

# **Transnational Urban Planning in the Multicultural City: An Analysis of Diversity Beyond Ethnoculturalism**

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## **Abstract**

Multiculturalism policy in Canada was intended to create a greater acknowledgement of the diverse contributions made by migrants. The federal government's policy framework sought to have diverse migrants in Canada included within government initiatives and public participation. A critical aspect to multiculturalism has been a focus on ethnoculturalism. However, it has become increasingly evident that multiculturalism has failed to address widening levels of inequity and inequality, most notably in the city of Toronto. Multiculturalism has also insufficiently enabled a broader public participation with diverse migrants. This study adopts a qualitative approach to understand migrant diversity beyond ethnoculturalism. By conducting 5 semi-structured interviews and reviewing relevant scholarly and grey literature, this paper considers a transnational framework to look at public engagement through multicultural urban planning and question its focus on ethnoculturalism. My research reveals that people's experiences with trauma, violence, gender marginalization, or undemocratic institutions among others are not always considered in both multiculturalism and urban planning – therefore affecting the public participation process. I argue that planning practitioners must look beyond migrant ethnocultural diversity alongside the complex lived experiences across the globe and state borders. By recognizing this diversity, practitioners could begin to look at (re)igniting political activism among migrants in the multicultural city.

## Foreword

This Major Paper is a culmination of my Area of Concentration, 'Equity-Based Urban Planning' that is outlined in my Plan of Study. This Area of Concentration sought to explore the political-economic framework that is guiding urban planning in the city of Toronto. The Area of Concentration also sought to investigate how multiculturalism has shaped the practice of urban planning. This Major Paper seeks to produce a framework that enhances public participation in the multicultural city of Toronto in order to produce an active urban citizen (or resident).

In my Plan of Study, the three components to my 'Area of Concentration' and 'Learning Objectives' include Multiculturalism, Equity and Community Planning, and Insurgency Planning. The intention behind these learning objectives was to gain a thorough understanding of the theory and practice of urban planning as it shapes urban space and the public participatory processes. These 'Learning Objectives' were accomplished in the MES program through coursework, workshops, and field experiences.

This Major Paper presents the insight and knowledge gained throughout the MES program through research. This paper has enabled me to, per my Objective 1.2, gain a good understanding of the on-ground experiences of multiculturalism from relevant community actors in Toronto to understand how multicultural ideology plays out at the urban level; and to, per Objective 2.3, develop an understanding of the role that community planning plays in seeking to develop equity-oriented strategies for marginalized groups in the city of Toronto. Finally, the overall research allowed me to, per Objective 3.3, ground myself with knowledge in the politics of planning as it informs the epistemological dimensions of the current paradigm of planning, while also creating further room to expand current epistemology.

## Acknowledgements

This research and the opportunity to be in this program would have been impossible without the support from my friends and family. As I inch closer to my professional goals, I am forever indebted to the sacrifices made by my mother and father throughout my entire life – from seeing my father arrive late from work where I remember barely seeing him get home, but if lucky, enough to say goodnight and my mother bouncing from her job to dropping me off at day care to doing all the tremendous work that never went unnoticed and always appreciated.

To my siblings who are what siblings are supposed to be: fun and loving but always finding a way to get under your skin. This Major Paper is not only a formal way to demonstrate my own completion of this program. Rather, this Major Paper serves as a hopeful example for my siblings to further pursue their deepest of interests because mami and papi always have your back.

The support from my cousins has not gone unnoticed and I sincerely thank them. Like my siblings, this Major Paper is also for my younger cousins. I hope that it serves as a reminder that I will continue to try mentoring and supporting all my younger cousins in the best way possible.

My friends have been tremendous throughout my entire degree and as I wrote and researched for this Major Paper. I want to especially reach out to my best friend Jordan for being there every step of the way. My constant ranting about various subjects and talking about urban planning issues are discussed throughout the pages that follow. Unfortunately, the words ‘minor variance’ are not present. I would also like to thank other friends of mine such as Joana, Keegan, and Mathew for having faith in me during my own professional development as a future urban planner.

I would like to thank the people who took time out of their day to be part of this research. The interviews were extremely insightful and I am forever grateful to each person.

Finally, I just want to acknowledge my grandfather. Despite him passing away nearly 10 years ago, I would like to acknowledge that his words ‘vamos hombre’ continue to serve as encouragement today and always.

## Preface

For the first decade of my life, I grew up in a semi-detached bungalow in the Jane-Finch area. My experience reflected the diversity of multicultural Canada on one single street. I had friends and knew people from diverse places across the globe. These people were first generation Canadians whose parents were from El Salvador, Portugal, Italy, the Philippines, Guyana, Vietnam, Ghana, Germany (in this case it was an older couple), and Canadian (or a family with an extensive family history stemming from white British roots). My family is originally from Ecuador. I knew diversity for its visible characteristics. However, I interacted with these people because of the friendships we had formed. I knew that this area had long held stereotypes about crime, gangs and incivility. These were carried over even after I moved to the city of Vaughan where remarks about these stereotypes were often made by people around me and quite ironically by my friends as well. There was something about these ongoing stereotypes that people (even myself) did not really understand at that time.

Fast forward to the latter part of my undergraduate degree where I became increasingly interested in reading scholarly articles on the changing political and economic landscape, namely through neoliberalism. At this point I began to understand the stereotypes about the place I grew to love as a place to ride around on my bike, walk to the parks and the nearby beloved Jane-Finch and Yorkgate Mall where I continue to carry strong memories about walking with my grandfather to shop and eat.

Upon graduation and eventually taking courses at the master's level, a certain curiosity struck as I navigated through York's Masters in Environmental Studies program. My initial understanding of the complex global economic and political changes that affected the opportunities for those living in the Jane-Finch area was further reinforced as I attended community meetings for various planning studies or projects. I began to question why my neighbourhood street (or the diversity that existed there) was not present in this community meeting.

Planners have negotiated some of the challenges that come with a diverse population by enabling a diverse set of engagement tools, either language-specific material or by now increasingly adopting electronic material that is made for easier user access. Yet, something was still missing from this entire process and it became apparent with the recent influx of Syrian refugees into Canada.

Syrians were forcefully migrating due to war and trauma. However, was this complexity acknowledged in planning process? When we look around to question who *isn't* here, are we thinking that perhaps they were unable to understand the newsletter sent out, *or* are we thinking about *how* their lived experiences with undemocratic institutions, corruption, gender marginalization, colonialism (to name a few) have played a role in their own willingness to become part of the process? For migrants now living in Canada, do we consider that they may possess limited knowledge about their own right to participate in planning issues, particularly for issues that directly affect their well-being?

I never realized the impact of growing up on such a diverse street. However, it made me realize that if the city of Toronto wishes to proudly carry on with its 'Diversity Our Strength' motto, then the city must acknowledge diversity for its wide-ranging involvement with complex issues that are not most visibly noticeable.

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## 1. Introduction

There is no such thing as a model or ideal Canadian. What could be more absurd than the concept of an “all-Canadian” boy or girl? A society which emphasizes uniformity is one which creates intolerance and hate. A society which eulogizes the average citizen is one which breeds mediocrity” (speech on multiculturalism by P.E. Trudeau in Grainger, 2016).

Addressing the passing of a policy of multiculturalism in Canada as a key historic moment in Canadian history, these words by former Liberal Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau at the Ukrainian-Canadian Congress in 1971 symbolizes the acknowledgement of diversity arising from the 1970s. Canada then had a population of 21 million (The World Bank Group, 2018). The population was soon to substantially increase with the change in immigration policies (Baureiss, 1987). The city of Toronto witnessed this increase in population as low-income immigrant families arrived shortly after these policy changes (Hulchanski, 2007). Many new immigrant families arrived to live in highrise housing in the city’s postwar suburbs of Scarborough, western North York, and northern Etobicoke (Hulchanski, 2007). Early on, the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto (now called Social Planning Toronto) identified a shift in Toronto’s inner suburbs. A report by the Social Planning Council (1979: 236, emphasis in original) noted:

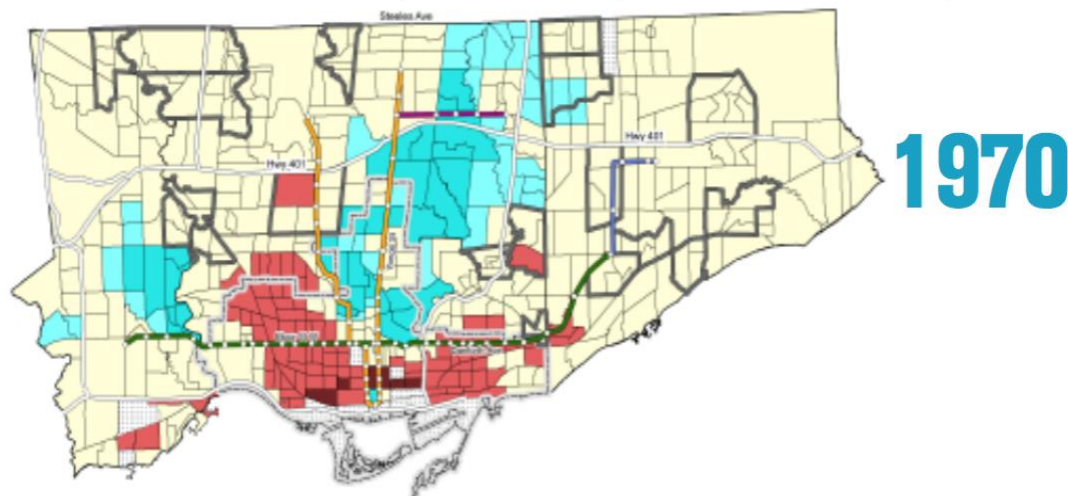
The post-war suburbs assumed one set of family conditions for child-rearing, and the physical environment incorporated these assumptions. The prototype suburban family – father in the labour force, mother at home full-time, ownership of a ground level home with private open space, two – four children, homogenous neighbours – is no longer the dominant reality of suburban life in the seventies... The exceptions to the prototype image started to increase... Each of the exceptions may be a social minority in relation to established earlier settlers. Nevertheless, we would conclude that the social minorities taken as a whole now constitute *the new social majority* in Metro’s post-war suburbs.

These “social minorities” included “recent immigrants, adults and children, from a variety of ethnic and cultural backgrounds, many in states of difficult adjustment and without traditional forms of support” (Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, 1979: 237). The Social Planning Council raised these concerns only eight years after Trudeau’s historic speech. However, this report was not a critique of multiculturalism but instead it was intended to



indicate that the post-war built form was not suitable for the changing demographics in Metropolitan Toronto and its inner suburbs.

**MAP 2: AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL INCOME, CITY OF TORONTO, Relative to the Toronto CMA, 1970**



**Census Tract Average Individual Income Relative to the Toronto CMA Average of \$30,800\* (estimated to 2001 census boundaries)**

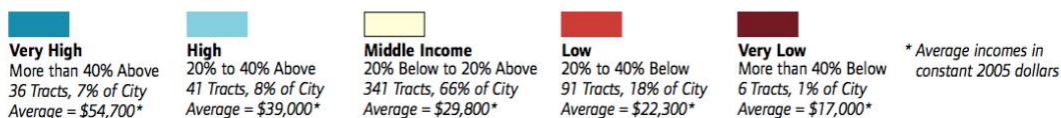


Figure 1: Toronto's predominant middle-class city during the year 1970. However, the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto later demonstrates that this began to change in less than a decade (Hulchanski, 2007).

Rather unintendedly, the Social Planning Council raised considerable concerns that linked multiculturalism and urban planning. This critique holds merit nearly thirty years later as Hulchanski (2007) illustrates that this demographic pattern has persisted into the early 20<sup>th</sup> century as the majority of Toronto's low-income, immigrant populations are pushed further from the inner city and into the city's inner suburbs. Planning theorists continue to argue that multicultural urban planning falls short to provide equal and equitable opportunities for immigrant populations (Sandercock, 2003). However, Qadeer and Agrawal (2011) dismiss the idea that urban planning or multicultural urban planning has failed to produce a social and physical environment that is equal and equitable to diverse immigrants. They argue that urban planning is attuned to the needs of immigrant populations and provided the necessary accommodations and even representation to allow them to be represented in decision-making, while adding that planning theorists and theory remains static as planning institutions,

practitioners, and immigrant communities continue to transform. I am critical of the arguments presented by Qadeer and Agrawal (2011) because of its focus on ethnocultural characteristics. Moreover, their conclusions are based on the opinions of planning practitioners who would unlikely admit that they are not sensitive to social diversity.

My research is a critique of multiculturalism pretensions of urban planning and I am particularly curious about asking *how does multicultural urban planning respond to the complex transnational lived experiences of recent migrants to Toronto?* Through scholarly research and semi-structured interviews, I argue that the current process of planning involving minimal practices of public engagement with racialized migrants has failed to integrate the complexities of recent migrants beyond ethnocultural diversity. Multicultural urban planning could be understood as focusing on diversity and the rhetorical inclusion of cultures in the planning process while doing very little to address the complexities associated with living in diverse places and moving across the globe. These complexities are related to politics, economics, patriarchy, geography, and democracy, among others. My Major Paper demonstrates that the complex experiences from 'back home' are often extended to new settlements and therefore need to be contextualized in our understandings of multiculturalism in order to paint the complex picture of migrant diversity beyond visible (or commercialized) characteristics.

Furthermore, my investigation of migrant communities is rooted in a transnational framework in order to understand how these complex experiences move across and between borders to impact the everyday life experiences in the new home city. In other words, planning in a multicultural city should be concerned with the ways that these experiences are "*constituted through borders and yet trespass across borders*" (Roy, 2011a: 407, emphasis added). This transnational framework allows me to ask how a migrant's experience with democracy, or lack thereof, constructs the perceptions of their role in the new home city. In order to better understand such role in their new home city, my research investigates how migrants to Toronto have engaged in social advocacy to transform (sub)urban spaces in their former home city. Attention is given to why advocacy arose and why such advocacy or political engagement has ceased to exist in the new home city. Why are people who formerly engaged in political advocacy now silent in municipal affairs in the new home city and how can planners

leverage these experiences with social advocacy to (re)ignite advocacy and engagement in the new home city?

