And as I explored in the first part of this section, the Hindu community was considered to demonstrate the wrong kind of orientation to the environment and the nation. Not all Hindu communities, immigrants, or forms of multiculturalism are rendered sources of pollution. As Minister Kenney noted in relation to the BAPS Mandir, "Canadian society continues to benefit greatly from [the] contribution" of Indo-Canadians, or as Dalton McGuinty expressed, the Hindu community's "vital contributions have enhanced Ontario's social, cultural and economic life in many ways" (Canadian Heritage, 2008 and BAPS Swaminarayan News, 2008).

In pollution – where pollution stands for an object (or relation) that is a source of fear and anxiety – the polluting object is cast away from the subject that *feels*, perceives or names the pollution. As Ahmed suggests in relation to disgust, casting something as an object of disgust "generates a community of those who are bound together through the shared condemnation of a disgusting object or event. A community of witnesses is generated, whose apparent shared distance from an event or object that has been named as disgusting is achieved through the repetition of the word 'disgust'" (2004, 94). In pollution, as in disgust, the object of pollution is simultaneously distanced and cast out. In my discussion of the BAPS Mandir, I argued that designating the temple a source of pride involves an orientation of towardness: a binding together of the temple, its

congregants, the Canadian public, and the nation. The BAPS Mandir comes to occupy a privileged space in the national imaginary as it is being set in place in the nation. In their association with the Hindu Federation's campaign, the Hindu community becomes a source of literal and symbolic pollution, a community to fear, a designation which involves an orientation of "awayness", and a casting out. This casting out takes both symbolic and literal forms. Symbolically, the Hindu community is rendered a "foreign" cultural and religious group, not yet deserving of a place in the national community. And as I discuss in the following chapter, the community is literally cast out of the park in which a space for this practice had originally been granted.

In this chapter I have argued that multiculturalism is not merely an "emotional issue" but that emotions have come to play a significant role in processes of exclusion and inclusion, and in determining who is worthy of Canadian citizenship and who is not. I have suggested that as a result of the reformulation of the multiculturalism program in 1997 and the major critiques and concerns regarding multiculturalism following its introduction, a new conception of the relationship between immigrant communities, citizenship and the nation has taken shape. The BAPS Mandir is seen to achieve this ideal, while the Hindu Federation's campaign fails to do so. That in one moment Ontario's "Hindu community" can be a source of pride and in the other a source of pollution and fear is telling of the complex and contradictory ways in which multiculturalism is understood, constructed, and defined in Canadian discourse, and the precarious position in which many ethno-cultural and religious minorities are currently situated.

In Chapter 1 I discussed how there is a distinction to be made between formal and substantive citizenship, and that formal citizenship entails certain rights and obligations, whereas substantive citizenship involves feeling a sense of belonging in the nation, and the right to "express ideas, to culture, to identity in difference (and equality), to self-management" (Gilbert and Dikec, 261). Himani Bannerji argues that formal citizenship alone "does not provide automatic membership in the nation's community" (Bannerji, 66). What is

interesting, however, is how in the contemporary period, these *qualities* of substantive citizenship have become *conditions* of full citizenship. As Jason Kenney declared, Canadian citizenship is “more than legal status, more than a passport... We expect citizenship to have an ongoing commitment, connection and loyalty to Canada” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2007). And the *perceived* failure to demonstrate the right kinds of feelings for the nation (the Hindu Federation’s campaign after all, is, I think, a demonstration of this community’s belonging and commitment to the nation), typically issues forth from some challenge to Canadian ideals and values (even as the challenge is mostly perception too). The feeling condition of citizenship has created a set of new and at times impossible expectations for immigrants and other marginalized communities in their claims for full citizenship rights and inclusion.

Chapter Three: Suburban Multiculturalism

“Cities everywhere are social and geographical prisms for the societies in which they have evolved. They serve both as mirror and moulders of a nation’s society, culture, and politics” – D.F. Ley and L.S. Bourne

On July 7th 2007, the Toronto Star’s urban life columnist, David Hume, opened his weekly article proclaiming: “Welcome to the New Canada”. Hume was covering the soon to be completed BAPS Mandir, writing that “though the name, Swaminarayan Mandir, won’t mean much to most Canadians, no one, not even those speeding by in cars and trucks, could help but notice this remarkable structure. It stands out, to say the least especially in this dismal suburban/industrial landscape at the north end of the city” (Hume, 2007). Hume’s remarks – and in particular, his representation of a “new Canada” – point to two transformations underway in Canada’s socio-cultural and urban landscape. The first is that of Canada’s demographic profile, which has changed dramatically since the liberalization of immigration and citizenship over forty years ago, and which – because the majority of newcomers to Canada settle in major urban centres – has transformed the urban landscape and environment in profound ways. Such a transformation in Canada’s urban fabric announces itself in a variety of forms: in the material architecture of the built environment, in the new items populating grocery stores and local eateries, in the languages that float up through streetcar windows, and that appear on storefronts, or on public flyers, and in what Jenny Burman has called the city’s fundamental “intertextuality” – a theoretical way of getting at the layering of time, place, political convictions and cultural material within the urban “diasporic” city (2001, 196).

The second transformation is more explicitly evoked in Hume’s opening remarks, and pertains to the growth of this demographic and spatial diversity

beyond the downtown urban centres where immigrant communities have traditionally settled, into suburban sites. Emphasizing a perceived incongruity between the “dismal suburban/industrial landscape” and the “remarkable” Hindu mandir, Hume implicitly references how rapidly and recently this transformation has occurred, at the same time as he suggests that there is something peculiar in the relationship between the building and its location. This perceived incongruity or incompatibility is rather consistent throughout much of the media coverage the new building received. In fact, combing through newspaper articles all published around the time of the temple’s official opening, it becomes clear that most journalists consider the temple an exception among its suburban and “brutalist industrial neighbours” (Bhandari, 1).

In this chapter, I attempt to work through and understand this perceived incongruity between suburban industrial space and a manifestation of multicultural difference. I examine how multiculturalism as a policy, and as an ethos, (to borrow again from Kymlicka’s useful distinction)³⁴ is qualitatively different in the suburbs than it is in more classically urban areas. I develop the concept of suburban multiculturalism to address and account for this difference. Informing this argument is the idea that there is a relationship between the city and citizenship: that the city is in fact a *locus* of citizenship (Isin, 51). As Isin writes, “the city is neither a background to [the] struggles *against which* groups wager, nor is it a foreground *for which* groups struggle for domination. The city is the battleground *through which* groups define their identities, stake their claims, wage their battles, and articulate citizenship rights and obligations” (50). Recent scholarship in critical urban studies has investigated the way in which “the compaction and reterritorialization of so many different kinds of groups within [cities] grind away at citizenship’s assumptions. They compel it to bend to the recognition that contemporary urban life comprises multiple and diverse cultural identities, modes of life, and forms of appropriating urban space”

³⁴ In Chapter 1 I took up Kymlicka’s suggestion that we consider multiculturalism as a fact, policy and ethos – a helpful way of disentangling the discourses. See Kymlicka’s “Disentangling the Debate” in *Uneasing Partners: Multiculturalism and Rights in Canada*.

(Holston and Appadurai, 9). Such investigations unearth how marginalized communities claim their “rights to the city” by “articulating strategic differences” that draw upon their unique identities, religions or cultures, addressing the city as a social, political and spatial form in new and unexpected ways. Such claims may involve the building of places of worship or the appropriation of public space in unusual or unprecedented ways, and can be understood as assertions of citizenship that destabilize the “universal entitlements” that the discourse of citizenship invokes, (Isin and Siemiatycki, 191), remaking the city and the modes of “being political” it makes possible, in the process (Isin, 2002).

The relationship between the city, multiculturalism and citizenship has been a site of critical inquiry for urban studies scholars for some time now, as multiculturalism in Canada has largely been conceived of as an urban phenomenon. In this conception, multiculturalism is considered a characterizing condition of the urban not only because this is where the demographic “fact” of multiculturalism is most evident, but because cities are considered to be bastions of cross-cultural engagement and natural servants to a robust, “vernacular” ethos of multiculturalism (Burman, 2010).³⁵ What has been less well explored, however, is the suburbanization of multiculturalism – the growth of Canada’s demographic diversity beyond the traditional inner city immigrant reception zones into suburban sites (Siemiatycki and Isin, 78), and thus, how citizenship is conceived of, enacted, and claimed in these spaces. In this chapter, I explore how multiculturalism as a fact is no longer just a characterizing condition of the urban, and how, as both a policy and an ethos it is considerably less robust and expansive in the suburbs, a disparity that derives in part from the suburban form and the political commitments and social relations that are constituted by it. Space, Isin writes, “is a condition of being political... spaces of citizenship as expressions of being political always involve buildings (Pantheon, pnyx, guildhall), configurations (forum, plaza), and arrangements (agora, gymnasia,

³⁵ Of course, they are not *exclusively* servants to a robust form of multiculturalism. Cities are also site of real impossibility, alienation and impoverishment (both in a material sense and political sense).

assembly)” (43). I contend that we can discern a particular form of multiculturalism in the suburbs – a form that I call “suburban multiculturalism” – that is the effect of certain kinds of spatial arrangements, demographics, local government policies and the political, cultural and social commitments that issue forth from these factors. In developing the concept of suburban multiculturalism we can understand and address what forms citizenship and “being political” may take in the suburbs.