### **Immigration policy in Canada**

Although most immigrants prior to 1967 came from Southern regions of Europe, Canada has received migrants from outside of Europe since the late 19<sup>th</sup> century. For example, Chinese migration first occurred during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and was driven by economic development. Baureiss (1987) breaks down Chinese-Canadian migration into various phases. The first phase, between the 1850s and 1870s, brought Chinese migrants into Canada during a period of free and labour contract immigration. Many of these migrants came to Canada from California and eventually directly from China in pursuit of employment in mining during a gold rush in Western Canada. The Canadian government attempted to deport these migrants following the downturn in economic activity with little success (Baureiss, 1987). The second phase, in the late 1880s, brought a significant number of Chinese migrants into Canada to build the railroad. Nearly 20,000 Chinese males were brought to perform work on the Canadian Pacific Railway in British Columbia as both inexpensive and reliable labour. Like the first phase, the deportation of these migrants was unsuccessful (Baureiss, 1987).

The third phase saw a period of harsh immigration policies targeting future Chinese migrants. The years between 1885-1923 saw a head tax for most Chinese immigrants. Baureiss (1987: 18, emphasis in original) indicates that the Canadian government “spent about \$19 million on promoting and regulating the entry of some three and one quarter million immigrants. Proportionately, \$305,000 should have been spent for the 50,852 Chinese immigrants. Instead, the Canadian government *collected* nearly \$19 million in head taxes in the same period”. The fourth phase saw harsher immigration policies on Chinese migrants through the introduction of the Chinese Immigration Act, which prohibited the entry of Chinese migrants into Canada. This restriction lasted from the mid-1920s until 1946. Finally, the period between 1947 and 1967 saw a relaxation of broader immigration policies towards the Chinese. However, “[i]n 1953, the Immigration Act gave the Minister of Citizenship and Immigration discretionary powers to reject entry into Canada on the grounds of nationality, citizenship,

ethnic group, geographic origin, peculiar customs, habits or modes of life” (Rawlyk cited in Baureiss, 1987:19).

The Immigration Act of 1967 changed immigration rules in Canada. This Act established a point system for immigration. This was radically different from the previous system that relied much more heavily on place of origin to decide which immigrants are granted entry into Canada (Baureiss, 1987; Canadian Museum of Immigration at Pier 21, 2018). The new immigration policies forbid the state from rejecting residency into the country on grounds of racial or ethnic differences (Moodley and Adam, 2012). These changes allowed Canada to open its doors to migrants from across the world and emphasized entry into Canada based on “the skills, education and training of the independent immigrant, rather than his or her ethnic confessional background” (Verbeeten, 2007: 5). This shift in immigration policy produced major changes in the demographic patterns of new immigrants. For example, prior to this points-based system, people from Europe accounted for 95% of migrants in the 1950s (Henry, 2002). However, the decade prior to 2002 saw more than 60% of immigrants arriving from Asia, particularly from Hong Kong, India, China, and the Philippines (Henry, 2002). Today, Canada is recognized as a diverse country where migrants, particularly racialized groups (or so-called ‘visible minorities’ in the official language of multiculturalism) represent nearly a quarter of the total population (Levitz, 2017). Many migrants initially settled in Ontario, Québec, or British Columbia, but the Prairie provinces have recently seen a steady rise of (racialized) newcomers (Levitz, 2017). In Toronto, the 2016 Census reveals that so called ‘visible minorities’ are now the majority (Cole, Tulk and Grzincic, 2017).

### **The emergence of Canadian Multiculturalism**

The changes to immigration policy in Canada cannot be disassociated from the emergence of multiculturalism as a federal policy. Multiculturalism as a policy framework was initially established in 1971 (a few years after the emergence of the 1967 points system) and legislated as the Multiculturalism Act of 1988 under the Liberal government of Pierre Elliot Trudeau. Uberoi (2016: 268) indicates that the Multiculturalism Act marked three important responsibilities for the Canadian government. First, “the Act altered the policy of multiculturalism by empowering it to encourage all federal departments to reflect Canada’s

ethnic diversity among its staff and to promote respect for this diversity". Second, "the Act increased oversight of the policy as it compels the federal government to report to Parliament annually on how the policy is 'operating'". Finally, "the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* explicitly empowers a policy of multiculturalism to promote understandings of what Canada is, or what we might call, 'Canada's identity'".

Harney (2011: 1916) indicates that "Canadian multiculturalism emerged out of a 1960s reappraisal of a white-settler, postcolonial nation-state project against the background of the period's social revolutions, massive post-war immigration, and a persistent question about French/English relations in the country". Contrary to the United States or British experience, multiculturalism in Canada did not emerge as a result of "black anti-racism and anti-imperialism (in the British case of Race Relations) or to civil rights activism and black power politics (as in the United States case of Affirmative Action), but to the demands from primarily European immigrant groups and the challenges of *Québécois* nationalism, which at times took on increasingly left-leaning and anti-imperialist dimensions" (Vallières and Drache in Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005: 671, emphasis in original).

This tension between English and French Canada is also reflected in the way that culture and race are differentiated and managed through federal legislation compared to Québec provincial legislation. The Canadian state brought forth 'multicultural education' with themes like "cultural pluralism, education about cultural difference, education of the culturally different, education for cultural preservation and education for cultural adaptation. All these approaches emanated from a liberal pluralist view, which assumed that cultural diversity was intrinsically valuable and worthwhile to maintain" (Moodley and Adam, 2012: 430). The Québec government instead takes an intercultural approach, which sees the state's role as being responsible for "socializing all citizens to a national culture, [and] prioritiz[ing] the enhancement of relations between the various groups through increased opportunities for exchange and collaboration" (Moodley and Adam, 2012: 430).

In general, multicultural or diversity policies have been heavily criticized for its superficial focus on culture and race as opposed to the structural lack of opportunities offered to these groups. As a result, the late 70s and 80s sparked programs against racism as a remedy

to the failures of multicultural policy (Moodley and Adam, 2012). Moodley and Adam, (2012: 431) indicate that:

In contrast to the consensus-based multicultural education, antiracism education sought to understand individual and group experiences within institutional and power structures. Through knowledge and understanding of the history of racism, the process of conquest, and the different forms of domination, antiracism education promoted political education.

The Ministry of Multiculturalism eventually included antiracism as part of its own priorities (Moodley and Adam, 2012). It also led to *Equality Now*, which sought for an all-party investigation of race relations, ultimately leading to affirmative action and employment equity that was federally-mandated by the Employment Equity Act of 1986 (Moodley and Adam, 2012: 431). However, these significant wins came at the heels of substantive changes in the political and economic structure that had rippling effects on Canada. The global neoliberal agenda was soon to make its mark on Ontario's political and economic landscape and its effects on multiculturalism have had long lasting effects.

### **The neoliberal turn in politics and the economy**

As mentioned, multiculturalism in Canada was intended to produce a unified Canadian identity. This unified, even collectivist notion behind multiculturalism was heavily challenged during the 1980s and the 1990s. This was a result of major political and economic restructuring that was occurring at the federal, provincial, and municipal levels of government (Keil, 2002). These political-economic changes were in line with global trends. Starting as a "starkly utopian intellectual movement", neoliberalism became heavily politicized by Reagan and Thatcher in the 1980s (Peck, and Tickell, 2002: 380). This political project was conceptualized and practiced as an ideological framework that encouraged competitive globalization, while also "inspiring and imposing far-reaching programs of state restructuring and rescaling across a wide range of national and local contexts" (Peck and Tickell, 2002: 380). Neoliberalism as a politicized project in Ontario sought to dismantle the structures of the Keynesian welfare state. The restructuring of Ontario's economy and politics was accompanied by neoliberal fixes like "aggressive forms of state downsizing, austerity financing, and public-service 'reform'" (Peck and Tickell, 2002: 381). This political-economic project "encourages people to see themselves as individualized and

active subjects responsible for enhancing their own well being” (Larner, 2000: 13). From this emerges a political subject that is transformed under an:

understanding of what it means to be a citizen, [what it means] to live everyday life in Toronto, has been shifted strongly to a novel concept of the individualized subject responsible for his or her own well-being, supported largely through the marketplace, market orientation, clientelism, consumer fees, voluntarism, and criminalization of marginal behaviours and spaces (Keil, 2002: 595).

This individualized subject is bounded by the principles of the marketplace as the state shifts its role in the everyday life of citizens. However, it should be noted that neoliberalism is not to be understood as “(less) state against (more) market, but rather about a particular kind of state suited to the logic of capital in a specific historical phase of capitalist development” (Fanelli, 2016: 11).

This transformation of Canada’s economy has been underway since the 1980s. Since 1986, the Canadian federal government has downloaded costs, placing heavy burdens on municipalities, which then pass costs onto residents and consumers (Dewing, Young and Tolley, 2006). A prime example of this occurred with the federal Liberal government downloading of housing in the early 1990s to provincial governments (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). Local providers of social housing were devastated by this funding cut while some provinces also resisted the downloading of responsibility (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006). In Ontario, this opened the door for Mike Harris and the Progressive Conservative government who came into power in 1995 following a campaign based on a ‘common-sense revolution’ (Keil, 2002). The campaign embraced key neoliberal policies of market liberalism and state dismantling and small government, but instead found themselves heavily involved in the lives of everyday Ontarians (Keil, 2002). Public workers including teachers, nurses, school boards, universities, government workers, homeless people, welfare recipients, urban residents (among others) were heavily impacted by the neoliberal agenda through job cuts, environmental and social re-regulation, boundary redrawing of municipal government boundaries, or welfare cuts (Keil, 2002: 588). It was at this point that the Harris government decided to remove provincial government responsibility from housing and download the responsibilities of public housing onto municipalities (Hackworth and Moriah, 2006).

In 1996, prior to municipal amalgamation, the Greater Toronto Area Task Force recommend merging the upper-tier governments (York, Durham, Halton, Peel, and Metropolitan Toronto) into a single-tier Greater Toronto regional body (Faneilli, 2016). This body would be responsible for land use planning, transit planning, economic development, infrastructure and highways, while lower-tier municipalities would experience a strengthened ability to address local needs (Faneilli, 2016). During the same year, an inquiry considering provincial-municipal administration and spending arrangements launched. The 'Who Does What Panel', chaired by former Toronto mayor, John Sewell, recommended the creation of the Toronto Services Board, which would have resulted in the elimination of upper-tier municipalities and the amalgamation of smaller municipalities with larger cities (Faneilli, 2016). However, Faneilli (2016: 25) notes that the Harris Progressive Conservative government ignored the reports and recommendations and instead proceeded with its own set of controversial amalgamations and "intervened in the public education system, leading to one of the most violent labour confrontations in Ontario history, and reorganized school boards, eroding both residential and business property taxes, weakening trustee authority and assuming control over education policy". The merger of Metropolitan Toronto and its former boroughs marked a turning point to neoliberal politics and economics in Ontario that focused on inter-urban competition between municipalities in the province, and (in Toronto's case) as a second-tier global city (Kipfer and Keil, 2002; Keil, 2002).

### **Indigenous Peoples in a multicultural state**

The lands which make up the country of Canada have long been occupied by diverse Indigenous groups, particularly thousands of First Nations and Métis and Inuit groups who have long lived on these lands well before European colonization. Indigenous ways of life were very much dependent on the natural environments where they have historically lived. The Cree, the Ojibway, the Chipewyan and the Inuit usually covered large territorial grounds. However, the primary social unit, the band, was usually small between fifty to one hundred people (Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006). During times of ample resources, several bands would form a larger band, but during times of hardship would often see these groups break off into small units (Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006).



The diversity of these Indigenous groups can be seen in the nearly sixty languages that existed prior to European contact (Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006). Although, many languages have since gone extinct (Norris, 1998), Census Statistics Canada indicates that there has been a revival of Aboriginal languages with over 70 Aboriginal languages across Canada grouped into 12 language families (Statistics Canada, 2017). The largest Aboriginal language family is Algonquian, which includes the Cree, Ojibway, Oji-Cree, Montagnais (Innu), among other languages (Statistics Canada, 2017). Historically, geography has played a significant role in the diversity and size of Aboriginal languages. Open plains and hilly woodlands of the Prairies are easier to travel across, best accommodating large groups of people compared to mountainous regions, like British Columbia, which tends to isolate groups and restrict the expansion of languages and groups (Norris, 1998).

However, contact with Europeans has brought other challenges to Indigenous peoples, such as the decline in their population caused by socio-demographic changes and infectious diseases previously unknown to the 'Americas' (Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006). For example, writing in 1925 Kroeber (in Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006: 51) attributes the decline of Aboriginal population in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century to "warfare, changes in subsistence patterns through intense European-Aboriginal interaction, and lack of political organization, rather than to the effects of disease."

In Canada, European settlement eventually accompanied the creation of the Indian Act in 1876. The purpose behind the Indian Act was to "facilitate the administration of programs to Indians, as well as to facilitate their assimilation into mainstream Canadian society. It included definitions of who constituted an 'Indian', and how much status could be gained or lost" (Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006: 11). Many Indigenous groups have historically signed 'treaties' with the federal government over lands across the country. From the government's perspective, treaties were a way "to remove the Indians' title to the lands, and to remove Aboriginal people themselves, to allow for settlement and exploitation of the natural resources by European immigrants" (Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006: 11). However, many Indigenous people argue that their ancestors did not intend to surrender these lands to the federal government but instead share the lands (Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006).

This brief history of Aboriginal people in Canada is further complicated by the introduction of multiculturalism and the Multiculturalism Act. In general, multiculturalism has wide-ranging implications for what constitutes a Canadian identity. As Légaré (1995: 352) explains:

As Canadian identity, multiculturalism is a populist (i.e., more democratic) phenomenon because it acknowledges that every society has a culture and each is equally valuable. It also acknowledges that the roots of the Canadian nation are more diverse than the English and French roots privileged in Canadian history books. The notion of multiculturalism constructs equality out of diversity by giving each culture its due. At the same time, this effectively neutralizes the uniqueness of each. Ultimately, difference at this level is problematic; equality demands sameness.

However, the narrative of equality out of sameness or neutrality is particularly challenging for Indigenous people. As a group of people, their survival in Canada is dependent on the federal government's recognition of them as a distinctive group of people that constitute separate nations within the nation of Canada with various cultures and claims to land and specific rights (Légaré, 1995; Waldrum, Herrin and Young, 2006). In other words, Indigenous survival is dependent on the recognition of them as 'Other' under the national framework of multiculturalism to ensure that their recognition as a group of people is maintained in Canada (Légaré, 1995). Therefore, Indigenous people cannot be simply acknowledged as another group of culturally diverse people because their history in Canada is bounded by various rights that are established in the treaties and the Indian Act. Indigenous cultures and identities have long been the basis for "resistance to their economic, social, and political marginalization" (Légaré, 1995: 354). Grouping Indigenous people into the framework of multiculturalism only diminishes their diversity and struggle as a group of people fighting the ongoing settlement of their lands.

### **Methodology**

I was first interested in conducting research on transnationalism after reading an article by Shome (2012) entitled, 'Mapping the Limits of Multiculturalism in the Context of Globalization'. Shome (2012: 146) asks: "are our engagements with multiculturalism (and its corresponding concepts, such as cultural identity and cultural difference) able to capture relations of cultural inequalities in other worlds that fall outside North Atlantic frames of equality, justice, and democracy?" I turned to the Canadian Multiculturalism Act soon after reading this article and

was rather intrigued to see the focus on culture and diversity, albeit within a human rights framework. However, I became even more curious to investigate if our nation's conceptualization of multiculturalism recognizes the diversity of racialized migrants outside of their 'visible' ethnocultural characteristics. The recent influx of refugees from war-torn Syria led me to wonder about the traumas associated with living in a war-zone and a state with a lack of democracy. What did the arrival of Syrians mean for the multicultural state? What do their longstanding experiences without democracy mean upon arrival in the multicultural city? It certainly meant that Toronto could further diversify its food industry (with even more Syrians that had previously lived in Toronto), but it led me to wonder how multiculturalism and planning respond and how each has responded to the influx of people coming from trauma and a restriction from democracy.

The epistemological approach in this paper is interpretivism, which is described as an approach that relies on "[studying] and [interpreting] people's actions and their social world *from the point of view of the actors*" (Bryman et al., 2012: 9, original emphasis). This approach is necessary to investigate how people perceive themselves as citizens in their former home country and as new migrants in the new home city. This also closely ties to the ontological approach of constructionism. As I study how people view the social world around them it is also crucial to investigate their own interpretations of the surrounding social world (Bryman, et al., 2012), such as Syrians viewing themselves and the world around them under the rise of nationalist discourse and extreme rise of anti-Muslim hate speech.

Finally, I recognize that my experiences and my own family's experiences of migration differ when compared to the migrants interviewed for this research. My family's experience did not include violence, war, or trauma—at least to the extent that was described in these interviews. It was therefore necessary to acknowledge my own positionality during the entire course of the research: pre-interviews, during the interviews, examining the research, and finally writing the paper. Hoggart and Davies (2002: 3010) indicate that, "[p]ositionality refers to historically generated circumstances that create the 'position' of the researcher, such as age, gender, ethnic heritage, education and life experience". I respect the fact I am an outsider to

these cultures and histories and I hope to uphold the power and legitimacy of the stories shared during this entire research.

### **Methods**

The City of Toronto recently began a project called the Toronto Review Panel (City of Toronto, 2018a). The purpose behind this project is to provide underrepresented groups with an opportunity to become more involved in planning across the city and to allow people to gain more knowledge about the practice of planning in their communities. This project signaled that there was more work needed to include racialized migrants into the planning process. Together with the reading by Shome (2012) and seeing the City's work with this project led me conduct research on transnational migration in order to better understand the implications of living in diverse places across the globe with diverse people and to understand its implications for public engagement in the multicultural city. I had previously been engaged with the Hispanic Development Council which is an organization that works to address issues facing the Hispanic or Latin American community in Toronto. The director, Duberlis Ramos, recommended that I speak to the three other organizations that formed the Alternative Planning Group. This umbrella organization consists of the Hispanic Development Council, the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter, and the African Canadian Social Development Council. I reached out to each organization and was able to get in contact with a current member and former member of one of the organizations. I conducted a total of 5 interviews.

Interviews were held between January and the end of February 2018. Interviewee 1 works for the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians and who recently migrated from the country of Sudan. The interview offered details of his experience working as a gynecologist in Sudan and his experience having recently migrated from Sudan. He advocated with a local organization to put an end to the practice of female genital mutilation. Interviewee 2 is a former worker from the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter. This interviewee shared her experience working with the organization and her family's experience living in Hong Kong and Toronto. Although she did not migrate from Hong Kong, she is knowledgeable about the experience of Chinese people living on mainland China and Hong Kong. I later reached out

to a prominent member of the Latin American community who is a priest. His work in Toronto has helped to bring Latin American issues forward through his AM radio station, *Voces Latina*. Interviewee 3 shares his experience doing advocacy on behalf of Indigenous people and the working-class in the rural areas of the Ecuadorian city of Cuenca. Interviewee 4 reached out to me when he heard about my research by a fellow co-worker. He is a Syrian refugee who recently arrived into Canada with his family because of the civil war in Syria. He arrived in Canada as part of the Trudeau government's resettlement program where he was sponsored by a family member. Finally, Interviewee 5 is a Tibetan woman employed at a legal clinic. We were connected by a co-worker of hers while I was reaching out to social organizations. This interview provided me an insight into the lack of sovereignty experienced by the state of Tibet and its people at the hands of the Central Chinese government. She also shares her knowledge of the status of Tibetans in Toronto.

The interviews were recorded using the iPhone app called Voice Record Pro. I transcribed the interviews shortly after each interview. I then coded the data by identifying reoccurring themes such as patriarchy, democracy, attachment to home, women's power, to name a few. The themes that I decided to work with are (1) attachment to home, (2) ethnic migrant use of space, (3) urban-rural divide, and (4) scales of democracy. These themes were carefully considered to reflect the discussions held across the interviews and in light of my research question. For example, 'attachment to home' is viewed as a transnational process where various aspects of a migrant's experiences remain attached to home, people, or culture. The 'scales of democracy' expresses how democracy is nuanced across space, gender, sex or class. This theme closely associated with the 'urban-rural divide' which considers how democracy is limited across rural and urban spaces. Finally, the 'ethnic migrant use of space' describes how racialized migrants use space once in the new home city, particularly for older age and working-class migrants.

## 2. Multiculturalism and Urban Planning

Multiculturalism in cities has impacted the practice of urban planning in at least four distinctive ways (Sandercock, 2003). First, multicultural cities challenge the values and norms that are deeply embedded in the legislative frameworks of planning, its by-laws and regulations. Second, these legislative frameworks, norms, practices or cultures are embedded in the actual planners. These positions can become problematic “[i]f planners believe that immigrants should adapt as quickly as possible to the life-ways of the dominant culture, then they are unlikely to be sensitive to or sympathetic regarding new ways of belonging in the city, new forms of place-making” (Sandercock, 2003: 21). Third, racism or xenophobia may “find an expression or outlet through the planning system, in the form of a planning dispute, over, say, the location of a mosque, or Hindu temple” (Sandercock, 2003: 21). Finally, there can be situations where planners and citizens’ values are incompatible with each other.

These critiques and observations of urban planning in multicultural cities has been challenged by Qadeer and Agrawal (2011: 138) who argue that planning theory lags the practice of urban planning, which in their view has been “restructured” (in the United States) because of the “Civil Rights movement of the 1960s and subsequent national and state legislation and court cases. Equal opportunity laws and fair housing provisions, employment equity and requirements for the equitable distribution of public services have had visible effect” (Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011: 138). In Canada, urban planning has aligned with the emergence of the multiculturalism policy of 1971, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms of 1982, and the Multiculturalism Act of 1988, along with other equity and cultural rights provisions soon thereafter (Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011: 138).

For Qadeer and Agrawal (2011) the recognition and involvement of diversity and culture is the most significant change in the practice of urban planning. In an earlier piece, Qadeer (1997) indicates that multiculturalism in cities has enabled planning to adopt three measures. First, race and culture have become analytical tools to analyzing public needs, social conditions, and ways of defining a local community. Second, planners developed a cultural sensitivity to the ways they engage with local communities. Third, models and procedures to public engagement came to reflect multicultural policies, such as including language-specific material. Qadeer and

Agrawal (2011) criticize theorists (who themselves have challenged the universalist approach of planning and argued for greater inclusion of non-dominant groups in planning) for failing to recognize the changes made by planners and the planning system, despite internal and external challenges faced by planners. For Qadeer and Agrawal (2011: 138), this lack of recognition leads to the following observations:

So how does one square the vibrant multiculturalism of New York, Los Angeles, Chicago, Toronto, or Vancouver with critiques suggesting that the interests and needs of ethnic communities have been neglected in the planning practice? What of the thriving Chinatowns, Barrios, India Bazaars, and other ethnic commercial areas and malls, the expanding ethnic economies, the national and religious parades and festivals, the multilingual street signs, and the range of religious institutions in the cities of the US and Canada and slow but steady advance of minority representations in local and regional authorities.

For Qadeer and Agrawal (2011), the vibrancy of culture and diversity on city streets is a key indication of a successful multicultural urban planning (even through one can question how much of this was directly emerging from planning per se). Contrary to this observation,

Interviewee 1 asks:

did those people start small businesses because they were real entrepreneurs, and they wanted to run restaurants, which is a *really* difficult sector to be in where margins are slim. Chinese restaurant business, that's rough, that's long hours and not a lot of profit, or are they starting those businesses because they couldn't get jobs anywhere? (original emphasis).

To further highlight Interviewee 1's point, I return to Qadeer and Agrawal (2011) on the implications of the political and economic shift from Fordist capitalism based on mass production to post-Fordism that is based on flexible accumulation and its impact on the employment opportunities and decisions made by Toronto's migrants from the Fordist-era of capitalism to today. This question is particularly interesting because Qadeer and Agrawal (2011: 138) mention that "[s]ince [the] 1980s, the conservatives' ideologies are realigning urban planning institutions" without further explaining the implications of these ideological changes.

To pick up on their critically missed point, the implications of the "conservatives' ideology" is notably in the strategies to city building since the 1980s. In North America and Europe, the dawn of neoliberal capitalism has seen large-scale urban development projects that

aim to position the metropolitan economy into the context of the local, national, and global stage (Swyngedouw, Moulaert and Rodriguez, 2002). In Canada, this shift was first initiated by the federal government's austerity measures and later the provincial governments where "the neoliberal medicine has been prescribed across the country by New Democrat, Progressive Conservative, and Liberal governments alike" (Keil, 2002: 588). In Ontario, the Harris government dramatically downloaded infrastructure costs to municipalities during the 1990s (Keil, 2002). These changes did not operate in silos, but were instead in line with other changes taking place in the broader global economic and political systems (Brenner and Theodore, 2002).

Part of the "conservatives' ideology" has also led to a civic boosterism that places a focal point on entrepreneurial strategies. Harvey (1987: 8- 10) argues that entrepreneurialism, in the post-1973 recession history of capitalism consists of four related options, but for our purposes I will focus only on two. For Harvey (1987: 8), entrepreneurialism has resulted in "[c]ompetition within the international division of labour [which] means the creation of exploitation of particular advantages for the production of services... [d]irect interventions to stimulate the application of new technologies, the creation of new products, or the provision of venture capital to new enterprises". Examples of these "interventions" are local governments offering "a substantial package of aids and assistance as inducements" (Harvey, 1987: 8). A prime example of this practice is the current inducement packages offered to Amazon for its new headquarters, where cities (interestingly not Toronto) have offered Amazon a range of inducement packages that include tax breaks (Benzie, 2017).

As for the second entrepreneurial option, the "urban region can also seek to improve its competitive position with respect to the spatial division of consumption" (Harvey, 1987: 9). Through this option, Harvey (1987: 9) indicates that "[t]here is more to this than trying to bring money into an urban region through tourism and retirement attractions" and instead there is an increased focus on consumerism, and even quality of life. Upon adopting the second option, cities see an acceleration of, "[g]entrification, cultural innovation, and physical up-grading of the urban environment" and the city transformed into an "innovative, exciting, creative, and safe place to live or to visit, to play and consume in" (Harvey, 1987: 8).



Directly related to the second option, entrepreneurial capitalism has taken the form of creative city planning. With his 'creative class' thesis, Richard Florida (2003), the main proponent of creative city planning has provided quick-fix solutions to cities with dilapidated inner cities and neighbourhoods. Peck (2005: 740) summarizes the 'creative class' thesis as one which rests on the premise where "urban fortunes increasingly turn on the capacity to attract, retain and even pamper a mobile and finicky class of 'creatives', whose aggregate efforts have become the primary drivers of economic development".

Building on its multiculturalism, Toronto has embraced such creative city approaches by implementing strategies like "food-and-festivals" as part of their creative-city strategies, built on branding an "aestheticized difference – premised largely on the exotic pleasures of 'visible' and 'edible' ethnicity" (Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005: 672). Literature on the creative city thesis has identified that these strategies are primarily used as a "place-marketing tool that privileges the needs and desires of particular groups, including specific segments of the creative economy workforce, typically by encouraging gentrification and displacement in central-city areas" (Grodach, 2013: 1748). Peck (2005: 740) sees this strategy as a mirror image of the neoliberal development agenda "framed around interurban competition, gentrification, middle-class consumption and place-marketing".

Non-for-profit arts organizations, like Artscape, have played an active role in this creative city planning agenda in the city of Toronto. Artscape has generally been one of the most prominent voices in the creative city planning approach in the city (Lehrer and Wieditz, 2009). Artscape has recently joined the wave of non-profit and/or community organizations collaborating with the private sector under neoliberal capitalism (Fyfe, 2005). Scholars like Harvey (1987) describe this collaboration as a major component of entrepreneurial capitalism. Interestingly, Artscape's current role with the private sector illustrates a key contradiction in neoliberal capitalism where this organization formerly worked to produce live/work spaces for artists, but now takes an active role in facilitating gentrification through the arts and culture. Recent collaborations with developers, like Daniel's Corporation, serve as an example of its role in gentrifying impoverished areas like Regent Park (Novakovic, 2017).

### **What is planning with/for diversity?**

To critically consider what is planning with/for diversity, I take up the critique by Mike Davis (cited by Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005). As Goonewardena and Kipfer (2005: 670, my emphasis) writes, Davis' critique of multicultural urbanism is "firmly rooted in differentiated *class analysis* and *everyday experience*, [and he remains] appropriately suspicious of not only the inflated promises of bohemian 'creativity', but also postmodern valorizations of aestheticized ethnicity variations on the theme of liberal pluralism that furnish, wittingly or not, a much needed human face for bourgeois urbanism". In addition to Davis' class-based analysis, I favour a critique of neoliberal multiculturalism from the intersections of race, class, *and* gender because a sole focus on class silences other critical voices that affect the everyday experience of living in the neoliberal multicultural city.