In the first part of this chapter I explore the historical association between diversity and the city, and how this literature is less relevant to, and unable to adequately address the suburbanization of diversity and multiculturalism. I then undertake a discussion of the area within which the BAPS Mandir resides and the various spaces with which the Hindu Federation’s campaign has been associated, exploring their unique geographic and demographic characteristics. I contextualize these spaces within their larger geographical and historical contexts, and in so doing I provide a picture of the City of Toronto and the Greater Toronto Area and the relationship between these regions. In the second part of this chapter I delve more deeply into the disparity between urban multiculturalism and suburban multiculturalism by way of Kristin Good’s analysis of immigration, diversity and multiculturalism policy in Toronto and its suburban counterparts (Good, 2009). Finally, I articulate the concept of suburban multiculturalism by examining the way in which the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation’s campaign have been received by the public, and I reveal the kinds of urban citizenship the form of suburban multiculturalism makes possible.

Leading urban theory scholars Graham and Phillips note that, “Canada’s claim to being a diverse, multicultural nation is defined by its big cities, where the vast majority of the population resides” (155). While all over world, living with difference and diversity is increasingly and perhaps “quintessentially what city life is all about” (Watson, 1) the association between diversity and the urban is even more salient in Canada, given that it is one of the most urbanized countries in the world, and a highly multicultural one. Over 80 percent of the

population lives in cities (Gerecke, 2) ³⁶ and the vast majority of Canada's 19.8 percent foreign-born population has settled in one of three major urban centres: Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal. In 2006, 95.9 per cent of Canada's visible minorities (making up 13 percent of the population, about 70 percent of whom were born outside of Canada) lived in a Census Metropolitan area. In 2006 immigrants accounted for 45.7 per cent of Toronto's population and 36.2 percent of Vancouver's. In 2005, StatsCan predicted that "Canada's visible minorities (most of whom are foreign-born) are likely to continue to locate in urban centres" and that "in 2017 close to three-quarters of Canada's visible minorities will be living in Toronto, Vancouver, or Montreal" (Statistics Canada, 2005). At a most fundamental level, "metropolitan areas are the places where multiculturalism is experienced" in Canada (Good, 5).

As such there has been significant discussion about and analysis of the relationship between diversity and the city. In Canada, cities are where the demographic fact of multiculturalism is most evident, and therefore where we might be able to analyze both the success and quality of our ethos and policy of multiculturalism because it forms and informs our lived, everyday encounters. Amin and Thrift argue that cities provide "the prosaic negotiations that drive interethnic and intercultural relations in different directions... [Their] sites of banal encounter and embedded culture are central in any attempt to foster interethnic understanding and cultural interchange" (Amin and Thrift, 292). Broader studies of urban life and the city have frequently proposed that diversity is a characterizing condition of the city as a political, cultural and geographic formation. In his classic "Urbanism as a Way of Life" Louis Wirth defined the city as a "relatively large, dense, and permanent settlement of socially

³⁶ I found this statistic consistently cited in the literature, but it might be slightly misleading given what counts as a city – in Ontario a community must exceed 10,000 people to be defined as a city, in B.C. it is only 5,000. Nevertheless Canada remains a highly urbanized population and increasingly so. In 2006 Statistics Canada determined that almost 90% of the total growth in Canada's population since 2001 occurred in the country's 33 census metropolitan areas. (A census metropolitan area is defined as "an urban area with a population of at least 100,000 including an urban core with a population of at least 50,000). According to the 2006 census, 68% of Canada's population lived in a CMA (Statistics Canada, 2008).

heterogeneous individuals” (Wirth, 34). Jane Jacobs has argued that “great cities are not like towns, only larger. They are not like suburbs, only denser. They differ from towns and suburbs in basic ways, and one of these is that cities are, by definition, full of strangers” (30). Others have argued that as processes of post-colonial migration, globalization and large-scale immigration continue to create increasingly multicultural urban centres, cities are becoming renewed sites of democratic possibility, engendering new conceptions of citizenship rooted in notions of cultural hybridity, mutual tolerance and respect (Amin 2002 & 2006; Amin and Thrift 2002; Valentine, 2008).³⁷ In my research, I found that the city-models operative in these accounts were not entirely reflective of Canada’s urban environment. As I suggested above, while multiculturalism is indeed an overwhelmingly urban phenomenon, as many scholars have pointed out, it is also, increasingly, a suburban one (Good, 93). But suburban cities and regions are quite unlike the urban form referenced above. I argue that we must take these differences seriously; there is a great disparity in the forms of multiculturalism that are found and the conditions of democratic possibility that are present throughout and within Canadian cities. When Toronto and Vancouver are lauded as some of the most multicultural and diverse cities in the world (as they so often are), such disparities become obscured, and the complexity of urban settlement within these regions flattened.

In Toronto and Vancouver, the highest concentrations of immigrants are no longer found in the traditional inner city immigrant reception zones, but “in the post-World War II suburbs and edge cities of the city region” (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997, 78). Traditional theories of immigrant settlement assumed that suburbanization issues forth from cultural, economic and social integration. But as geographer Daniel Hiebert points out, contemporary trends of suburbanized immigrant settlement “suggest a more complex picture” (30). Recent studies have shown that immigrants are altogether skipping the traditional reception

³⁷ It should be noted that these scholars have not been blind to the exclusions and asymmetries produced by the conditions of the global city. They acknowledge the simultaneous existence of great possibility and great exclusion as a characterizing condition of, and important transformation in the global city.

zones and are immediately settling in the suburbs (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997; Hiebert, 2000; Good, 2009; Qadeer and Agrawal, 2010). Some have attributed this development to the increasing number of affluent immigrants admitted to the country as a result of the points system who have the means to establish themselves in single-family homes, and to purchase vehicles for more convenient mobility (public transportation networks are much less extensive in the suburbs as compared to the city, and travel distances tend to be much greater). While it is true that many new immigrants that reside in the suburbs are affluent, the growth in suburban settlement is also the result of rising housing costs in the downtown core, which have pushed those less affluent to regions beyond the inner city (Graham and Phillips, 163). Further to this, suburban regions are more spacious and provide more room for growth, thus enabling the building of cultural institutions like community centers, places of worship and other sites for sociability. As supportive networks and ethnic enclaves in the suburbs continue to grow, they attract more new migrants.

The Sites, The Toronto City Region, and the Greater Toronto Area (GTA)

The BAPS Mandir is located in the northwest corner of Toronto's city limits, just off Highway 427 and Finch Ave, on 7 hectares of industrial land (depicted below in Figure 3.1).

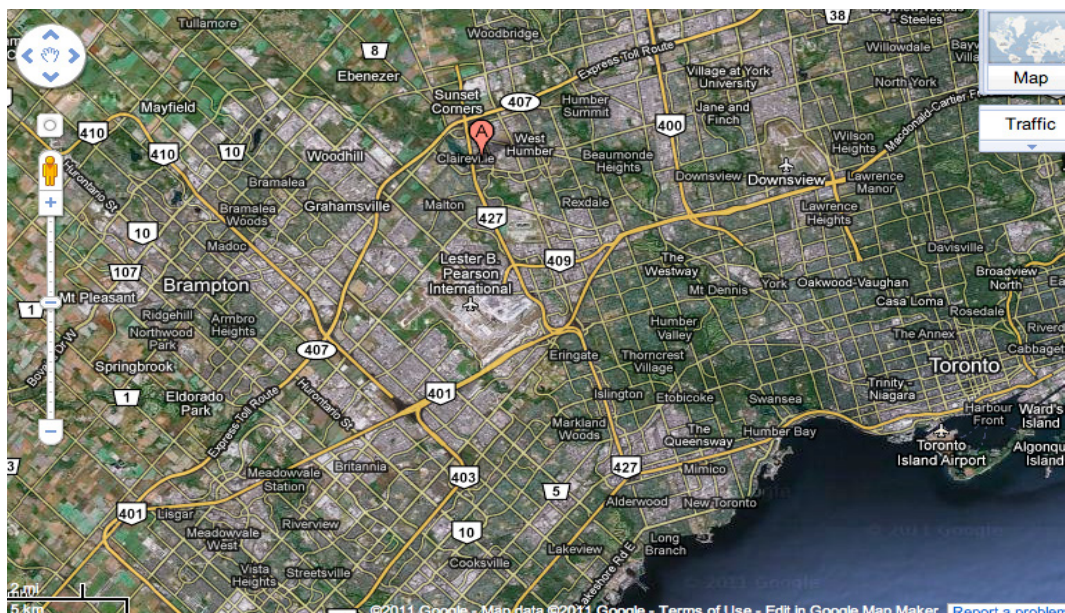


Figure 3.1 : The BAPS Mandir, Toronto (represented by the “A”). Map. *Google Maps*. Google, March 2011. Web.

It is considered part of the community of Rexdale, however the immediate area wherein the temple resides – demarcated by Finch Avenue to the South, Highway 27 to the East, Steeles Avenue to the North and Highway 427 to the West – is often referred to as Claireville, once a small, historic and primarily rural neighbourhood (depicted in Figure 3.2 below).