### **Migrant women's struggle in the amalgamated multicultural city**

Punam Khosla (2003) highlights many silenced voices in her report titled, 'If low Income Women of Colour Counted in Toronto'. Khosla (2003) points to various obstacles facing women of colour, such as barriers to employment, inadequate jobs, poverty, homelessness, sexual violence, among many others, in post-amalgamation Toronto. A few years prior to Khosla's (2003) piece, Mike Harris and reports by the consulting firm KMPG made claims that amalgamation would result in financial savings for the new City of Toronto. These savings did not materialize (Schwartz, 2009). Amalgamation instead cost the city of Toronto well over \$100 million dollars and along with many more additional costs onto the municipal budget (Boudreau, Keil and Young, 2009). Only a few short years after amalgamation, Khosla (2003) demonstrates that this forced amalgamation did very little to address other issues that evidently plagued the city.

Immigrant women's precarious employment status is complex and due to many factors with issues related to social barriers, gender relations, the lack of affordable childcare, limited mobility across geography, and in some cases an unsupportive male partner (Premji and Lewchuk, 2014). Premji and Shakya's (2017) study on employment opportunities shows that most women's employment situations did not improve over increased time living in Canada. For those who obtained employment opportunities, some women, e.g., Sudanese refugee

female youth, indicate that employment adds to their domestic roles upon migration to Toronto (Guruge et al., 2015). For some migrant women, immigration did enable them to gain access to employment in the labour force and autonomy from their husbands by having regular access to wages (Foner, 1998).

Yet, access to the employment in the labour force must not ignore that women “suffer from gender inequalities that are a feature of American [or Canadian] society generally, but important vestiges of pre-migration gender ideologies and role patterns may place additional constraints on them” (Foner, 1998: 20). When discussing Sudanese female youth, Guruge et al (2015) points out that in Sudanese refugee camps, female youth roles primarily revolved around the home and their migration into Canada has included an expansion of their roles to consist of greater financial and emotional support for their families, being intermediaries for family members, organizations, or institutions, and even providing cultural assistance to other relatives (Guruge et al., 2015).

The multi-faceted role and struggles for migrant women raises questions about their own participation in planning issues due to their obvious lack of time, given their primary role in caregiving along with other daily responsibilities. Despite being heavily involved in these roles, Interviewee 4 explains that his wife, a stay-at-home mother, actively participates with an organization called Roots of Empathy. This organization looks to teach children about the daily life of a baby. He notes that she has limited knowledge of the English language, but the engagement with this organization has allowed her to “[fill] her time now. She is feeling much better after she engaged in this program” (Interviewee 4). This program situates the domestic role of women into a public space where his wife can use her experience as a parent and mother to become a teacher for children.

For planners, this case presents an opportunity to explore approaches for engagement with (migrant) women who may continue to take the role of primary caregiver. This is *not* to argue that we must solely engage migrant women using caregiving practices, or solely in caregiving settings even though the reality is that many migrant women remain primary caregivers in the home while experiencing various barriers to participation outside of the home. Many women, as specifically illustrated by the experience of Interviewee 4’s wife, are active

participants in other aspects of social life that are tied to their roles as domestic caregivers. This means that planners must critically evaluate the context of local communities to understand the various roles and engagements taken by migrant women at their local community centres, schools, or other community spaces. Some women might participate in a similar type of program while other women might be engaged in other aspects of social life that may be specific to their own roles as domestic caregivers inside the home with other relatives, or friends.

### **The role of public infrastructure in the multicultural city**

The previous section provided a brief insight into migrant women's employment constraints and gender roles, this section focuses on migrants more generally and the role of public infrastructure in potentially influencing a greater level of participation. Living and common spaces can play a critical role in further disenfranchising racialized migrants. As an example, Interviewee 2 discusses the uneven levels of service provision when he compares his area of residence in East York to other areas in the city. He also cites a higher presence of garbage, slower snow removal, smaller community centres and parks in this area of the city compared to others. Interviewee 2 indicates that the areas near his home tend to have a higher percentage of racialized populations. His description of East York and of the poor level of services and amenities for this area are reflected in the City of Toronto's (2018b) Toronto Strong Neighbourhoods Strategy 2020 that identifies three areas designated as 'neighbourhood improvement areas' in East York.



library has long been recognized as an institution of democracy that spreads knowledge to all people (Kelley, 1934). As a spreader of knowledge, the library is particularly important in a multicultural city with a continuous influx of new migrants each year. However, the availability of a free public library is described as a luxury by Interviewee 2 when comparing his former city of origin to Toronto. Echoing Huzar (2013: 6, my emphasis) libraries in a democratic city “leave open the possibility that their commitment to freedom of information, equity of access, neutrality etc. can be continuously *challenged*. It is this open possibility of the *contestation* of the library, its function and its values that places democracy at its heart”. About participation in democracy, Rancière (2007 in Huzar, 2013: 6) argues that “[t]he test of democracy must ever be in democracy’s own image: versatile, sporadic – and founded on trust.” For Huzar (2013: 6), Rancière’s (2007) description of democracy lends itself precisely to the library as it can be made into a “site of political contestation.”

This discussion about public libraries (and public infrastructure more broadly) ties closely with interviewee 4’s suggestion that community centres can be vital to raising newcomers’ awareness about their democratic responsibilities in the city. In our conversation, Interviewee 4 describes these responsibilities as being active participants in city building on a larger scale and in the community. Together, these public spaces can enable a stronger means of communal learning between residents to enable a more diverse active citizenship. In the multicultural city, this space allows for an interaction between people that can, ironically, challenge dominant discourses that are produced by the state and capitalism inside a space that is produced through the means of capital accumulation (i.e., tax dollars). In other words, there is room to radically transform public libraries or community centres into spaces that challenge the production of space by accumulating and generating new forms of knowledge that strengthens democracy for a greater public engagement in the multicultural city.

### **Multiculturalism: How do we understand it? How do we live it?**

The framework for the Canadian *Multiculturalism Act* (1990) follows the Constitution of Canada (1982) to establish that all people are equal under the law and to preserve and enhance cultural heritage in Canada. The Canadian Multiculturalism Act (1990) indicates that:

the Government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada[.]

The Act has resulted in noticeable on-the-ground impacts. Interviewee 5 notes that multiculturalism is most visibly seen in funding. Comparing her experience of living in the United States and New York City more specifically, Interviewee 5 cites examples of investments in multiculturalism such as the level of funding towards settlement programs for newcomers and recent immigrants, English and citizenship preparation classes, and funding for organizations actively working to address the issues experienced by newcomers.

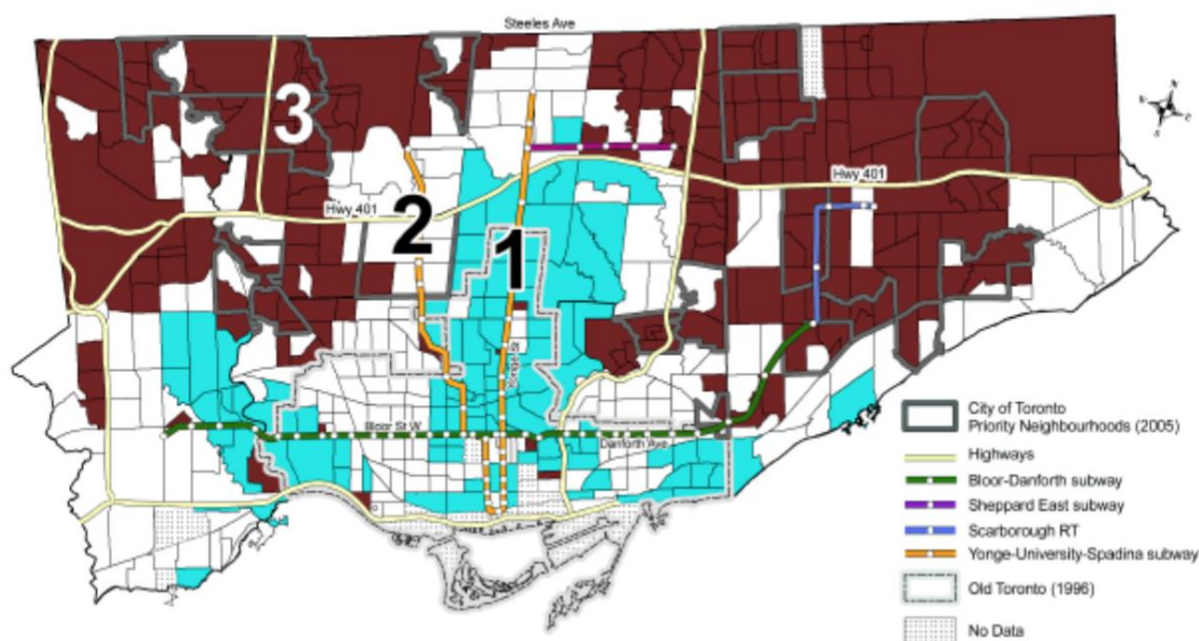
Yet, Interviewee 5 is aware of the limits of multiculturalism legislation when she later indicates that “[multiculturalism] is something that we, I think, Canadians pride themselves in, but it almost seems like if you scratch beneath the surface you see something uglier, right?” This led to a discussion about David Hulchanski’s Three Cities in Toronto report and the report entitled, *Poverty by Postal Code*, by the United Way. Hulchanski’s (2007) report shows that the racialized character of Toronto’s inner city has radically shifted from being largely populated by working-class racialized people and migrants to an increasingly white, middle- and upper-class population. Racialized working-class migrants are increasingly being displaced from the inner city to the suburbs of Toronto that have historically been largely white, and middle-class (Hulchanski, 2007).

Moreover, in their report entitled *Poverty by Postal Code 2: Vertical Poverty*, by the United Way (2011: 17) shows that there has been a “geographic ‘sorting’ of households along income lines.” In Toronto, households with lower incomes and those living in poverty are increasingly living in the city’s inner suburban postwar apartment buildings (United Way Toronto, 2011). These apartment buildings increasingly house newcoming racialized families

who rely on social ties with their neighbours to meet every day needs (United Way Toronto, 2011). The reports by Hulchanski (2007) and the United Way (2011) are stark reminders that the cultural and diversity focus of the Multiculturalism Act has, particularly in Toronto, failed to mitigate the changes in the global and local economy, politics, and urban planning most evidently seen in Toronto's geographical makeup of residents in the city.

### MAP 1: CHANGE IN AVERAGE INDIVIDUAL INCOME, CITY OF TORONTO, RELATIVE TO THE TORONTO CMA, 1970-2005

Average individual income from all sources, 15 years and over, census tracts



#### Change in the Census Tract Average Individual Income as a Percentage of the Toronto CMA Average, 1970-2005

##### City #1

Increase of 20% or More  
100 Census Tracts, 20% of City

##### City #2

Increase or Decrease  
is Less than 20%  
208 Census Tracts, 40% of City

##### City #3

Decrease of 20% or More  
206 Census Tracts, 40% of City

Figure 3: Toronto is city where the place of residence and access to major transit infrastructure is dictated by level of income (Hulchanski, 2007).



### Racialized migrants use of space

The way racialized migrants use space is important to consider when looking at this image of Toronto's geographical sorting of residents along income lines. Planning in the multicultural city requires that planners become attuned to this geographical sorting *and* the way racialized migrants use and move through space. Interviewee 2 offers an insightful description of racialized migrants' use of space. Her description lends us an opportunity to examine the city from multiple scales – the street, the block, and across city neighbourhoods. As we will see, her description problematizes the focus on place-making in (creative) city planning. However, place-making is not new to urban planning. Jane Jacobs (1961) provided the vision for place-making in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* where she advocates for a built form that emphasizes local, neighbourhood-level planning where the street is vibrant with activities and people. In this type of built form, the proximity to amenities produces walkable streets that help to create vibrant and safe neighbourhoods.

Contrary to these notions of place-based planning, Interviewee 2 describes how racialized migrants' use of space is bounded by multiple scales (or places) across the city. She indicates that when compared to:

your average Western, English-speaking person, [urban planning doesn't] take into consideration that ethnic communities, or people from ethnic communities are also interested... in going to Chinatown, but not just this Chinatown over here but also this Chinatown over there... or that people from different religions will have their local community but they will also have community in their church or mosque (Interviewee 2).

This interviewee noticed this trend from working with seniors at the Chinese Canadian National Council Toronto Chapter and the Alternative Planning Group where their advocacy work for lower senior TTC fares was partly influenced by noticing that racialized migrant seniors use public transit more frequently compared to English-speaking seniors. Generally, seniors require safe methods of transportation in order to reduce stresses associated with aging (Rittner and Kirk, 1995). The organizations noticed that racialized seniors often relied on public transit to travel to places where they can access communities speaking the same language as they do, or specific food, places of worship, or cultural places that are not within proximity. There is a gendered aspect to this as well. Manzo's (2003) study on seniors in Canada demonstrates that

senior men more often cited use and access to a car compared to women. This is further reinforced by Hulchanski's (2007) study, which reveals that many of the (poor) racialized population now living in Toronto's inner suburbs rely heavily on public transit.

Another example of this movement across various scales and space involved the Chinese community and Toronto's police. Interviewee 2 describes that there was a shooting in East Chinatown near Broadview and Gerrard Streets where the police had a difficult time obtaining information from witnesses. She indicates that people were unwilling to engage with police because of a situation that happened at the same time as the shooting where a police cruiser ran over a Chinese resident in Scarborough. The police were apparently confused and questioned the connectedness of the situation in Scarborough to the case in East Chinatown. However, Interviewee 2 notes that the Scarborough event was "all over in the Chinese media, and I was very surprised at how surprised they were".

This story reveals two critical points. First, this offers planners an insight into reconfiguring how the 'neighbourhood' is conceptualized to reflect multiple scales in the city beyond the local neighbourhood. In this case, racialized/immigrant residents possess an attachment to community that is not based on delineated neighbourhood or ward boundaries. The analysis of these scales must reflect how community attachment stretches beyond the geographical neighbourhood boundaries – from a residential neighbourhood in the northern part of the city to a place of worship in the eastern part of the city, etc. This case allows us to shift our understandings of place-making to one that adopts multiple scales across the city. Interestingly, despite the heterogeneity of the Chinese community, this story shows an attachment to community that transgresses migration experiences, current lived experiences, or politics.

For low-income, racialized or recently arrived communities, access to transit heavily dictates their access across geography and neighbourhoods to places that they associate with both ethnically, culturally, religiously, or perhaps politically. A person can attend a religious ceremony in a Scarborough neighbourhood, then do shopping in downtown Chinatown, and end off in a friend's neighbourhood in North York. During a consultation process, this means that we must ask questions about resident's mobility outside of their immediate surroundings

to understand how their movement is situated within the city (and perhaps Greater Toronto Area) as an entire geographical space.