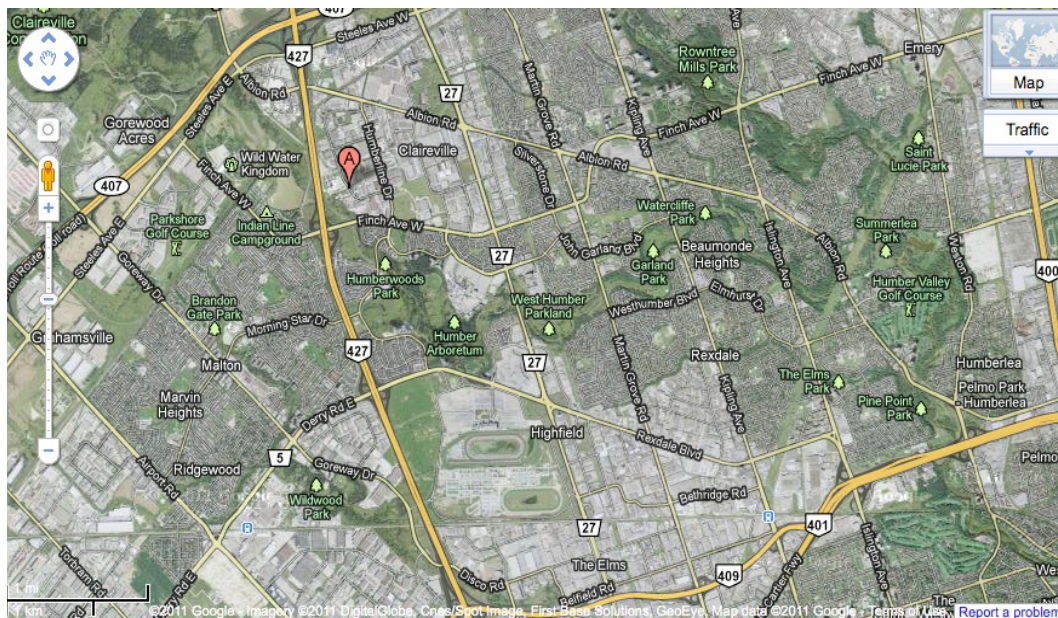


Figure 3.2 : Claireville, Toronto (represented by the “A”). Map. *Google Maps*. Google, March, 2011. Web.

This incarnation of Claireville has since disappeared. The construction of the 427 in the 1970s, combined with the proximity of Pearson International Airport made the area very attractive for industrial development, and the completion of the 407 in the 1990s sowed the final seed of Claireville’s demise. It is now entirely industrial, save for the BAPS Mandir (Wencer, 2010).

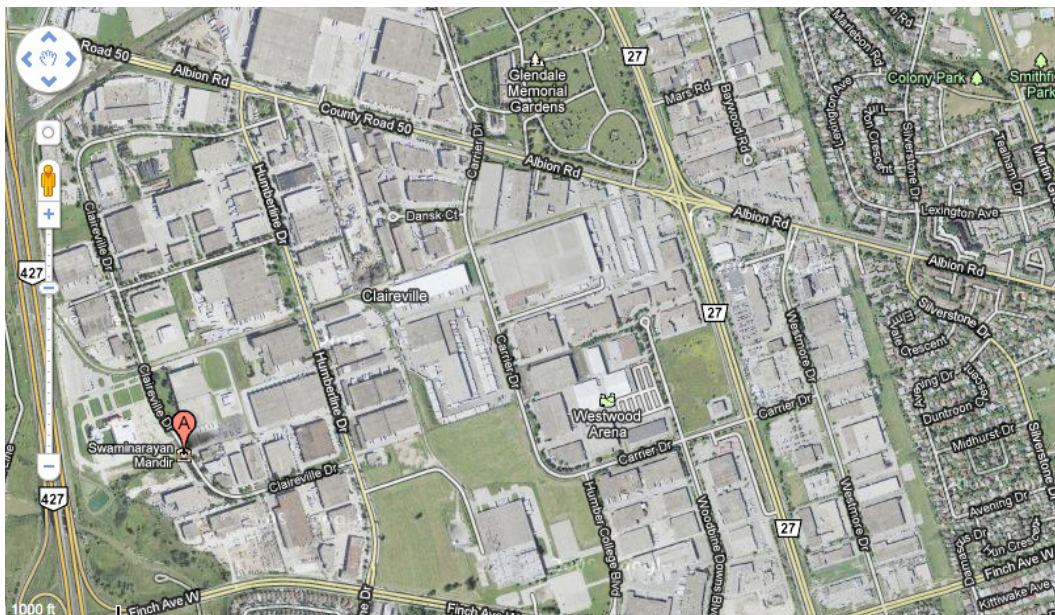


Figure 3.3 : The BAPS Swaminarayan Mandir, Toronto (represented by the “A”). Map. *Google Maps*. Google, March, 2011. Web

Prior to the amalgamation of the City of Toronto in 1998, Claireville was part of the municipality of Etobicoke, a post-World War II suburb of Toronto. The controversial amalgamation united six previously federated municipalities under one single government: North York, Scarborough, York, East York, Toronto, and Etobicoke. North York, Scarborough and Etobicoke are described as post-World War II suburbs, while York and East York are early 20th century industrial suburbs (see figure 3.4 below).



Figure 3.4: The Toronto Census Metropolitan Area, pre-amalgamation. Source: Statistics Canada. Retrieved from: <http://prod.library.utoronto.ca:8090/cgi-bin/maplib/cma.pl>

The old city of Toronto indicated on the map constitutes the original core city of Toronto, and this remains the most densely settled and traditionally urban part of the newly amalgamated city. While the suburban, formerly federated municipalities that surround the old city Toronto have been amalgamated for over ten years, they remain qualitatively different from the original core city, and city residents treat them as such. They are regarded as distinct regions of the city, and city dwellers continue to refer to these municipal lines in their colloquial, everyday understandings of the region.

The residential neighbourhood immediately south and east of the temple, which can be seen in Figure 3.2 – spanning the area between Steeles in the north, Islington in the east, highway 409 to the south and the 427 to the west – is home to a very high concentration of South Asians.³⁸ This concentration is represented in Figure 3.5 below.

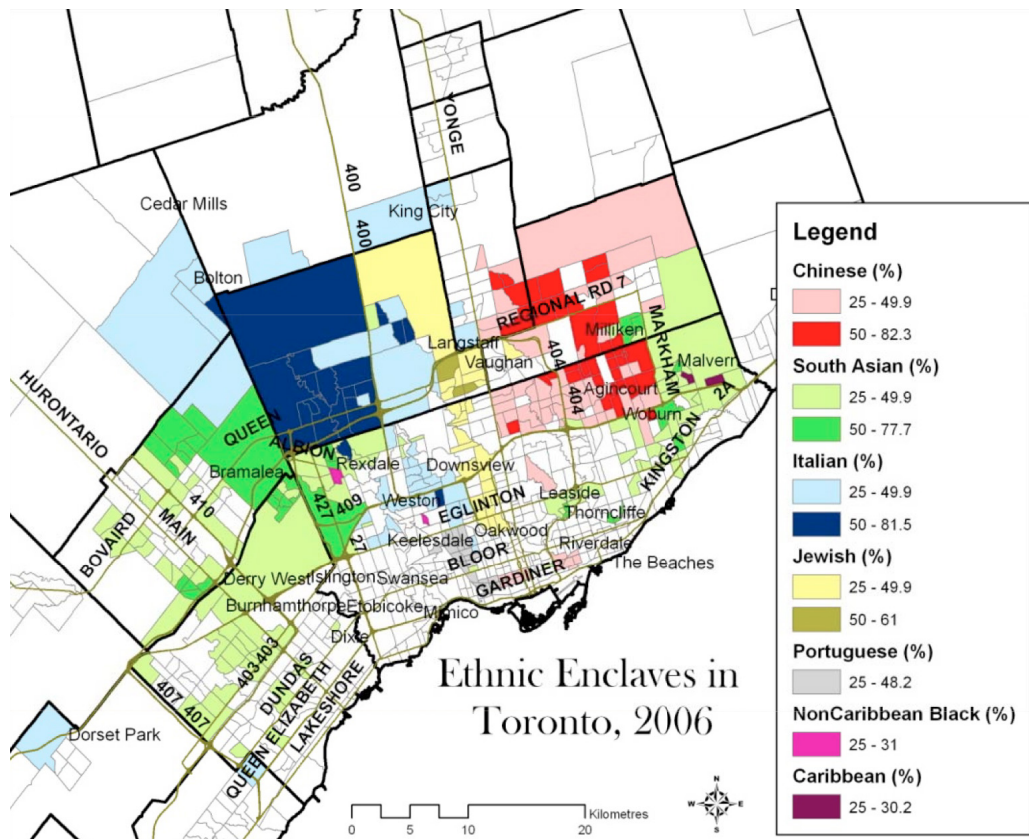


Figure 3.5: Source: Qadeer and Agrawal, 2010.

This northern region of Etobicoke differs dramatically in terms of its demographics in comparison to southern Etobicoke. According to the 2001

³⁸ According to a Statistics Canada report, the vast majority of Hindus officially identify as South Asian (Tran, Kaddatz and Allard, 2005). This is helpful in loosely mapping the settlement of Hindus in Canadian cities. As I mentioned in Chapter 1, Hindus have migrated to Canada from all over the world. And based on my conversations with Hindus in Toronto, identifying as a South Asian is not a static, firm identification; Hindus in Canada conceive of their identities in a much more fluid and dynamic way. I use the correlation between South Asians and Hindus only for the purposes of mapping settlement.

census Etobicoke had an immigrant population of 153, 725 (up from 118, 365 in 1991), 46% of the population (up from 39.22% in 1991).³⁹ Figure 3.7 below indicates that the vast majority of these immigrants reside in the northern most region of the city (where the BAPS Mandir is located).