Such approach and multi-local spatial practices raises numerous questions for participation processes. The first is that it redefines the concept of 'community' for consultations. The City of Toronto Official Plan (City of Toronto, 2018c) lays out policies for public participation in Section 5.5: The Planning Process. Policy 1.C(ii) indicates that at least one open house be held in the affected area by the proposed amendment to the zoning by-law or official plan. The racialized migrant's use of space begs us to critically question the notion of 'community' in an area. More specifically, who is the 'community' in this community consultation? When examining (sub)urban space, we must identify those invisible from the physical space and look beyond the census data in neighbourhoods. In other words, statistics and visual observations might not be able to capture how other users frequently move in and through spaces, like the aforementioned racialized migrant seniors who have an attachment to place that is associated with their own communities. Our failure to recognize this movement across spaces leads us to risk isolating seniors and other vulnerable people upon dramatic changes to spaces that they are becoming or have grown accustomed to.

This also means that the City's secondary plans must not only reflect the contextual boundaries of the study area. The immediate response to this argument would be to look at the Official Plan as the City's 35-year master plan to guide overall growth in the city. However, in order to reflect these multiple scales, the secondary plans must also relate to other nearby plans. Planning needs to draw further connections outside of a study area's surrounding context in order to understand how the social, economic, and political capital flow inside *and* outside this area. By undertaking this framework, we can consider Interviewee 2's discussion about the various movements across space. In other words, we can begin to reflect on the way that a place of worship in Scarborough is closely tied geographically, socially, economically, and perhaps politically to other establishments and people without being in proximity to each other.

The immediate challenge would be that we do not want to begin planning neighbourhoods for people who do not live in certain city spaces or for potentially more affluent people.

That is precisely the critique against gentrification (Smith, 2002; Slater, 2004; Peck, 2005). However, my analysis is based on a critique of neoliberal multiculturalism. This critique considers how neoliberal multiculturalism is a component of creative city building that often celebrates diversity and ethnicity, while commodifying “difference and normaliz[ing] processes of racialization through such practices as “ethnic packaging” and neighbourhood branding” (Rankin and McLean, 2015: 221, see also Hackworth and Rekers, 2005; and Catungal et al., 2009 for a further discussion on this topic). Balancing the need to reinvest and protect key areas where Toronto’s racialized poor reside and frequently use is of great importance, while preserving and protecting cultural heritage—as the mandate of the Canadian Multiculturalism Act. After all, it is part of the Official Plan’s (2018c) vision to create a city that is accessible to all its residents.

### **The ‘dark’ side of major public investment**

Toronto needs major investments, particularly in transit infrastructure. Many are currently in the works, or completed, like the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension, the controversial Scarborough One-Stop extension that is currently in the planning phase (Pagliaro, 2018), the Finch LRT with construction soon-to-be underway, or the Eglinton Crosstown by Metrolinx that is a few years from completion. However, sometimes accessibility and equity conflict with major investments in infrastructure, where for example, those with businesses in the former city of York’s Little Jamaica are voicing their concerns about gentrification brought by the Eglinton Crosstown (Spurr, 2018). The Crosstown is expected to deliver 25 stations across 19 kilometres along Eglinton Avenue (Metrolinx, 2018). Starting from Mount Dennis and terminating at Kennedy Road, the Crosstown will cut through at least 10 neighbourhood improvement areas in the city. While such projects are critical to bring transit equity and accessibility and ensuring social inclusion and greater participation in the urban region (Hertel, Keil and Collens, 2015), the Crosstown risks displacing the commercial strip along Eglinton Avenue that houses many retail shops that cater to recent immigrants, particularly in the Mount Dennis neighbourhood (Rankin and McLean, 2015). Nearly 25% of households in the Mount Dennis neighbourhood meet low income cut off (Hertel, Keil and Collens, 2015). If planned and managed well, the Crosstown can help these retail shops become a regional hub

to offer their services and goods to other low income racialized residents across the city (and region) by enhancing mobility for low income racialized migrants. This also further provides racialized migrants with the opportunities to move across scales in the city—from neighbourhood to neighbourhood, street to street, or block to block that are outside of their neighbourhoods. However, the current situation with Little Jamaica puts the opportunity to further connect people at risk. At this point, this project performs the opposite of distributing resources to those who have been most deprived (Hertel, Keil and Collens, 2015).

### **3. Everyday Life in the City of Origin**

Interviewees highlighted various complexities associated with living in their countries of origin. However, the interviewees rarely, if not ever, spoke about race/ethnicity as variables to their experiences. Yet, Canada's institutionalized policy on multiculturalism remains firmly situated on the preservation of culture and diversity, albeit within a human rights framework.

Multiculturalism can be distinguished as policy and ideology. On the one hand, Berry, (2016) points out that programs are established in order to support "cultural diversity and facilitate equitable participation for heterogeneous ethnic cultural groups". On the other hand, multicultural ideology is defined "as an appreciation for cultural diversity and a need for mutual accommodation that promotes equitable participation" (Berry et al., 1977 in Berry, 2016: 8).

The literature on multiculturalism (Grant and Robertson, 2014) and more specifically in urban planning (Sandercock, 2003; Thompson, 2003; Chan, 2007; Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011; van der Horst and Ouwehand, 2012) tends to remain particularly focused on culture and ethnicity (rather than race). This literature looks at the consequences of the inclusion and tolerance of culture and ethnicity in the planning process. The interviewees instead share life experiences that are not solely based on ethnocultural differences. These interviews demonstrate an intimate connection between everyday life experiences with politics and power. For example, access to democracy emerged as a central theme concerning the relationship with their city (or country) of origin. However, the interviews observed that democracy is nuanced and dependent on many variables.

In this section, democracy is discussed by evaluating several (non-exhaustive) factors. These factors are in no particular order but a definition of the concept of democracy is first needed. First, a definition of the concept of democracy is needed. Imai and Zeren (2017) indicate that scholars have most often relied on a “thin” or “thick” conceptualization of democracy. “Thin” democracy describes a system in which individuals or political parties acquire power through a competitive struggle over the people’s vote. Under “thin” democracy, “people can choose and replace their leaders in regular, free, and fair elections, [thus establishing] an *electoral* democracy” (original emphasis, Imai and Zeren, 2017: 15). However, Imai and Zeren (2017: 15) indicate that electoral democracy does not guarantee “high levels of freedom, equality, transparency, social justice, or other values considered to be essential in a democracy (Diamond, 1999). Only when these substantial measures exist can we call a system a *liberal* democracy” (Imai and Zeren, 2017: 15, original emphasis). Under a “thick” democracy, Imai and Zeren (2017: 15) note that “a system is not a democracy unless it also ensures a range of attributes such as substantial individual freedoms”.

The inclusion of these ‘liberal’ democratic principles, does not guarantee that these ‘principles’ are equally and equitably met for all of those living in the liberal democracy. This is particularly the case with an increasingly globalized political and economic system. As Imai and Zeren (2017: 17) note, “[a]s the flows of capital and information become too great for any state to control, and as various transnational and international actors such as multinational corporations, the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) supersede the states’ autonomy, globalization erodes their authority”.

One of the first themes that emerged in the interviews was politics and power, particularly held by the state. The politics and power of the state most actively operated with interests that at times had little, or no interest in citizen or resident concerns. The second factor was geography. Access to democracy was most readily accessible in the urban areas as compared to more rural, peri-urban, or suburban areas. Gender is also an important factor especially where the already limited access to democracy is exacerbated by gender marginalization. As pointed out in an interview, women have or have received less power and voice, even with issues that most affected their own physical and emotional health. Colonialism

was also identified as an issue. Interviewees consider the colonized state of Indigenous peoples in Ecuador and Hong Kong as formerly colonized by the British and its current political and economic situation with mainland China. Together, these intersectional factors show various 'scales of democracy' where access to democracy is dependent on multiple variables. For multiculturalism in Toronto, this theme will help us to understand how people's perception of their role in their home countries and limited access to democracy are factors that contribute to people's understandings of their role as citizens across geographies and borders.

### **Democratic deficits in Syria**

Interviewee 4 argues that there is a lack of democracy in Syria. This lack of democracy is connected to a societal obligation to "be supportive of the government [where] you are not able to pick a side [for] any kind of things happening, or anything that needs to be improved, or developed... [In Syria,] other parties are not allowed to participate, citizens cannot participate in the politics in Syria, or criticize, or protest this party." This 'obligation' strongly stems from the Syrian state's position on economic and political liberalization (Sarihan, 2012). Since the 1970s, there have been various efforts in Syria, initiated by Hafez Al-Assad of the ruling Baath Party, to enable economic liberalization in Syria. Hafez Al-Assad passed the first *infitah* policies, which resulted in an increased involvement in public investment by the private sector (Sarihan, 2012). *Infitah* is described as an open-door policy approach to private investment (Weinbaum, 1985). The second *infitah* policies were passed during the 1980s to enable the private sector's role in the economy, particularly in the agricultural sector (Sarihan, 2012). These reforms most often provided Syria's bourgeois class with benefits, while the rest of Syria remained consistently plagued by widespread unemployment and poverty during different periods of economic liberalization by various leadership reigns (Sarihan, 2012).

The current Bashar Al-Assad regime has initiated a series of changes that appear more of a façade to democratic liberalization (Emadi, 2011). The Assad government has adopted similar reforms, like state-led privatization which has enabled the operation of foreign banks in Syria (Emadi, 2011; Sarihan, 2012). Foreign capital favoured a "reduction in oil exporting dependent economy... and [the Assad government] founded the Damascus Stock Exchange in 2009 to encourage foreign investment" (Sarihan, 2012: 78). These efforts operate under the guise of

economic liberalization, which remain “under strong, rigid and dictatorial state control” (Sarihan, 2012: 78). A Syrian economist quoted in Theodoropoulou (2012: 60) notes that, “decisions related to subsidies and liberalization policies are designed to serve the interest of economic and political elites, but also to keep a minimum of popularity for the government”.

Interviewee 4 argues that economic liberalization has not improved the economic opportunities and political freedom for Syrians. He shares his experience of working in the public sector where he describes that public-sector employees were often sitting from 8 AM to 2:30 PM with no work. The government had contracted most of the public-sector work to private companies who sometimes had relationships with the ministers in the government. Such statement illustrates the increased role of political interests between the private sector and the Syrian government under the Bashar regime. As Interviewee 4 states, “we are unable to do any actual activities to show our professions, to show our experience, to be engaged in the building of our country”. This incapacity eventually led to his decision to leave the public sector and seek private sector employment.

As for ‘political liberalization’, Syria is governed by a one-party system where the state’s regime does not tolerate political liberalization in the form of “multiple political parties; competitive elections; or freedom of press, speech, and demonstration” (Sarihan, 2012: 78). The current authoritarian government has been in power in Syria under a one-party/one family rule over the course of more than four decades aided by the role of its secret intelligence service (Khoury in Theodoropoulou, 2012: 60). Despite this rigid political grasp, Emadi (2011) notes that Bashar’s party allows for media outlets, but most are owned by the state. Interviewee 4 points out that Syrians cannot protest the government decisions and advocate for enhanced services or infrastructure, like community centres. Any effort to do so results in a report written against you and an investigation. Access to democracy is severely restricted.

These experiences shared by Interviewee 4 highlight two important contradictory points for the ‘scale of democracy’. The first is the limited power that Syrians possess when confronted by state politics, even while holding public-sector employment. In fact, Interviewee 4 mentions that technology workers in the public sector possess little power, but those in the private sector have increased power to perform work compared to their public-sector



counterparts. Interviewee 4 describes the ability to perform work through employment as a political act, where he and other workers have a role in “building [the] country”. Yet, the public-sector technology workers are unable to participate in ‘building the country’, unless they are employed in the private sector. Interviewee 4’s experiences show us that access to democracy is limited with (or without) employment and in everyday life. As Sarihan (2012: 78) indicates, “[t]here is no political liberalization to make the economic liberalizations long term applicable”.

Moreover, the state has produced a societal condition that regulates citizens from engaging in advocacy for fear of discipline. This discipline makes it difficult for Syrians to dissociate politics from their everyday lives. As Theodoropoulou (2012: 66) explains, “[i]n the heterogeneous setting of Syria [although not ‘multicultural’ in the Canadian sense of the word], where the political interacts with the social and the economic on a constant basis, it is very hard – almost impossible – to separate these spheres of constant interaction in the everyday lives of Syrians”. Despite these political conditions, Interviewee 4 expressed that him and his family lived in peace prior to the current civil war. However, peace is only provided to those who remain outside of the purview of politics in Syria. Peace is also only attainable to those who cooperate with the security forces that regulate citizens and government officials (Interviewee 4). These security forces seek to ensure that lower levels of government do not conflict with the upper level interests, restricting the autonomy of local level politics and people (Interviewee 4).

### **Urban-rural divide and gender inequality in Sudan**

My discussion with Interviewee 1 further troubles the scale of democracy by bringing forward the role of geography as a major variable. Interviewee 1’s experiences in Sudan highlight two components related to the scale of democracy. The first is a geographical distinction between the urban and rural, peri-urban, or suburban areas of the city-region. For simplicity’s sake, I will use ‘rural’ to describe the areas outside of the urban agglomeration with distinctive urban form, patterns of mobility, infrastructure, and even access to differentiated forms of democracy (Keil, 2018). I refer to this distinction as the urban-rural divide.

Eltigani’s (2001) research reveals that one-third of Sudan’s population lived in urban areas. This statistic remains relatively unchanged until 2017, where data from the UN-Habitat (2012) indicates that Sudan had an urban population of 34% in 2014. Interestingly, despite such

a low percentage of urban dwellers, Interviewee 1 notes that the levels of service allocation and infrastructure in the rural areas compared to the urban areas of Sudan are insufficient. As Interviewee 1 explains, “we noticed that the government concentrate[s] in *urban areas*, and neglects *rural areas*, and this creates conflict as people in the remote villages are demanding more attention, more resources, more services, and the government doesn’t provide them; they just concentrate in major cities and they enforce their power there but they are neglecting people in the remote areas” (emphasis added). This is particularly concerning as poverty and inequality are most persistent in the rural areas, while access to education and hard infrastructure (roads, or electrification) is most lacking in the rural areas (Verdier-Couchane, 2016).

Interviewee 4’s experience in Syria was similarly marked by a lack of infrastructure across rural and urban spaces. He describes having to drive eighty kilometres to the city of Damascus where his workplace was situated, a three-hour drive from his home. For Interviewee 4 and many Syrians, travelling to Damascus was his only option for employment and education. He indicates that Syrians were restricted to four public universities, which were situated in the southern region of the country near or in Damascus. Private universities in Syria have grown substantially from an initial student population of 3,500 at four institutions in 2003, to nearly 23,000 at 15 institutions as of 2009 (Buckner and Saba, 2010). However, accessibility to these private universities is limited for many low-income Syrians (Interviewee 4). While 36% of Syrian youth from urban areas are enrolled in university programs, only 17% from the rural areas pursue university education – and disparities are even higher for women living in rural areas (Buckner and Saba, 2010: 93-94).

These stories about Syria and Sudan illustrate the state’s attention is generally on urban centres. This raises considerable questions about access to democracy for those living in the peripheries amidst ongoing processes of global suburban growth. In his book titled *Suburban Planet*, Keil (2018: 9) argues that “under the conditions of current trends in technology, capital accumulation, land development and urban governance, the expected global urbanization will necessarily be largely *suburbanization*.” This process of peripheral growth in many parts of the globe has been accompanied by a “new informality” that possesses a “rural/urban interface”

(Roy, 2005: 149). Citing examples in Mexico (Aguilar and Ward, 2003), Southeast Asia (McGee, 1991), and Egypt (Bayat and Denis, 2000), Roy (2005: 149) contends that “[i]ndeed, it can be argued that metropolitan expansion is being driven by informal urbanization”. This (in)formal process of expansion leads us to question the varying scales of democracy across a planet that has and is continuously seeing this form of urbanization, despite the recent financial crash of 2008 (Keil, 2018).

This is not to say that the traditional urban centre is the only place where democracy, or an active urban politics can be found. As Keil (2018: 39) argues, urban “[p]olitics consequently does not necessarily come from the centre. It increasingly comes from the desire of the periphery and the maelstrom of the post-suburban city.” Yet, (sub)urbanization does not guarantee a meaningful set of political rights. As Holston (2008: 236) shows us, Brazil’s urbanization of poor rural areas resulted in a greater electoral base, however:

[it] is evident that although more had gained political rights than ever before by the beginning of the 1970s, the vast majority of working-class Paulistanos found neither meaningful participation nor effective representation in the established sphere of political citizenship.

The inclusion of political rights was not effective for the rural population who either had to vote to elect the existing military regime or the party that officially opposed (Holston, 2008). As a result, the stories told by Interviewee 1 and Interviewee 4 raises concerns about migrants’ experiences with democracy for those who have previously lived in the marginalized peripheries. Here, we see how the urban centre of a region likely remain the most probable site for access to democracy while the geographical peripheries along with those who live there remain disenfranchised from city or state politics, services and infrastructures.

Interviewees’ stories invite us to think about how rights in diverse parts of the world are “constituted *through borders* and yet *trespass across borders* (Roy, 2011a: 407). Borrowing from Lefebvre’s (2003: 138) observation, “[t]he urban problematic is global, but the way we approach it depends on the economic, social, and political structure of the country, as well as its ideological superstructure”. It could therefore be argued that the conceptualization of multiculturalism in the planning process must acknowledge the distinctive economic, social, political, as well as ideological superstructure of the countries where diverse people migrate

from. By doing so, planners can begin to expand our notions of multicultural urban planning to one that is bounded by concepts and ideas beyond ethnocultural diversity. This conceptualization must also bear in mind the implications of the current planetary condition where most of the world's population now lives in cities but come from disenfranchised rural spaces that have long been marginalized from formal planning processes and democracy.

Interviewee 1's discussion of Sudan adds another critical element to the scales of democracy – women's lack of power. He discusses his experience working as a gynecologist and advocating on behalf of women's reproductive health, particularly on the issue of female genital mutilation and underage marriage. Female genital mutilation in Sudan ranges from 65% of ever-married women in the Darfur Region to nearly 99% in the Northern Region (Islam and Uddin, 2001: 71). However, "[g]iven their lack of choice and the powerful influence of tradition, most women accept circumcision as a necessary, and even natural, part of life, and adopt the rationales given for its existence" (Islam and Uddin, 2001: 71). Obermeyer (2005) highlights that the practice of female genital mutilation has increasingly become medicalized in many countries like Sudan, raising considerable questions about the role of medical research on the elimination of this practice altogether.

According to Interviewee 1, maternal mortality is also a critical issue in Sudan. The Maternal Mortality Estimation Inter-Agency Group (2018: np) cites that primary causes of maternal mortality are "hemorrhage hyper-tension, infections, and indirect causes, mostly due to interaction between pre-existing medical conditions and pregnancy." This issue is closely related to what he describes as an element of everyday culture where having many children is like competition between men. It is like "flexing muscles. For example, my brother has 5 kids, I want to have more than 5, I would like to beat him" (Interviewee 1). He indicates that these pregnancies sometimes occur against the wishes of women as they are forced to have more kids due to a tradition where the men compete to have more children, particularly more sons. This not only impacts women's health, but also their future academic and employment opportunities. As Interviewee 1 explains, "[t]he women want to study... they want to work, or they can't do that [sic] because of the load of frequent kids. Every year, women there they have

a kid, a new kid. So, women become exhausted. The burden of raising a kid is hugely magnified with these frequent babies.”

Interviewee 1’s advocacy work operated out of an organization with the slogan ‘empowering women’ which received initial government approval, despite strong pushback from many government officials (many of which are men), even within the health sector. He explains that the government eventually closed this organization, based on religious grounds. This story told by Interviewee 1 provides us with an understanding of the role of women in the country of Sudan, juxtaposed by the position of men on the ground and within the upper levels of government. While I am not in a position to elaborately discuss the extensive cultural, or religious history of Sudan, these issues appear relevant for multiculturalism and planning in Canada.

This story helps us to problematize multiculturalism and consider using a critical transnational framework. I borrow from Ananya Roy (2011a: 406, my emphasis) where she describes a critical transnationalism as a framework that “forges transnational solidarities, *makes possible the crossing of borders*, and above all, accomplishes what Watson (2009) has called ‘seeing from the South.’” This framework is intended to remind us to continuously look to the global south, not as geographical spaces that are ‘over there’ but as places that are present in the global north through the diversity of cultures that we have become accustomed to (Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005; Peck, 2005).

Transnationalism is “attuned to global forces. But such forces cannot be understood as postnational. They are simultaneously *embedded in and transcend* national systems of governance. They are constituted *through borders* and yet *trespass across borders* (Roy, 2011a: 407, my emphasis). This means that we must understand how diverse experiences with governance structures, patriarchal systems, or war-based violence impact people’s perceptions of their role in everyday life as citizens. These experiences are ‘constituted through borders and yet trespass across borders’ from the global south to the global north. The implications of this movement across borders is imperative to our critique of neoliberal multiculturalism, precisely because of the processes of global or planetary urbanization (Brenner and Schmid, 2012).

The story told by Interviewee 1 reveals how women in Sudan live their everyday lives in a contextually-based patriarchal system that is central to their role in the family structure and society. This role is well recognized by the government as shown by the reluctance of government officials to continue supporting women's reproductive health. However, these experiences with patriarchy not only continue to operate back 'home'. Patriarchy takes different forms in our liberal-democracies, but it is a dominant structure that operates across various borders within different political, cultural, or economic systems (Shreenan, 1992; Taraki, 2001; Haider, 2016). I therefore ponder how women's experience with patriarchy across borders can impact their roles and perceptions of such roles once they settle in Toronto.

### **Urban-rural divide, colonialism and change in Ecuador**

Interviewee 3 contributes to my understanding of the urban-rural divide by bringing forward issues faced by Indigenous peoples and peasants in the rural areas of Cuenca, Ecuador. Cuenca possesses class and race classifications, which possess a hierarchization of powers. Valcuende del Rio and Piedad Vásquez (2016: 309, my translation) note that:

White, which has been the image of power, refers to the descendants of Spaniards, who were added to groups from other contexts, bleached by virtue of their economic position. In this classification of White, rests the "chazo" or rural white, which possesses positions of power in relation to other (rural) peasants, but much less than the urban Whites; similarly, Indigenous Peoples sit on this lower rung of power when compared to Mestizos, who are "ranked among the urban "whitewashed" and rural mestizo.

The population in the Cuenca region is also differentiated by *cholos/cholas* who can be urban or rural and they are differentiated from Indigenous peoples by their characteristic braids (Valcuende del Rio and Piedad Vásquez, 2016). As stated by Valcuende del Rio and Piedad Vásquez (2016: 309, my translation and emphasis added), "if there is a fact that helps us to understand the different hierarchizations between whites, mestizos and indigenous, it is precisely the *urban / peasant duality*" where living in the rural areas plays a significant role in the limited power and access to resources that people possess.

To highlight this imbalance of power, I share Interviewee 3's work in Cuenca, which focused primarily on helping rural Indigenous peoples and rural peasants to 'rediscover' or regain their voice and identity. The need for this 'rediscovery' results from capitalist and

colonial expansion in Ecuador. Interviewee 3 contends that years of colonization have interrupted critical aspects of Indigeneity in today's Ecuador. As he explains, "I think there is an issue of self-esteem, because as a consequence of oppression, many of them they have their self-esteem very down" (Interviewee 3). From the ongoing colonial and capitalist occupation, an Indigenous proletariat has emerged in Ecuador's rural areas of the Sierra (the geographical region where Cuenca is situated) who predominantly work as flower growers, or *floricultoras* (Martínez Valle, 2007). Additionally, there is a critical situation for those living in Ecuador's rural areas (particularly younger people) who experience a lack of employment opportunities or precarious labour where the difficulty of obtaining salaried employment is exacerbated by a large demand from rural dwellers looking for work and limited supply of available work (Martínez Valle, 2007).

To obtain sources of income, Interviewee 3 notes that peasants and Indigenous peoples travel to urban areas to sell goods in local markets, a necessary move for them to address ongoing precarious employment. Roy (2011b: 232) notes that, "the periphery signifies a relationship of interdependence in an apparatus of domination but it also refers to a specific topographical location: the peripheral neighborhoods of the urban poor". This lack of infrastructure between the urban-rural geographies is often exacerbated for monolingual Indigenous peoples. Perreault's (2003) study on Indigenous politics in Ecuador's Amazon region reveals that access to resources, like state agencies, international NGOs, Indigenous agencies, or the Federation of Indigenous Organizations of Napo (FOIN) is inaccessible for Indigenous women. In this study, Perreault (2003) conducted surveys at an office for FOIN where only 21% of 74 surveys with Quechua visitors were women. Perreault (2003: 335) notes that, "[t]his gendered difference is compounded by limited linguistic ability because monolingual Quechua speakers, more common among rural residents, older generations, and women, have less access to FOIN than do Spanish speakers".

This lack of access to resources and lack of power for rural dwellers is also reflected in a recent increase in urban development in the rural areas, sparked largely by outwards migration. Economic downturns in the Ecuadorian economy during the 1990s led to outwards migration that fueled a significant increase in remittances (Klaufus, 2006). This increase has sparked

widespread changes in the built environment as local residents use these remittances to construct new, modern houses that have been designed using non-traditional architecture and materials. These newly constructed houses have sparked controversy among (architectural) professionals and locals, largely due to its poor integration and regard for the contextual elements of the surrounding natural and built environment (Klaufus, 2006).

Interviewee 3 describes that these new houses are most often constructed in the rural areas where many Mestizo people or migrants from the United States buy several houses from peasants and Indigenous peoples in the rural areas for little to no dollar value. Interviewee 3 tried to support the local people by telling peasants that there is no “need to give your land [for] free” and that their land and house has some value even if old and minimal.

However, for Interviewee 3 local peasants/Indigenous peoples selling their properties was a sign of deeper contextual issues:

One of the difficult things was the education. Many of them don't understand or don't value what they have. I think there is an issue of self-esteem as a consequence of oppression, many of them have their self-esteem very down. Because you are a peasant, you are scared, you are shy... you don't empower yourself (Interviewee 3).

To address these issues, Interviewee 3's advocacy work in rural areas was to educate people on the importance of valuing their lands. He often directed people towards types of educational training that would help them recuperate their lands by studying to become an agronomic engineer or an ecologist. His role as educator with the community was to re-establish a relationship with nature for Indigenous peoples and peasants, more broadly. Nature as a major component to urbanization was a central theme in the discussion with Interviewee 3, but this component is of heightened importance for Indigenous peoples who have long experienced colonial and capitalist disruptions to their ways of living off the lands (see Andolina, 2012 for a case on Indigenous water politics in Ecuador).

Interviewee 3 also supported locally-based economic projects to help residents stabilize their economic conditions. Interviewee 3 explains that protecting their homes and providing basic infrastructure, like water and good structural conditions, is a vital part to local eco-tourism in rural areas. Eco-tourism has become a major component of the Ecuadorian economy with its own webpage dedicated to tourism and a sub-category dedicated to eco-tourism



([www.ecuador.travel](http://www.ecuador.travel), 2018). Eco-tourism can incorporate community-led activities that are in direct contact with nature, e.g., jungle tours, photographic safaris, and diving, among others (Orgaz Agüera and Cañero Morales, 2016). When involving local communities, this form of tourism is described as community tourism (Orgaz Agüera and Cañero Morales, 2016). However, Scheyvens (1999: 246) points out that ‘community tourism’ should only be used in cases when communities possess a high degree of control of the activities and benefits.

Eco-tourism has been criticized by various scholars for neocolonialist reasons. Orgaz Agüera and Cañero Morales (2016) indicate that many scholars argue that this form of tourism places an excessive focus on the environment, replicating long-held stereotypes about local people. This type of tourism is also criticized for its dependency on non-governmental organizations that evidently strips these communities of their economic autonomy. This type of tourism results in negative impacts to the local communities, which can result in poorer quality of life for its residents while also potentially causing major environmental disruptions and ultimately resulting in a loss of local culture and economic issues for the residents (Orgaz Agüera and Cañero Morales, (2016: 101). As argued by Munt (1994), eco-tourism is most often a case of cultural-capital enhancing for the new middle-classes.