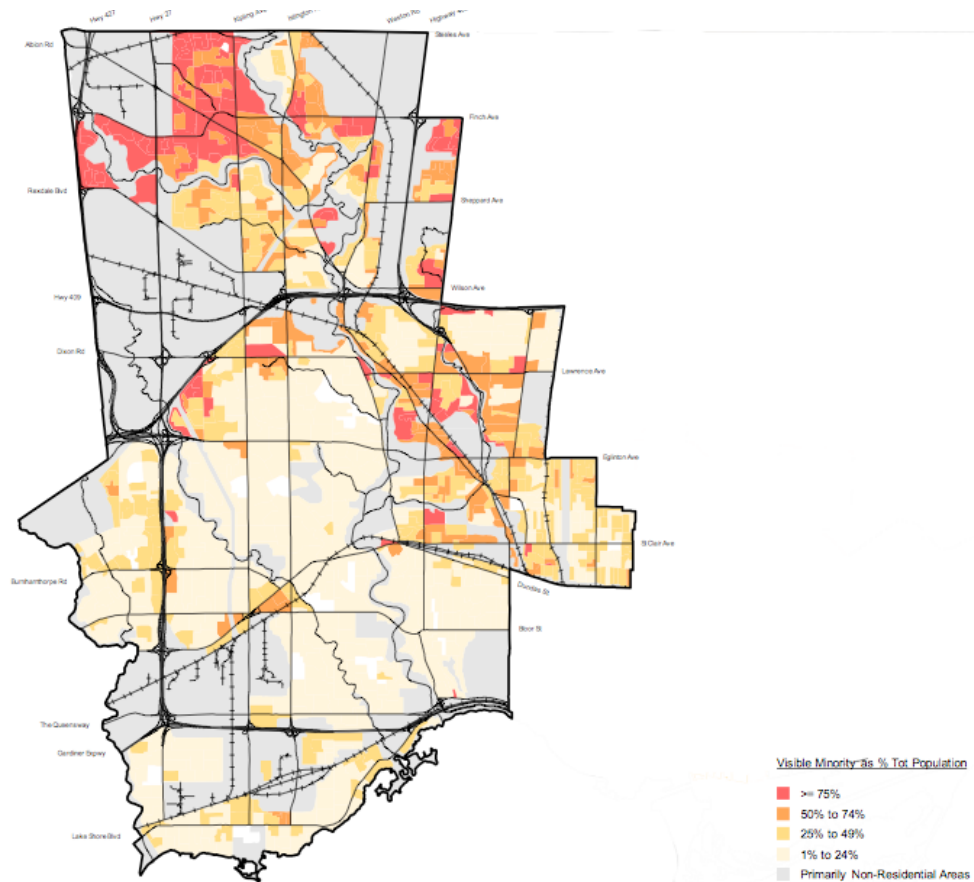


Figure 3.6: Visible Minorities in Etobicoke. Source: City of Toronto.

The region of Etobicoke ranks 5th in immigrant concentration, behind Scarborough, Markham, North York and Mississauga. Of the 118, 365 immigrants dwelling in the city at the time of the 1991 census (by 2001 there were 153, 725 immigrants, 46 percent of the population), 52.70 percent of that

³⁹ I use data from the 2001 census in the following analysis because it is the last census that collected information on the previously federated municipalities that were amalgamated in 1998.

population had immigrated to Canada after 1971.⁴⁰ Most of the municipalities in the GTA with high concentrations of immigrants saw the majority of immigrant settlement occur after 1971; Scarborough for example saw 68.75 percent of its immigrant population settle after 1971; Toronto saw 60 percent; and Mississauga saw 63.41 percent (Siemiatycki and Isin, 79). In 2001, 35 percent of the population of Etobicoke was a visible minority, 60 percent of Scarborough's population identified as a visible minority, 55 percent of Markham's and 40 percent of Mississauga's. Compared to other subdivisions in the region, Etobicoke has a lower population of visible minorities, it has a strong immigrant base composed of older, predominantly European immigrants who arrived before the liberalization of immigration and citizenship policies, and the vast majority of visible minorities are concentrated in the northwestern region.

The mandir is accessible predominantly by bus or personal vehicle. The neighbourhood in which it is located is entirely suburban/industrial and very spread out, making foot travel time consuming, but possible. Anyone living immediately south of Finch Avenue and west of Humberline Drive could walk within fifteen to twenty minutes. There is one bus line that stops immediately in front of the temple, the 96b, departing from Wilson subway station – the second last station on the University side of the Yonge-University-Spadina line. The mandir petitioned the city and the TTC for this route, at the time of the temple's opening in 2007, no such stop existed (Finlay, 2007). A second bus, the 36b, departing from Finch subway station, the northern most stop on the Yonge side of the Yonge-University-Spadina line stops just south of Finch Avenue. The mandir is about a 15-20 minute walk from this stop, on a route with very little pedestrian traffic⁴¹.

⁴⁰ I draw on the 1991 data here based on its distinctions between immigrant settlement before and after 1971, which coincides with Canada's liberalization of immigration and citizenship. I considered consolidating the data across different census information, but decided against it, due to possible inconsistencies and incomplete access to the calculations used.

⁴¹ I have travelled to the temple by personal vehicle and public transportation. By public transportation, coming from Dundas and Spadina in downtown Toronto, my trip takes roughly one hour and thirty minutes. I take the Bloor line west to Kipling station (twenty minutes) and two different bus routes north (about forty minutes). Walking to

The Hindu Federation's campaign to secure a site for funeral ceremonies is associated with and has traversed a series of spaces throughout the GTA. While Pickering is close to formally instituting a space on a small beach located in Frenchman's Bay just off of Lake Ontario (see figure 3.8), the campaign began in the suburban municipalities of Mississauga and Scarborough (see figure 3.4 above). Remember that the TRCA and Credit Valley Conservation received complaints from residents that Hindus were performing religious ceremonies and depositing coconuts, lemons, bouquets of flowers, and plastic statues in the Credit River in Mississauga and Fletcher's Creek in Brampton.

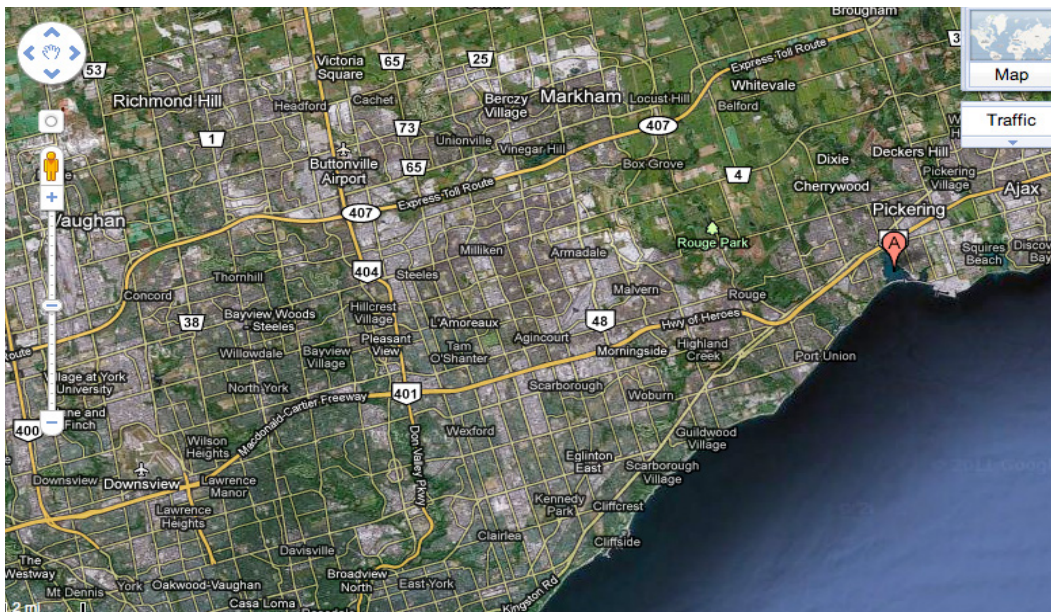


Figure 3.8: Frenchman's Bay, Pickering (represented by the "A"). Map. *Google Maps*, Google, July 2011. Web

These were considered ideal spots as they satisfy two key requirements of the practice: they are swift moving bodies of water, and they are conveniently located for the Toronto region's large Hindu population (Sharma, 2011).

Brampton and Mississauga have the highest concentrations of Hindus in the GTA (according to the 2006 census, Mississauga's Hindu population is 29, 165, making up 4.8 percent of the population, and Brampton's is 17, 640,

the Bloor line and to the temple from the bus station accounts for about twenty to thirty minutes. Driving from southern Mississauga, the municipality immediately west of the temple, takes about twenty minutes on two highways.

making up 5.4 percent of the population), second and third only to Toronto (118,765; 4.8 percent of the population), but both turned down the Hindu Federation's request for a space. The Federation has exclusively petitioned suburban municipalities. Part of the reason behind this decision is that the suburbs boast more spaces that meet the requirements for the practice. But it was also a decision that reflected the Hindu community's mode of organization and spatial distribution. Of the thirty or so temples in Ontario, the majority are located in the suburban municipalities making up the GTA, or in the post-WWII suburbs recently amalgamated into the new City of Toronto. Pandit Sharma explained to me that Oakville has been receptive to the idea of granting a space for the practice, and that they are currently determining whether they can find a suitable site, but nothing has yet come into fruition (Sharma, 2011). Pickering is the only municipality that has been officially committed to the Hindu Federation's campaign, despite the fact that their Hindu population is much smaller than Mississauga's or Brampton's (there are 2,050 Hindus in Pickering, about 2.4% of the total population).⁴²

Pickering is located immediately east of the City of Toronto's borders (see figure 3.4 above). It is the most ethno-culturally diverse city in the Durham region. In 2006 immigrants accounted for 30.1 percent of the population (up from 28.9 percent in 1996), and visible minorities accounted for 30.5 percent (up from 26.4 percent in 1996). Originally established in 1791 as a town of various industries, including agriculture, lumber milling and ship building, Pickering eventually developed into a classic post-war suburb. Developers favored the location during the massive burst in suburban growth following WWII because of its close proximity to Toronto and because a certain amount of transportation infrastructure already existed linking the town to the city (Lee, 8). The cities of Pickering, Mississauga, Brampton and Oakville are four of the 25 municipalities that make up the Greater Toronto area with a population of 5.5 million according to the 2006 census. Isin and Siemiatycki have usefully classified the 24

⁴² The data drawn upon in this chapter is from the 2001 census (the 2006 census did not gather data on religion).

municipalities surrounding the City of Toronto into three categories: edge cities (such as Mississauga, Brampton, Vaughn and Markham, which can be distinguished by their explosive growth in recent years and by their “integration” with Toronto), older, medium-sized cities that possess “sufficient geographic distance and/or economic autonomy to resist full metropolitan integration with the core city” (such Oakville, Pickering, Burlington and Newmarket) and the “primarily rural municipalities” that compose the edge of the GTA: “from Milton in the West to Georgina and Brock in the north and Clarington in the East” (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1997, 78). See again figure 3.4.