### **Adjusting to Toronto**

My interviewees’ stories have highlighted complex experiences in their countries of origin. Of heightened importance are questions of democracy based on urban or rural geographical areas, gender, class, and colonialism. These relationships with democracy are critical to a deeper understanding of migrant communities in Toronto, specifically for those who are “not used to rocking the boat” and are used to “just doing what they’re told, keep their heads down, and to not get into any trouble” (Interviewee 2). My intent is not to compare the political systems across such diverse areas to Toronto. Nor is it my intention to claim that liberal-democracies, like Canada are havens of democracy. Instead, the purpose of discussing democracy in the context of migration and home countries is to point out that people’s experiences with these systems are indeed “constituted *through borders* and yet *trespass across borders*” (Roy, 2011a: 407) and to argue that our framework of multiculturalism and urban planning has not fully recognized how these experiences transcend borders into the multicultural city. People remain

deeply connected to their city and/or country of origin and their experiences of such places. It is precisely the multiple connections to these places, both experientially, and by others means of connection, that are important for this study on transnationalism.

### **Preserving Tibetan culture and identity across borders**

Interviews with the same people about their particular experiences of settlement in Toronto highlighted some often-cited immigration struggles, like challenges directly related to employment and language skills, (Teixeira, Lo, and Truelove, 2007; Okrainec et al., 2017) and housing (Teixeira, 2008). Speaking to barriers for the Tibetan community, Interviewee 5 cites a loss of language between generations as a considerable issue that might be addressed through a cultural centre. Research has shown that other migrant communities share a similar loss of language and cultural knowledge and identity with younger generations (Chumak-Horbatsch, 1999; Guardado, 2006).

The preservation of Tibetan language, culture, and religion is not only a process that is constituted within Canada's borders. As Interviewee 5 describes, for Tibetans, the preservation of Tibetan culture and language is a political struggle that transcends borders. This indicates an 'attachment to home' that is intimately connected to a transnational political struggle. These political struggles in Tibet were often about highlighting human rights abuses and the disappearance of political prisoners, journalists, revered teachers, and spiritual mentors (Interviewee 5). These political struggles are tied to the Tibetan struggle for state sovereignty from the Central Chinese government (Lawrence, 2014). Interviewee 5 explains that the struggle for sovereignty in Tibet has resulted in a precarious citizenship status among many Tibetans in Tibet. Many Tibetans have fled a political system where their own identity "was under attack" (Interviewee 5) and remains in constant tension and struggle.

The tensions brought by the fight for Tibetan sovereignty stretches across geographical borders and into Canada. A project by the Mosaic Institute brought Chinese people and Tibetans together for a dialogue following a conflict between Chinese and Tibetan protesters in 2008 (Interviewee 5). Interviewee 5 describes the goal of the Mosaic Institute as bringing:

Tibetan-Canadians, Chinese-Canadians together into a room to have a dialogue... so that they are not bringing conflicts from outside into their dialogue. That was the aim, but did that resolve anything? I don't think so. Like I made some Chinese-Canadian friends, like we went for meals, we had some interesting discussion but I don't think anyone's minds were changed.

This case points out that the experiences from the place of origin have transnational reach across geographies. This has an impact on how people engage with the world around them in their new home city, particularly with those who remain (politically) engaged in their everyday lives in their former home cities and countries. For planning purposes, it highlights a need for a political awareness in neighbourhoods with ethnocultural groups that have deeply political and contested experiences amongst each other. For our discussion of multiculturalism, this leads us to consider how the preservation of ethnoculturalism (as mandated in the Canadian Multiculturalism Act) can be situated within a context of transnationalism to recognize how ongoing political experiences and struggles between various ethnocultural groups across borders may impact the public participation process.

Despite being in a new geographical space, Interviewee 5 feels that these political struggles remain of significant concern for Tibetans in Toronto. For Tibetans, adjusting to Toronto is not only about adjusting to the new system, paying taxes, or learning a new language; it is instead a process of self-reflection about the meaning of being Tibetan in Canada for a community of people who continue to struggle with the protection of their own status and identity in their country of origin (Interviewee 5). This Tibetan struggle to preserve and maintain their own identity remains a politicized project during the month of March in Toronto and across the globe (which I will discuss later in further detail) for Tibetans who continue to protest the lack of state sovereignty from the Central Chinese government in Tibet.

This is precisely why Interviewee 5 indicates that the creation of a cultural centre is important for the Tibetan community in Toronto. Realistically, to create a cultural centre for every single ethnocultural group might not be realistic. The difficulty in providing accessible space for communities is already exacerbated by the neoliberal project, which since the 1990s has increasingly extended business expectations onto non-for-profits, or NGOs (Fyfe, 2005). Culture and the preservation of culture has not been a neoliberal priority. However, as

Interviewee 5 notes, the need to continue to protect their culture in Canada is deeply embedded in this political process that not only puts their identity and citizenship at risk of loss, but it has also affected their relationship with Chinese migrants in the city.

### **Diversity of migration and planning experiences in Hong Kong**

Interviewee 2 emphasizes the political situation of Hong Kong in her family's settlement experience. Ng (2008) outlines that Hong Kong is currently governed by an executive-led government that was imposed by the system of 'one country, two systems' with China. As the largest landlord, the executive-led polity in Hong Kong has a significant interest in the land development process (Ng, 2008). This system follows a "market leads and government facilitates" (Tang 2007 in Ng, 2008: 169) approach that (on the surface) appears to offer citizens power in the land development process. However, this is not necessarily the case. Ng (2008: 170) indicates that in Hong Kong, "[t]he legal system has legitimized a set of planning and development processes that deny citizens a right to participate and confine decision-making power to a privileged few at the apex of the power structure". This was further troubled by the 1997 financial crisis in Asia and heightened competition between nearby Chinese cities that has allowed the administration to adopt a planning process that looks at "social, cultural and environmental considerations [as] impediments to "progress" and "development" and are therefore trivialized if not neglected in the planning and development process" (Ng, 2008: 170).

Interviewee 2 speaks to the heterogeneity of migration experiences for the Chinese community, such as those from mainland China and those from pre- and post-colonial Hong Kong, those who arrived during the historical expansion of the railroad before the Chinese Exclusion Act and after the termination of this Act. The discussion with Interviewee 2 focused on Chinese migrants who arrived from Hong Kong during the last twenty or so years, particularly during the end of the British rule. Interviewee 2 describes that people in Hong Kong feared the Chinese 'takeover' and resorted to migrating to places like Canada or Australia to obtain citizenship in case the political transition did not work out favourably. Hong Kong's 'one country, two systems' political system is important for reasons explained by Interviewee 2 in her experience with Chinese Canadian National Council-Toronto Chapter doing advocacy work around anti-racism and anti-poverty. This advocacy work was met with challenges to obtain

community approval “because a lot of the community is not *used to* rocking the boat, *they just do what they’re told*, keep their heads down, don’t get into any trouble... I think people’s idea of public participation is very different, especially when you go to mainland China. *They’re not really used to giving their opinions*” (Interviewee 2, emphasis added).

For the Chinese community from Hong Kong, adjusting to Toronto is deeply tied to their experiences of living in a state with a political structure that follows a top-down, economic-first approach to governance and urban planning (Ng, 2008). For Hong Kong, Ng (2008) raises two crucial questions about growth-oriented spatial plans that dominate the policy and approach to planning in Hong Kong. Ng (2008: 166) asks: “Is planning necessarily a mere tool of the state to govern and to produce the necessary economic spaces?” and “Can urban planning also acknowledge the lived experiences of different stakeholders and empower a diversified citizenry who has no right to universal suffrage?” These challenges experienced by people in a system that operates under an economic-first approach and one with a lack of universal suffrage leads us to critically consider Interviewee 2’s statement that “people’s idea of public participation is very different, especially when you go to mainland China. *They’re not really used to giving their opinions.*”

Ontario currently prescribes a public participation process in the *Planning Act* (1990). Two notable sections for public engagement in the *Planning Act* are: section 17(15) Consultation and Public Meeting [official plan amendment]; and section 34(12) Information and public meeting; open house in certain circumstances [zoning by-law amendment]. In addition to the provincial legislation for public engagement, the City of Toronto (2018c) has policies listed in its Official Plan, section 5.5: The Planning Process. The policy reads as follows:

1. Public Involvement

A fair, open and accessible public process for emending, implementing and reviewing this Plan will be achieved by:

- a) encouraging participation by all segments of the population, recognizing the ethno-racial diversity of the community and with special consideration to the needs of individuals of all ages and abilities;
- b) promoting community awareness of planning issues and decisions, through use of clear, understandable language and employing innovative processes to inform the public, including the use of traditional and electronic media; and
- c) providing adequate and various opportunities for those affected by planning decisions to be informed and contribute to planning processes, including:

- i. encouraging pre-application community consultation;
- ii. holding at least one community meeting in the affected area, in addition to the minimum statutory meeting requirements of the Planning Act, for proposed Official Plan and/or Zoning By-law amendments prior to approval;
- iii. ensuring that information and materials submitted to the City as part of an application during the course of its processing are made available to the public; and
- iv. ensuring that draft Official Plan amendments are made available to the public for review at least twenty days prior to statutory public meetings, and endeavouring to make draft Zoning By-law amendments available to the public for review at least ten days prior to statutory public meetings, and if the draft amendments are substantively modified, further endeavouring to make the modified amendments publicly available at least five days prior to consideration by Council.

Despite the provincial legislation and municipal policies, public engagement with diverse communities remains an issue (Gibson-Wood et al., 2012; Nguyen, 2014). The City of Toronto has fortunately recognized this issue and recently created the Toronto Planning Review Panel to generate broader participation with non-represented communities (Nanji, 2017). However, in the broader context of multicultural Toronto, Interviewee 2 notes that for “a lot of people, multiculturalism means we get a lot of really good food in Toronto... but I think a lot of multiculturalism in Canada doesn’t go very deep, it is very much just on the surface. It is something nice to say but at the end the system was built by the powers of... and they haven’t figured out how to adapt themselves to other cultures”.

This is also troubled by the fact that communities are not homogenous in their experiences across diverse geographies, which are often marked by contradictory forms of power and politics. Multiculturalism in Toronto must be situated alongside the political issues that evidently have transnational importance and significant implications for communities. The undemocratic structure in places across the globe cannot be removed from Interviewee 2’s acknowledgement that some people are not used or socialized to “rocking the boat”. These political struggles for identity preservation, adjusting as new refugees, and (political or gender-based) violence must not be made invisible upon immigration into Toronto.

### What does it mean to “adjust to Toronto”?

These stories lead us to question the meaning behind adjusting to Toronto. What does adjusting to this city mean for people who remain intimately connected to their (political) experiences and communities from home? Through the powerful stories and experiences shared by these interviewees, I ask the following question: what does it mean to ‘adjust’ in Toronto? In a multicultural city, what does an integration of culture, race, and ethnicity mean when pressed against these complex experiences across various geographies and borders? The interviews have shown that these borders are sometimes heavily contested by international politics and violence. By questioning what it means to adjust to Toronto, we can begin to ask about the aspects of an individual or group that *is* and *is not* recognized under neoliberal (symbolic and market-driven) multiculturalism where the interviewees show that lived experiences are rendered invisible or silent once people arrive in the multicultural city.

This further problematizes multiculturalism as its central focus on ethnoculturalism is not directly concerned with the conflicts experienced by these interviewees and those living in these places of origin. These are direct reflections of the tensions in politics and power in these countries, where for example, the trauma experienced by Syrians from home related to war, or terrorism and a lack of democracy has been met with various levels of extreme discrimination upon migration across the globe (Fotiadis, 2016). Once here, these experiences directly lead us to question where the experiences of politics and power fit within the discourse, policy, and practice of multiculturalism. To move forward, we must ask how we can expand our discussions of multiculturalism in Toronto towards a deeper understanding of people’s experiences outside of ethnoculturalism. These experiences from across the globe should not be disregarded as past events with a beginning and end in a person’s life experiences. People from across the globe not only bring the most tangible components of their identity, like food. As Interviewee 2 only half-jokingly indicates, “people from all cultures have learned to like the food of other cultures... So, food is first but what is the next step?” It is the intangible components of someone’s *experiences* that are less understood by the policies and the ‘branding’ of neoliberal multiculturalism — and we must begin to ask questions that acknowledge these experiences.

#### 4. Urban Activism as Insurgency Planning and Citizenship

This section discusses urban activism as embedded in transnational networks and experiences. I look to spaces outside of the multicultural city to argue that the multicultural state must become attune to these experiences *with* advocacy across space if it hopes to produce a civic engagement that is truly representative of the city's multicultural character. In other words, we must also begin to look at migrant diversity for its wide-ranging involvement in civic participation, democracy, and insurgency across borders in order to maximize the participation of diverse publics. By doing so, we ensure that multiculturalism does not *only* remain a cultural diversification project – as discussed in the previous chapters. The insurgent practices that are taking place across spaces are important if we are to look at multicultural cities as places that possess much more than cultural diversity but instead as places that are filled with a diversity of experiences engaging in advocacy and insurgency. By recognizing such experiences, we can begin to understand how to (re)ignite political engagement amidst struggles to strengthen civic engagement in the multicultural city – and by extension into the planning process.

My interviewees shared knowledge and experiences about their fights for a voice. The resiliency that is often embedded in the rural or urban spaces of their country or city of origin demonstrates that “[t]he same forces that effectively fragmented and dominated the rural poor by reducing their existence to a “mere life” incite the urban poor to demand a citizen’s life” (Holston, 2008: 313). This fight for a “citizen’s life” cannot be removed from the conception of citizenship, which involves the inclusion of rights, duties, and membership of a political community (Brown, 1994). A prime example of this fight for a citizen’s life is Tibetan urban politics. Tibetan advocacy sought to highlight injustice in Tibet that occurs the hands of the Chinese government, along with the human rights abuses and disappearances of political prisoners, journalists, teachers, spiritual mentors as a way of “amplifying the voices of Tibetans in Tibet” (Interviewee 5). This has been a result of 20<sup>th</sup> century politics between the Chinese and Tibetan states. Tibetans are in a precarious state-hood condition where the Central Chinese government considers Tibetan state lands as the Tibetan Autonomous Region of China, despite ongoing protests against the Chinese government to recognize Tibet as a sovereign state with its own delineated state borders, culture, religion, etc. (Chand and Danner, 2016).



Interviewee 5 notes that she often witnessed Tibetan advocacy occurring in Kathmandu, Nepal and at times in New Delhi, India. This advocacy usually involved the marking of significant events and dates, advocating for social welfare on behalf of elderly Tibetans without children, building old-age homes, or meal distribution. Advocacy usually happened at sacred or holy sites in the city. Interviewee 5 explains that her parents were actively involved in the 'Tibetan freedom movement' – her mother was part of the Tibetan Women's Association while her father was part of the Tibetan Youth Congress. Her parents lived in Kathmandu and sometimes travelled to India for meetings to engage with people to discuss Tibetan politics. Chand and Danner (2016) explain that China has taken an active economic and political role within Nepal and India in order to secure itself as an economic powerhouse in Asia. This political-economic strategy has spurred transnational advocacy by Tibetans, particularly in Nepal and India.