Multiculturalism and the Urban-Suburban Divide

Toronto is consistently cited as one of the world’s most multicultural and diverse cities, so much so that an urban legend has developed that the UN definitively pronounced Toronto *the* most multicultural city in the world (Good, 92). As I have already indicated, this extraordinary demographic diversity is not a characteristic of the City of Toronto alone; it extends outwards to the suburban municipalities that make up the GTA. According to the 2006 census, Mississauga, Brampton and Markham all have higher proportional percentages of visible minorities – 49 percent, 57 percent and 65.4 percent respectively – than does Toronto at 46.9 percent. Mississauga and Markham also have larger foreign-born populations – at 51.6 percent and 56.5 percent – than Toronto at 50 percent (Brampton follows close behind at 47.85 per cent). Interestingly, despite the fact that these three edge cities have levels of diversity proportionately equal to or greater than Toronto’s, Kristin Good has revealed that they fall considerably behind Toronto in terms of responsiveness to their demographics. In her incredibly thorough account of multiculturalism and diversity in Toronto, Vancouver and their suburban counterparts, Good developed an approach to measure the responsiveness of a municipality to immigrants and ethnocultural minorities. Her study focused primarily on the ways in which various municipalities developed and implemented policies of multiculturalism, delineating three broad elements of policy: 1) formal policy pronouncements and initiatives, 2) policy implementation and 3) informal policies or practices (52). It

was determined that a municipality can be proactive, reactive or inactive and their “depth of municipal responsiveness” to immigrants and ethnocultural diversity can be comprehensive, limited or highly limited. Taken together, these two evaluations determine whether a municipality is responsive, somewhat response or unresponsive.

Corroborating the “objective” assessment of a municipality’s responsiveness based on data collected from municipalities’ websites and those of their various agencies, local-government policy documents, and interviews with over 100 local leaders, with the views of immigrant-serving community leaders, Good found that the City of Toronto is “responsive” to immigrants and ethnocultural minorities, and that it has adopted a “*comprehensive* range of policies that reflect the needs and preferences of these groups, and [has] done so in a *proactive* way” (57). The three suburban municipalities in the sample, Markham, Mississauga and Brampton considerably lacked Toronto’s initiative. Markham has been “somewhat responsive” to its changing ethnocultural demographics: “their policy responses have been *limited* and for the most part have been adopted *reactively*”. And Mississauga and Brampton “have been ‘unresponsive’ to the particular concerns of immigrants and ethnocultural minorities; for the most part they have been *inactive* in multiculturalism policy” (57).

A multitude of factors come together to make Toronto a responsive city, and to make its suburban counterparts either unresponsive (as in the case of Mississauga and Brampton), or somewhat responsive (as in the case of Markham). In Toronto, political, community, and economic leaders have built bridges to create and maintain a “network of productive governance arrangements and resources to support multiculturalism and settlement-policy development” (94). Ethnocultural diversity is considered an asset in Toronto, and it has been mobilized to enhance the city’s image as a global or world city, reflected symbolically in the city’s motto “Diversity our Strength” (94)⁴³.

⁴³ That the city has actively cultivated this profile is not without criticism; I briefly discuss some of these critiques later in this chapter.

Political, community and economic leaders in Toronto believe that the city should have an expansive and active role in immigration, settlement and multiculturalism policy, and numerous initiatives, have been set up to address these concerns. As Good explains “Toronto’s high level of responsiveness is correlated with an abundance of well-resourced organizations in the immigration, settlement, and multiculturalism policy fields. The city has many immigration and settlement agencies and ethnospecific planning councils, as well as other organizations that provide services to immigrants and refugees and represent their interests” (108). The extent of these initiatives, organizations and policies is actually too great to detail here, but some examples are the city’s Diversity Management and Community Engagement Unit (DMU), which coordinates a handful of diversity-related working groups and advisory committees, provides “leadership in diversity policy to line departments and agencies” and more generally acts as a “catalyst” and a “facilitator” in the city (58). There is also the Race and Ethnic Relations Advisory Committee, which is designed to formally consult ethnocultural minorities on city issues, and the Immigration and Refugee Issue Working Group which seeks to engage Toronto’s diverse communities in developing various city policies (60).

Such municipally directed action is further supported by Toronto’s business community and certain private foundations (such as the Maytree and Laidlaw foundations), which together provide considerable support for immigrant settlement and integration and actively work to develop and facilitate anti-racism and equality initiatives in the workplace (110). All of this activity promoting the goals and ethos of Canada’s official multiculturalism is reinforced and supported by Toronto’s progressive newspaper, the *Toronto Star*, which has proved itself crucial to agenda setting in the city and to “airing city issues” in a way that “challenges local governance arrangements to respond to emerging issues” (115). It has a reporter assigned to issues of diversity and immigration in

the city, and has been credited with bringing “the issue of racial profiling in police services to the forefront of public debate” (115).⁴⁴

In contrast, the suburban municipalities of Mississauga, Brampton and Markham dramatically lack this commitment to multiculturalism. In Mississauga, the GTA’s most populous and fastest growing suburb, Good found that the only notable responses to diversity were Mayor Hazel McCallion’s annual multicultural breakfast, and a formerly city-funded but now financially independent multicultural festival called Carassauga. The city actually has a policy “*against* translating documents into other languages,” and this “despite requests from various ethnic groups” for certain city documents, such as the Master Plan, to be translated. This refusal stands in stark contrast to Toronto’s public information service, Access Toronto, which provides information on city services in more than 140 languages (58). Mississauga’s business community has failed to demonstrate any active interest in multiculturalism or immigration issues. Brampton’s and Markham’s business communities have been slightly more proactive than Mississauga’s, but do not nearly approximate the engagement of Toronto’s community in “supporting social initiatives and community development” for ethnocultural communities (112).

In the “somewhat responsive” municipality of Markham, the business community’s commitment level is conditioned by a prevailing conflict between new Chinese immigrants and older, predominantly white, inhabitants, and determined by a belief that “business interests cannot be effectively represented when the business community is divided” (113). In a conversation with one Brampton councilor (who is one of very few councilors from a visible-minority background) Good discovered that “immigrants and ethnocultural minorities feel as though the city does not represent them” (86). This sentiment is perhaps understandable in light of the city’s paltry attempts to include ethnocultural minorities in decision making, policy development or settlement which is limited

⁴⁴ Again, Toronto’s official approach to diversity and commitment to the goals of Canada’s official multiculturalism have been criticized as profoundly narrow and banal. I discuss them to signal how great a disparity there is between Toronto and its suburban counterparts.

to a multicultural festival called Carabram, and a monthly breakfast hosted by the mayor for the leaders of various religious and cultural communities in the city (85). In all three municipalities, there was a general lack in advocacy for multiculturalism policy development, immigrant settlement and race equality initiatives, and most people stressed the costs of such programs over any benefits they might deliver to communities (114).

Finally, a most telling indicator of Toronto's "dynamic political culture" and commitment to the needs of diverse members of the community, are the expectations of local leaders. Good writes that "these people expect the city to overcome its jurisdictional and resource limitations and provide leadership in multiculturalism policy. They do not accept the argument that these policy areas are provincial and federal responsibilities and, therefore, beyond the scope of local mandates" (119). In comparison, local leaders in the suburban municipalities were resigned to the unimportance their local governments assigned to issues of multiculturalism and diversity, and they were cynical about the possibility of any kind of positive change.

Many urban studies scholars have looked to the city as a promising frontier and model for inter-cultural relations and a sense being-togetherness that is necessary in an increasingly globalized world (Amin, 2002; Sandercock, 2003). As Good has pointed out in her study, cities like Toronto and Vancouver, Canada's two most demographically diverse cities, "play an important role both in the initial immigrant settlement process and in achieving the ongoing goals of Canada's official multiculturalism" (47). Moreover they have been at the "forefront of social change" in Canada and "have become important innovators in multiculturalism policy development" (47). The six suburban municipalities Good included in her study – each of which has roughly the same proportional percentage of immigrants and/or visible minorities as Vancouver or Toronto – were dramatically unresponsive to those realities. The "somewhat responsive" municipalities in the sample – Richmond, Surrey, and Markham – have been so largely as a result of extreme racial tensions between newly arrived Chinese immigrants and older white inhabitants.

Good has chalked up the disparity between Toronto and the surrounding suburban municipalities to a number of different factors. Firstly, it is a much older city than its suburban counterparts, and significantly larger, with a population of approximately 2.5 million people. While Mississauga, Markham and Brampton may all have proportional percentages of diversity equal to or higher than Toronto, the actual size of Toronto's immigrant population numbers over one million, which is larger than the entire population of any of these cities (indeed it is larger than most Canadian cities). Toronto's Chinese and South Asian populations alone are greater than the entire population of Markham (Good, 12). Moreover, being an older and larger city, "ethno-racial minorities have had more *time* to organize and to create bridges among ethnic groups in Toronto", and it has "benefited from the investment of resources (including settlement resources) from upper levels of government", also over a longer period of time (Good, 2007, 40).

Further to this, Toronto has been able to build from a very strong foundation of diversity policies that were developed in the mid 70s by the former Municipality of Metropolitan Toronto and the former City of Toronto (57). Moreover, there is a very strong sense among community leaders, the local government, and city residents that Toronto, (like Vancouver and Montreal), is a "qualitatively different" kind of city – that it is a global or world city (Good, 2007, 41). This projection of Toronto as a world city "emerges as a blend of official discourse produced and disseminated by city hall, often in conjunction with both higher levels of government (provincial and federal) and private enterprise, positioned alongside a grassroots movement" propelled by a combination of advocacy for racial equality, public space and environmental activism, and a growing community of artists (Levin and Solga, 38). As I noted above, Toronto's self perception and carefully cultivated projection of itself as an altogether different kind of city is reflected in its motto "Diversity our Strength".⁴⁵ In addition to the vast disparities in municipal approaches and

⁴⁵ I'd like to briefly recognize some of the critiques of Toronto's approach towards diversity, (unfortunately doing them justice is outside the scope of my discussion).

policies between Toronto and its suburban counterparts, Toronto distinguishes itself in terms of its vernacular or unofficial form of multiculturalism (Burman, 2010b). The vibrancy of this vernacular multiculturalism, and the challenges it poses to normative conceptions of a Toronto “mainstream”, motivated Jenny Burman to reconceptualize Toronto as a “diasporic city”. In moving away from the language of multiculturalism, Burman contends that we are more able to accurately describe “the radicality of the current urban transformations” and the “new spectrum of possibilities” such transformations have produced (2006, 102).

Burman argues that the model of the multicultural city – with its emphasis on “cultural retention” and static notions of culture – is too narrow to grasp the density of hybridities, alliances and asymmetries that characterize Toronto (2006, 102; 2010, 102). The language of multiculturalism continues to posit a “declining but still powerful” Anglo-European mainstream that is increasingly out of date (2006, 111): “the ‘mainstream’ Toronto into which new groups might assimilate has been altered irrevocably to the point where residents of non-European descent make up more than half of the population” (103). I find Burman’s conception of the diasporic city – as “partly a reality, partly a horizon” – incredibly appealing, especially in its capacity to simultaneously critique the city’s “top-down diversity management style” policies, and to enunciate its “hybridization of places and subject positions” (2010, 103/104). However, in analyzing the language with which the BAPS Mandir and the Hindu Federation’s campaign for funeral rights have been described by the media, residents of Toronto and the GTA, and by public officials, and by exploring the various locations with which these spaces are associated, I argue that such a concept is neither a reality, nor a horizon in suburban space. The diasporic city is

As laudable as many believe Toronto’s approach is, it has been criticized by others as a banal attempt to “sell” diversity (Abu-Laban & Gabriel, 2002). It is argued that the city has directed a considerable amount of time and resources to accommodating and fostering ethnic diversity not “out of fairness and principles of justice” but rather to effectively manage diversity in order to “a) promote economic growth, and b) avoid race relations problems that could threaten business investment” (Good, 126). Still however, the differences between Toronto’s approach and that of its suburban counterparts is striking, and Toronto’s approach has certainly contributed to the dynamism of Toronto’s urban and political culture.

differentially realized across Toronto's urban fabric, and I contend that there are particular conditions of the suburban form, and interpretations of its character, that prohibit, or slow, the development of a robust form of vernacular multiculturalism, or as Burman might argue, a process of diasporization (2010a).

Joanne Waghorne's discussion of the Sri Siva-Vishnu Hindu temple in suburban Washington is telling in this respect. The temple occupies "an archetypal suburban split-level house" in Lanham, Maryland, "a fast-growing outpost of metropolitan Washington" (103). It is surrounded by nearly identical ranch style homes that were typical of post-World War II suburban development in this area. The neighbourhood has grown increasingly diverse over the last twenty years. At the time Waghorne conducted her research, the temple's neighbor to the right was the Victory World Outreach, a Christian gospel study group, and a young African-American Muslim family occupied the house to the left. Waghorne suggests that "the temple stands amid other houses, but it is not related to them in any way other than that this suburban world allows such a temple to exist among houses... *only such neutral areas that are not bounded neighbourhoods could so easily tolerate such diversity*" (120). And she asks whether "diversities living side by side but never infringing on the other – a patchwork quilt, a cut-and-paste world of multiculturalism that is stitched together by neighborliness and good fences" is not the "quintessential characteristic" of contemporary suburban life (she believes it is) (120). I do not support such an unequivocal assessment of suburban life, but her argument does help us to begin theorizing the relationship between multiculturalism and the suburban form.

I must first critique her suggestion that only "neutral" areas and "not bounded" neighbourhoods would be able to "tolerate such diversity" (120). While it is true that many neighbourhoods in highly multicultural societies have seen considerable conflicts, whether over space or as a result of the intense proximity of diverse groups of people⁴⁶, numerous other "bounded" neighbourhoods have transformed into dynamically multicultural and hybridized

⁴⁶ Take, for example, the race riots in three British cities in the spring/summer of 2001.

spaces as a result of their demographic diversity. It is this very dynamism that stirred Burman to develop the concept of the diasporic city. What might be more accurate to say is that the neighbourhood Waghorne describes is “caught in the multicultural model” (Burman, 2010, 102) – multicultural because its diverse groups are imagined as existing contiguously beside but not meaningfully interacting with one another (“side by side... never infringing on the other”), and “caught” because its spatial formation and embodied values limit or slow its transformation (it is “stitched together by neighborliness and good fences”).

The area in which the BAPS Mandir resides is a sort of “neutral” space, not unlike the neighbourhood in which the Sri Siva-Vishnu Temple is found. But I take issue with Waghorne’s use of the term “neutral” – I argue that it is not so much that the space is neutral, but rather that the materialization of difference within is not perceived to challenge a hegemonic spatial order. Leonie Sandercock argues that the local spaces of any city are embodied with cultural and political values – and that conflicts within the “mongrel cities of the 21st century” are most often the result of contestations over whose imaginary is to be writ in space (111). That the BAPS Mandir does not threaten the stability of a dominant – we might even say “Canadian-Canadian” – spatial narrative is evidenced by the way in which reporters described the temple. Many highlighted how “out of the way” this area of Toronto is, stating that while thousands of commuters and other vehicles pass by the temple everyday, most are doing just that: passing by. Aparita Bhandari writes that “once you find your way to the Etobicoke neighbourhood near Finch and Highway 427” (as if not many usually would), “it’s hard to miss the BAPS Shree Swaminaryan Hindu *mandir* among its brutalist industrial neighbours” (2005, 1). Such deprecatory remarks of the surrounding region abound. “The Hindu temple’s location,” writes David Hume, “a dreary suburban site in the northwest corner of the city, makes the temple all the more remarkable. It addresses the area with such sincerity that it puts the rest of the stuff that lines the highway to shame. Most Torontonians may not value this part of the city, but these people do” (2008, 2). The area is represented as not worth visiting, and it is not considered a valuable asset to the city. *Globe and*

Mail columnist Charles Finlay proposes that the temple may have a positive impact on the “dismal” region by precipitating economic spinoffs (2007). But it is “the surreality of the whole thing – a full-blown Hindu temple complex on the side of a highway to nowhere” that remains the overwhelming “reaction” of onlookers and visitors (Hume, 2008).

These reporters stage an incongruity between the spectacular Hindu temple and its surrounding region. But the perceived incongruity emerges not from a sense of discomfort about difference, or a challenge to a hegemonic spatiality, but that such a manifestation of diversity is unusual to and not befitting of the suburbs. Following scholarship in critical urban studies, I have suggested that we consider the BAPS temple an expression of its community’s citizenship rights and an assertion of belonging in the nation. I contend that the BAPS Mandir was seen to be incongruous with its locale because this kind of “declaration in architecture” as David Hume puts it (2008), as an assertion of citizenship and belonging, has less of an historical precedent in suburban space. The suburbs lack both policies *and* “*traditions* of accommodating diversity”, so much so that, communities seeking to “express collective identity, solidarity and citizenship...continue to celebrate their national holidays, religious festivals or soccer triumphs on the streets or civic squares of the old core city of Toronto” (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1999, 105, my emphasis). While diversity has always been “a feature of urban life” (Watson, 1) it has only recently become a feature of suburban life. The demographic diversity of the GTA’s suburban neighbourhoods and municipalities has unsettled the long-held assumption that the suburbs are sites of demographic homogeneity, but it has yet to fully unsettle the modes of “being political” (Isin, 2002) – the practices of making and claiming space – that are traditional to these sites⁴⁷. Put differently, that the

⁴⁷ Matthew Hall and Barrett Lee discuss the two perspectives which dominate popular thinking about the suburbs in the United States: the “suburban dream” perspective and the “suburban nightmare” perspective. Both are premised on the notion that “suburbs are homogenous, consisting predominantly of White, married, middle-class homeowners with children” (3). This is less relevant for the Canadian context where, I do think that most recognize the demographic diversity of the suburbs that ring Canada’s largest

suburbs, historically sites of demographic and architectural homogeneity, may also be on their way to an immense kind of spatial diversity, the result of the unique relationships their diverse communities may take up and forge with their locales in their expressions of citizenship, is less well accepted.

I argue that the BAPS Mandir represents a new form of engagement with space in the suburbs, a new kind of declaration of citizenship in architecture that has historically been associated with the *urban* form⁴⁸. At the same time, and as my following discussion of the Hindu Federation's campaign will reveal, it stands as the quintessential expression of suburban multiculturalism. This is a safe, contained representation of official multiculturalism, and the fact that it exists within a little valued suburban/industrial neighbourhood perceived to be disconnected from the rest of the city helps to explain why this temple has been constructed as an acceptable manifestation of multiculturalism, celebrated as an "awe-inspiring" testament to Canada's "proud tradition of pluralism" (Guelph Mercury, 2007, 1).

The Hindu Federation's campaign further reveals the limits of suburban multiculturalism, and the challenges immigrant communities face in their assertions of citizenship and belonging within these locales. The campaign is perceived to challenge a particular imaginary of suburban space and of the nation, evidenced by the sometimes xenophobic and virulent criticism it came up against, and by its ongoing struggle to formally secure a space for this practice. As my discussion thus far has revealed, the demographics of a city do not necessarily imply or lead to a robust form of multiculturalism. Indeed while there is a significant deficiency in official multiculturalism policy in the suburban municipalities that Good examined, the way in which the BAPS Mandir was seen to be incongruent with suburban space, and the immense difficulty the suburban Hindu community has faced with respect to this

cities. The point I am trying to make however, is that the demographic diversity of these locales has not yet translated into a dynamic, diasporic urban culture.

⁴⁸ I should note however that it is not the *only* example of this new kind of engagement. Many diasporic communities are contending with the suburbs in this way, transforming the modes of being political that they have historically made possible.

campaign is an indication that such municipalities also lack a lived, vernacular form of multiculturalism. This lack has implications for the extent to which immigrant communities may claim their citizenship rights.

As I discussed in the previous chapters, criticisms of the campaign were largely articulated through the language of pollution and concerns for the environment. Official perspectives oscillated between the belief that the practice would be of no harm to the environment, and the worry that a) not enough information was available to determine the effects of the sustained dispersal of ashes in a particular spot and b) that the environmental responsibility of the community could not be ensured or controlled (Guinto, 2011)⁴⁹. In the course of my research, I found that the preoccupation with the environmental concern was largely as a result of pressure from the public – the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Credit Valley Conservation authority, and representatives of both local and provincial governments, consistently reiterated concerns over sightings of non-traditional pollutants and ethnicized detritus in the water. Particular kinds of images emerged to articulate such concerns: “foreign” pollutants (i.e. lemons and bunches of flowers wrapped in plastic rather than pop bottles and candy wrappers) bobbing down Canadian rivers; dogs sniffing at ash remains and coconuts on the shore; burnt body parts floating down stream; “the Credit River ain’t the Ganges... you ain’t in India anymore” (Gombu, 2007; Guinto, 2011; Sharma, 2011; Ramnauth & Gosyne, 2011; mnolz, 2009). According to a TRCA report, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority

⁴⁹ A major concern cited by the Toronto and Region Conservation Authority, the Credit Valley Conservation Authority, residents of the GTA, and some city officials is that individuals performing these ceremonies would drop non-biodegradable items (such as jewellery, coins, and clothing), or an unwieldy amount of biodegradable materials (flowers and leaves) into the water. The Hindu Federation, in collaboration with the TRCA, developed a brochure describing the proper protocol for conducting water offerings and the negative effects such offerings could have if they were not performed in an environmentally responsible manner. The brochure can be found on the TRCA’s website, it was distributed to all the Hindu temples in the GTA, and an event was held at the Ram Mandir to discuss the matter in detail. Pandit Sharma, and representatives from the Devi Mandir in Pickering had no suspicions that their communities were not following these protocols (TRCA, 30). As one Hindu living in the GTA stated, “most would have the common [sense] not to pollute the environment in which they live” (Gombu, 2007).

filed numerous complaints “founded on personal observations of offerings floating on the water surface and being carried for considerable distances downstream and along the Lake Ontario waterfront. Concerns raised include the real and/or perceived impacts of ashes and offerings on water quality, aquatic life and aesthetic enjoyment and on the interests of riparian landowners” (TRCA, 33).

Criticism mounted when Pickering declared it would dedicate a spot for the practice in Brockridge Park, a very centrally located, and popular park in the city, with a creek (Duffins) that runs through it (see Figure 3.9).

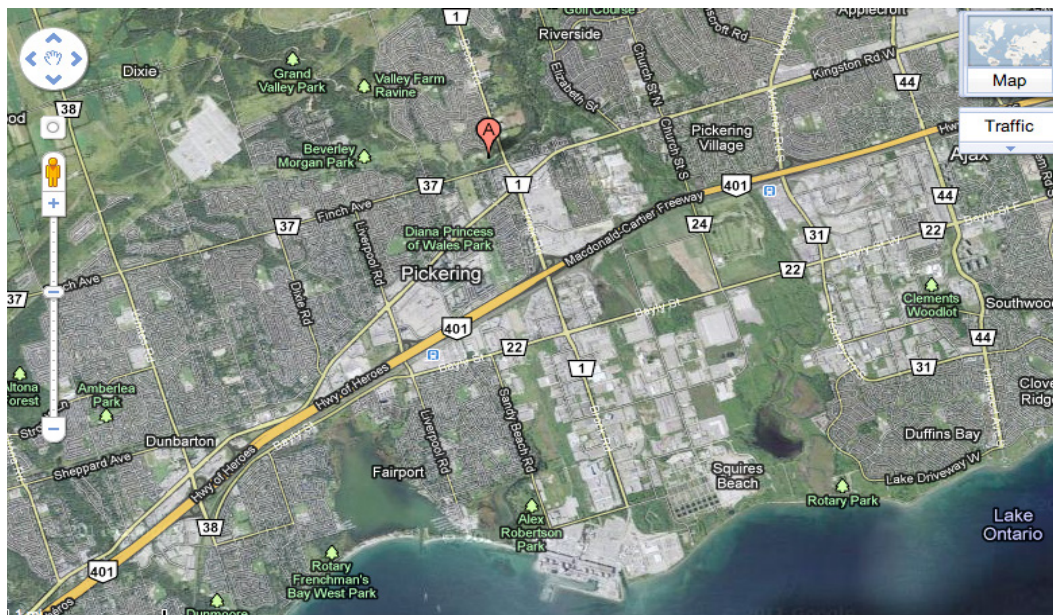


Figure 3.9: Brockridge Park, Pickering (represented by the “A”). Map. *Google Maps*, Google, July 2011. Web.

News reports described Pickering residents as in “disbelief”. At a town hall meeting, one resident cried that she had “always been led to believe that our waters our sacred. That is our life force really” (Calis, 2009). On June 26, 2009 Ontario’s Minister of Government Services announced that the scattering of ashes is permitted on occupied or unoccupied Crown land, and those Crown lands covered by water. They stated that “there is no need to obtain government consent to scatter on or in such areas, which include provincial parks and conservation reserves, and the Great Lakes. Individuals wishing to scatter on

private land, or private land covered by water, should obtain the owner's consent" (TRCA, 32). Duffins Creek falls under the TRCA's jurisdiction, which is included in the provincial categorization. The scattering of ashes could therefore take place on Duffins Creek. However, the Hindu community was seeking one specific designated site, identified with signage. The request for a specific site can be read as an expression of citizenship, belonging and inclusion in the nation, a claim for space and for the right to handle grief and death according to one's own customs and religious practices. A designated site would, hopefully, limit intrusions by onlookers and signal the permissibility of the practice to the wider community. In Pickering, the establishment of such a space requires a proposal to council. And it was the granting of one official site that had Pickering residents – and politicians that represent them – so concerned.

Mark Guinto explained to me that Brockridge Park is a very popular and busy park in the city. Residents who opposed the practice were worried that should the city approve a site, the Hindu funeral ceremonies would limit both their access to and enjoyment of the park. When I mentioned that I didn't think the practice would be particularly intrusive on other park users, Guinto responded that it wasn't the practice itself that was a concern but that the park has

“a limited amount of parking spaces available... they get pretty filled up. And then if there is a scheduled tournament or a game it would just create conflict in the community. Never mind the ash scattering... but if there's a game or a tournament going on and you let another group take over the park – like 50 or 60 spaces for another activity, then there would be a conflict... we have a limited amount of parking” (Guinto, 24:00, 2011).

Here the park is constructed as a space rightfully reserved for baseball games and soccer tournaments, and the facilities are entitled to individuals partaking in those ordinary park activities. The park is often busy, and should it be used for anything other than such traditional activities, it becomes at risk of being too full – the community's enjoyment of their park is under the threat of loss (if they

cannot park their cars they cannot attend practice!) and therefore their unwillingness to share the space is seen to be justified.

And yet, the size of the ceremony is grossly overestimated – the parking lot is not actually under the threat of full capacity. Both Ramesh Gosyne (a scriptural teacher at the Devi Mandir) and Pandit Sharma (of the Shri Ram Mandir) told me that the ceremony would include between one and five people, only the closest family and/or friends. Moreover, many residents *were* very concerned about the practice itself, contrary to Guinto's assertion that they were not. In my interview with the Devi Mandir, Cecil Ramnauth told me that "people were getting this feeling that [we would be] walking through the park...singing and beating drums and...making music with symbols...and going down to this creek and throwing the ash and having a tremendous build up of ash...and it was creating a lot of anxiety in the community". Ultimately, the politicians and the Hindu community together decided that "it was not going to be politically expedient for the politicians of the day to undertake such risk for fear that they would not be elected", and they began looking for a site along Lake Ontario, near Frenchman's Bay (Gosyne & Ramnauth, 27:24).⁵⁰ The new site is expected to be much more private than the original site proposed for Brockridge Park, a place Cecil described as "more suitable for people to go to scatter the ash without being harassed... in any way shape or form" (38:33).⁵¹

Mark Guinto was very much in support of the practice, and he was the only person I spoke to that attributed criticism to a "subtle form of racism". As we continued our discussion, he felt the need to clarify his position: "it might not be racism – but when people are... *visibly* exposed to other rites and practices that they aren't familiar with...it creates a level of discomfort...it's a discomfort because it's not something you are used to" (14:50). This notion of visibility is crucial in understanding suburban multiculturalism and the kinds of expressions

⁵⁰ When I spoke to Guinto only a few weeks before my interview with the Devi Mandir, he made no mention of the fact that Brockridge Park was no longer an option.

⁵¹ While Cecil and Ramesh were frustrated by the sometimes hysterical criticism that they received, they stressed their belief that acceptance is all a matter of education and awareness. Ramesh told me that he believed most Canadians would be 100 percent supportive if they only knew all the facts about the practice.

of citizenship it makes possible. Criticism of the campaign revolved predominantly around the various manifestations of its visual intrusion: the visibility of ritual objects in beloved waterways, the Credit River transforming into the Ganges, an accumulation of ash on the banks of a stream in a popular public park, a group of “unfamiliar” people singing and banging drums amidst a soccer tournament. Critics experienced, or perceived, their everyday spaces altered in a way that challenged both their enjoyment of it and their imaginary of it. Sandercock argues that the imaginaries of national space and belonging are imaginaries that are “actually, literally embodied in the local spaces of one’s street, neighbourhood and city, where [they are] either reinforced or undermined. It is an imaginary which involves a sure knowledge” that when taking a walk in, say, a public park, one will come across a family picnic, or a children’s soccer match, and not a Hindu funeral ceremony (112).

Many scholars have pointed to the “powers of visibility and encounter between strangers in the open or public spaces of the city” in materializing a robust, multicultural urban culture (93). Burman describes the city as “a crossroads site deriving its energy from the coming into relation of people” (2010, 102). However, in the suburbs, encounters with strangers and the coming into relation of diverse sorts of people are considerably less common. Whereas traditional urban centres are about publicness, visibility and proximity, the “countless pathways running in and out”, and unstable, collaborative productions of “here” (Burman, 2001, 196/199), the suburbs are considerably more privatized and capsulated (Miller, 9). The experience of suburban life is characterized by its sprawling geography and dominated by the personal automobile. Social interactions occur largely within private spaces; co-mingling and co-presence is easily controlled and/or avoided. Likewise, the privacy that conditions the character and social relations of the suburbs extends to official and unofficial positions on multiculturalism and expressions of diversity. As Good suggests, multiculturalism in the suburbs is mainly considered a “private matter” (133).

Furthermore, as one of Good’s informants pointed out, in Toronto, organizations, corporations, community leaders and municipal officials working

together to develop ethnocultural equity mandates and policies meet both “in the boardroom and the street” (32, 2007). In the suburbs, social encounters are so often mediated and proscribed by the steel and glass of one’s car, and the vast tracts of highway and land separating houses, stores and gathering places. The very possibilities for co-mingling, co-presence and encounter that help to make dynamic, diasporic urban cultures are severely limited in the suburbs. As Isin writes, “whether groups stand near to or far from each other has a significant impact on how they orient toward each other...the proximity or distance among the members of a group or between two groups has considerable impact on the relationships they constitute” (45).

It is not just the diverse demographics of a city or region, and the local government’s commitment to fostering the vibrancy of that diversity that catalyze the development of a dynamic multicultural urban life. It is also the structural form of those spaces, the social relations that are constituted by them, and the modes of “being political” they make possible. I do not agree with the reporters’ understanding of the Rexdale area as a “dismal” and otherwise insignificant neighbourhood in the city of Toronto, and I do not mean to suggest that the suburban regions and municipalities that I have discussed here cannot eventually transform into places like Burman’s diasporic city. Rather, I argue that a city’s spatial arrangement – and social, political and cultural commitments that are constituted by it – matters in exploring the relationship between multiculturalism and the city, and that suburban multiculturalism, typified by controlled and bounded spatializations of diversity, is fundamentally different, and much more limited than urban multiculturalism. Moreover, the form of suburban multiculturalism has ramifications for the way in which communities assert their citizenship rights and sense of belonging in the nation.

When multiculturalism is considered an “overwhelmingly urban phenomenon” (Graham and Philips, 1) as it so often is, and when the city is considered a “strategic arena for the development of citizenship” a particular image of the city is generated; and it is an image that does not adequately represent the suburban condition. We cannot assume that as Canada’s suburban

regions grow increasingly multicultural that a dynamic, multicultural ethos, which enables immigrant communities to claim rights to citizenship through the appropriation of urban space in a variety of ways, will naturally follow.

Conclusion: Encountering Multiculturalism

This thesis has explored the public life and history of two Hindu spaces in suburban Ontario – how they have been understood and received by the media, by public officials, and by residents of the Greater Toronto Area – and the complex ways in which they can be seen to mediate a range of discourses, forms, and articulations of multiculturalism in Canada. The story I have told here reveals how multiculturalism involves “a double and contradictory process of incorporation and exclusion” (Ahmed, 2000, 97); how “multicultural Canadians” are “managed, located, let in, excluded, made visible or invisible, represented positively or negatively, assimilated or appropriated, depending on the changing needs” of the nation (Mackey, 25). In order to capture the complex machinations of that process, I have taken up and considered multiculturalism in a variety of ways: as a demographic “fact” giving way to a profound set of transformations in Canada’s cultural, political and urban environment; as a collection of policies at official, provincial and municipal levels intended to “manage” diversity, foster an ethos of inclusion and acceptance within Canadian society, and to define what forms of diversity may be accepted as part of the “national ideal” and what forms may not; as a highly contested ideological terrain where the identity, politics “and culture of the nation and its limits are embattled” (Fortier, 17); and as an enabling (or disabling) condition of citizenship and belonging. I have mapped some of the articulations between these forms, the various transformations they have undergone, and the broader cultural, political and global dynamics in which they are implicated.

In the course of my discussion, I seem to have painted a rather grim picture of multiculturalism in Canada. In Chapter 2 I explored how the interplay between particular global and local dynamics has functioned to significantly impact the way in which multiculturalism is “felt” as an encounter (Fortier, 2008), debated in public discourse, and constructed as official policy. Analyzing the introduction of the new multiculturalism program in 1997 alongside some of the major critiques and concerns expressed in the public debates, I suggested that

the terms of belonging and inclusion in the nation have been redrawn according to how citizens, or potential citizens are considered to feel. What were once qualities of substantive citizenship (feelings of inclusion, belonging, and attachment to the nation) – qualities that the policy and ethos of multiculturalism in Canada promise to enable – have become *conditions* of citizenship. I called this the “feeling condition of citizenship” and I suggested that it creates a set of new and at times impossible expectations for those whose inclusion and belonging in the nation is, for some reason or another, not guaranteed.

In Chapter 3 I argued that we have to take into consideration the suburbanization of multiculturalism when we conceive of the relationship between the city, multiculturalism and citizenship. Multiculturalism is not just an overwhelmingly urban phenomenon; it is also increasingly, a suburban one (Good, 93). I argued that the particular conditions of the urban form – visibility, proximity, and ‘publicness’ – that are crucial to the realizing of a robustly multicultural ethos, and which together enable dynamic expressions of citizenship, are severely limited in the suburbs. What I have called “suburban multiculturalism” is an effect of these sites lacking “traditions of accommodating diversity” (Siemiatycki and Isin, 1999) and of their spatial form – its sprawling geography, a reliance on the personal automobile, limited public gathering places and restricted possibilities for encounters with difference. Suburban multiculturalism is privatized and capsulated, characterized by controlled and bounded spatializations of diversity. The new immigrants increasingly drawn to the suburban municipalities and neighbourhoods of the Toronto metropolitan region as a result of the expanding networks and community infrastructure taking shape there, face a different set of challenges than their urban counterparts. Lacking the dynamic multicultural (or diasporic) ethos of the urban core, these new spaces are limited in the expressions of citizenship they permit and make possible. This is perhaps a new and unforeseen way in which multiculturalism acts as a mechanism of inclusion and exclusion.

In my concluding remarks, I’d like to brighten this picture a little bit. Indeed, there are real countervailing pressures on the realizing of a robustly

multicultural society in Canada, however, I think that we can also identify some moments and sites of possibility and potential transformation. If, as Eva Mackey suggests, multiculturalism functions as a strategy for the articulation of power relations that draws its force from the flexibility and the ambiguity of the strategy (13), so alternative discourses may draw their power from that flexibility too. I think that we might find some fertile ground in the title of this thesis: “Encountering Multiculturalism in Suburban Ontario”. What does it mean to encounter multiculturalism? How has this thesis sketched a history of encounters?

Part of my imperative throughout this discussion has been to investigate how multiculturalism is encountered in many ways and forms: in the diasporic texture of contemporary urban life, as an official policy enshrined in our Charter, in the headline of a national newspaper (Barbara Kay says “Multiculturalism was Canada’s biggest mistake”) as the subject of your daughter’s grade 8 history paper, a neighbourhood controversy over someone’s “Burqini”, a guideline for respectful conduct in the workplace. The results of these encounters – whether, say, the Hindu Federation’s campaign is read as something to fear, encourage, or support – is, as Ahmed suggests, based on past histories of encounters, associations, and narratives (2004, 7).

But is there not also something unpredictable about the encounter? An encounter is not the same thing as a meeting, or a rendezvous. To encounter something or someone is to come upon the thing or person by chance, to be surprised, to be caught, perhaps, unawares. Encounters involve instability and conflict. The feeling or approach one takes, or the ideas one forms as an effect of the encounter might be determined by past histories of encounters, memories, and stories told – but not “fully determined” by those histories (Ahmed, 2000, 7). Crucially, encounters are moments of negotiation. They involve unpredictability, conflict, and contestation. If ideas and forms of multiculturalism emerge in a series of encounters, if multiculturalism is indeed, *felt* as an encounter, then the encounter is our site of possibility. My use of the present progressive –

“*encountering* multiculturalism” – is deliberate. I evoke a process that is *in situ*, a story that is not yet over.

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