Interviewee 5's parents were among thousands of Tibetans forced to seek refuge in nearby Nepal and India following the events of 10 March 1959. On this date, the Chinese Communist Party set up a cultural performance for the Dalai Lama, but Tibetans gathered to prevent his attendance because many speculated that this was an attempt to have him arrested by the Chinese government (Chand and Danner, 2016). This gathering led to a "full blown popular movement, which subsequently led to the Dalai Lama's flight from Tibet to neighbouring India" (Chand and Danner, 2016: 31). The anniversary of 10 March 2008 saw the most significant resistance to Chinese rule in the Tibetan Autonomous Region since the initial uprising of 1959. This prompted an active role by the Chinese government in Kathmandu to "curb the rights of the Tibetan refugees within Nepal, particularly the rights of individuals to organize, but also backing up its demands with more aid and non-lethal military aid" (Chand and Danner, 2016: 32). The political atrocities by the Chinese government is similarly documented by Schwartz's (1991) ethnographic study of Lhasa, Tibet during the late 1980s where many foreigners witnessed police open fire in a square with Tibetan protesters, including children.

Recent economic growth in China "and its increasing influence in Asia could be attributed to its ever extending overtures in Nepal, as it seeks to secure the Tibetan Autonomous Region through further diplomatically pressuring the Nepalese government to

control the political activities of Tibetans” (Chand and Danner, 2016: 32). The objective of the Chinese government “in relation to Nepal have been in part to curb the political activities of Tibetans in Nepal in order to further discourage dissent from the Tibetan Autonomous Region and prevent cross-border spillover. Thus, China sought to influence the Nepalese government to control the Tibetan population within Nepal” (Chand and Danner, 2016: 32). These macro policies by the Chinese state have consequently led to protests by Tibetans as they struggle with the right for sovereignty within the Tibetan Autonomous Region and across the borders in Nepal. Tibetans in Nepal are pressed against foreign policies in a state that has been subject to strong Chinese influence.

This mobilization outside the Chinese state borders is an important aspect of Tibetan urban politics, particularly as it extends into our context of North America. Tibetan advocacy in Toronto (and globally) is most evident on 10 March of every year to commemorate the 1959 uprising. However, compared to the protests in Nepal, Interviewee 5 points out that Toronto’s police facilitate safe passage during their rallies, whereas in Nepal, “police are there to restrict your movement, restrict your freedom of expression. And there’s [no] asking why, or especially when it is a stateless group or a group with precarious status in that country” (Interviewee 5).

The political conditions in Canada are not like those currently in Tibet, leading one to ask why the Tibetan experience for state sovereignty, displacement and advocacy is relevant in the context of the multicultural city. Yet, this story is important in the multicultural city because, “Tibetans are so organized when it comes to something that is happening thousands of miles away in Tibet. For example, [if] a building burned down in Tibet all the Tibetans in Toronto know about it. But something that’s more local that affects them on a day-to-day kind of basis, like, they’re kind of clueless” (Interviewee 5). Illustrating the importance of Tibetan politics among Tibetans, Interviewee 5 explains that her mother takes off work on 10 March to protest for the annual Tibetan National Uprising and usually takes part in Tibetan-related events or community meetings that deal with the prospects of a Tibetan Cultural Centre because “that’s something close to her heart” (interviewee 5).

The Tibetan community in Toronto shows us how (political) experiences that led a group of people to advocate in their former home city or country needs to be contextualized in our

multicultural city to understand how to (re)ignite political engagement in the multicultural city. The Tibetan community shows us the importance of specific dates during the year that serve to (re)ignite urban activism in the multicultural city, despite a limited engagement with local level politics. It becomes interesting to consider how people, like Interviewee 5's mother who do very little engagement in Toronto, become active urban citizens when confronted with issues that are 'close to their heart'.

Tibetan advocacy led me to ponder the following questions: What are the issues across migrant communities that remain close to their heart? How knowledgeable are we about the political contexts of these communities? How do these political contexts remain embedded between/through communities (like Tibetans and Chinese) in the multicultural city with histories of conflict? And what is the role of planners in uncovering these particular political contexts? Put succinctly, how do planning strategies for public engagement become more firmly rooted in a deeper contextualization of urban politics across urban geographies as shaped in the global south and contested in the multicultural Western city? Understanding people's experiences (like Interviewee 5 and her mother) with urban activism allow us to understand how living in the neoliberal multicultural city restrains an ongoing engagement with urban politics and/or urban planning.

Interviewee 1's story about migrant struggles with foreign educational recognition also affords us an opportunity to better understand how we can (re)ignite urban activism in the multicultural city. Interviewee 1 indicates that migrants (like himself) struggle with obtaining employment in their area of expertise due to their foreign credentials not being recognized in Canada (see Houle and Yssaad, 2010; Somerville and Walsworth, 2010). This employment limitation restricts Interviewee 1's ability to formally share and utilize his professional and personal knowledge and experiences doing advocacy in Sudan for women's rights. It also limits his ability to become an active health provider for women (now living in Canada) who have experienced female genital mutilation. This rich knowledge and involvement in this area of the health sector is made invisible by the multicultural state, as are the needs of potential patients. If these credentials were to be formally recognized, then Interviewee 1's experience doing advocacy in this area of the health sector can provide our health care system with an

opportunity to enhance our knowledge about women in Toronto with personal experience with female genital mutilation. It can also bridge our understandings of this cultural practice with the extensive cultural and political history of Sudan, the current role of the Sudanese government in allowing for female genital mutilation to continue, and the gaps in accessible health care for Sudanese women now living in Toronto. In short, by restricting his ability to perform this work, the multicultural state loses a considerable opportunity to understand female genital mutilation for its complexity and the context of the country Sudan – as well as here.

These two interviewees' stories demonstrate that we would gain to investigate the issues that migrants find close to their heart as they are embedded in transnational ties to 'home'. Doing such investigations would allow us to begin to understand how these transnational ties remain of great significance for people despite living in a new urban society. This does not ignore that political engagement occurs out of necessity where many people were forced to engage in advocacy to obtain basic human rights. At the same time, these engagements were also met with major challenges. Interviewee 5 recalls protest challenges that were associated with Nepalese-Chinese ties where the Nepalese government saw the Chinese "regime" as their "friends" (Interviewee 5). Despite being a sovereign state, Interviewee 5 indicates that the Nepalese government was intolerant of the protests mainly because of these close ties with the Chinese government (Chand and Danner, 2016). Meanwhile, Interviewee 1 experienced challenges in continuing the operation of the organization because of a patriarchal position on women's reproductive health. These challenges are contextual. However, they raise questions about how we can begin to contextualize migrant and transnational issues in the multicultural city and how we can draw from these experiences in a way that recognizes the ongoing networks and connections between the multicultural city and the former home city/country.

### Planning with Transnationalism

The purpose of this research was to investigate how transnationalism as a framework can allow us to understand the implications of diversity beyond ethnocultural characteristics in the multicultural city. This recognition of diversity is rooted in a need to examine the complexities behind people's experiences across borders. It also allows us to begin to question the implications for *how* these complex experiences impact the experience of living in the multicultural city (of Toronto). My aim has been to ground this theoretical position within the greater scope of democracy in the city. This position is further grounded on understanding how we can begin to look at the multicultural city as a space that is rich with the capacity for greater involvement in public participation, precisely because people's histories have been deeply involved in such advocacy. The richness behind the stories told in my Major Paper have shown that there remains a tremendous amount of learning to do in order to produce a public engagement process that is truly representative of the diversity that exists in the multicultural city. This paper has attempted to critically consider what it means to *do* transnational planning in the multicultural city by first defining what transnationalism means in the theory and practice of urban planning.

What does this mean for urban planning? This paper was not set out to disregard all the incredible work being conducted by planners, planning consultants, planning firms, or others generally involved in planning-related work. Planners must adhere to municipal policies and laws set out by the higher levels of government. Planners (in Canada) must adhere to a professional code of ethics that positions planners as professional advisers who must work within a specific set of responsibilities for clients and employers (OPPI, 2018). Urban planning and planning more generally is in a constant state of change since its formal incorporation as a profession in the early part of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Thomas, 2016).

This paper argued that multiculturalism and democracy needs to expand if we are to shift how we conceptualize 'multicultural planning' (as discussed in Qadeer and Agrawal, 2011) to a more transnational framework that is more representative of diversity in the multicultural city. From the interviews emerged a few ways that planning can be more responsive to transnational experiences. One example for the need to adopt a transnational planning

framework is the recent Syrian refugee crisis with millions displaced, in need, or in hard-to-reach and besieged areas (UNHCR, 2018). Interviewee 4 indicates that the federal government provided financial support for Syrians refugees to settle in Canada but did very little to address the psychological trauma that comes with living in a war zone. As Interviewee 4 explains:

A lot of people still have trauma because of the war, because of the bad circumstances that they passed through, and I didn't see that there is a focus on that. The federal government was just focused on bringing a number of people to the country with no responsibility about the psychological [issues from the place] they came from."

This interviewee refers to the Trudeau government's promise to bring 25,000 Syrian refugees into Canada by the end of 2015. The failure to address the psychological well-being of Syrian refugees entering the country is concerning, especially with research that has documented the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorder associated with populations who have been displaced from their home country or have lived in refugee camps (Steele et al., 2009). The psychological effects of mass human rights violations and refugee trauma are also concerning across the globe with the increasing number of global refugees, while psychology experts aim to address ways to better examine the implications of their traumas (Silove, 1999). In an article that holds great significant today, Silove (1999: np), suggests a more comprehensive framework than post-traumatic stress disorder by proposing an approach that gives more attention to:

the impact of trauma on other adaptive systems such as the capacity to form and nurture interpersonal bonds, to retain a sense of identity and role functioning, to maintain faith in a system of justice, and to sustain a sense of existential meaning, coherence, and hope.

Therefore, a transnational framework within multicultural urban planning is one that identifies these experiences across borders as they affect the human experience in the new home city. People's interactions (or lack thereof) with the new government are critical aspects of (forced) migration. A transnational framework must be situated in a comprehensive approach (like the one proposed by Silove) if we wish to enhance civic engagement in our multicultural city.

This approach by Silove (1999) is critical for us when we consider the complex link between Syrians' trauma with war and the consequences of the Syrian government's lack of civic engagement:

Syrians don't feel safe to be engaged with the government because we were used to our countries where playing with the government is not easy, you are going to be in trouble. So, we need to change this kind of idea on the mind of those newcomers. We need to make them more engaged with the activities, with the planning of the city. We need to bring people to understand their needs, to understand their fears, and to work to recover them before they are engaged in planning for the future (Interviewee 4).

Interviewee 2 suggests that a transnational framework should not be tied to one specific development because of the technicality involved in a development project. She instead proposes that a transnational planning framework must be a vision that we adopt for the future of the city. This vision would remain situated on a common goal for all Torontonians. This vision could, for example, incorporate architectural and design elements from Latin American, Italy, or Portugal, among many others in the city (Interviewee 3).

At the same time, this vision could incorporate Toronto's youth who will play a crucial role in city building (Interviewee 3). Young people from across cultural backgrounds can form a symposium to generate a greater contribution towards an "urbanity, a post-modern city of Toronto with a multicultural urbanism" (Interviewee 3). Such symposium could include discussions about architectural and design elements but also the complexities behind everyday life in the country or city of origin. Such discussion could go beyond the tangible elements of diversity and instead be able to dig much deeper into the diversity of experiences, struggles, and advocacy that continues to shape cities around the world.

## 5. Conclusion

Urban activism continues to be an expression of citizenship in these diverse places around the world. The preceding chapter demonstrates that the capacity for urban activism and political engagement among racialized migrants has always existed, regardless of geographical location or reasons for activism. It is important to further examine migrants' fights for an equal voice for women or Indigenous people, protesting for state sovereignty, advocating for the working-class, or fighting to have the state provide adequate services, infrastructure or even access to democracy in urban and rural areas. As shown, these struggles have a direct impact on everyday life for those living in the city/country of origin. This 'impact' is most evident in people's lack of power and lack of a legitimate voice when confronted with the politics and power of the state and other empowered people, (generally men) over disempowered people, (generally women, racialized or Indigenous people). Finally, the interviewees have shed light on the implications of these experiences across transnational borders, particularly into the multicultural city.

The main principle behind the Canadian Multiculturalism Act is to protect the diversity of cultures in Canada within a human rights framework. This is not an illegitimate purpose or principle in the Act. However, this paper has shown that ethnocultural diversity does not fully represent the diversity of Canada's racialized populations. As argued, (Canadian) multiculturalism's focus on the preservation of ethnocultural diversity fails to contextualize the complex human experiences of living in diverse places across the globe. People's complex political experiences are in fact an element of diversity that racialized migrants possess outside of their perceived ethnocultural characteristics. This is evidently reflected in the ongoing struggles for migrant representation in planning processes. These experiences are intimately tied to urban, rural, or state level politics and power that has a wide range of impacts for access to democracy in the city of origin and once in the new home city. Race, gender and class are also critical to how people experience politics and power, and deficits in democracy. Furthermore, multiculturalism is compounded by neoliberal politics and economics that see ethnocultural diversity as opportunities to maximize capital accumulation (Goonewardena and Kipfer, 2005). The fetishization of ethnocultural diversity has become entrenched in the



neoliberal state and (in this case) the city of Toronto. Meanwhile, trends continue to demonstrate that this fetishization has done very little to address trends of an increasing racialized working-class in Toronto (Hulchanski, 2007).

### **Politics and Power: the implications for everyday life in the city of origin**

This Major Paper has demonstrated that these experiences significantly impact how people perceive their role as citizens in their country of origin and across transnational borders. It is from the analysis of these experiences that the implications for public engagement in the multicultural city become crucial to understanding how people's complex experiences transgress borders. The politics and power and deficits in democracy are also closely tied to space. Where people live, work and play will have a significant impact on access to power or democracy. Therefore, from this analysis emerges an urban-rural divide where the urban, rural, and state-level politics and power are critical to examining how these spaces play a role in further marginalizing people.

Succinctly capturing this idea of power and access to democracy is the 'scale of democracy'. This theme is critical given the expansion in the urban peripheries in the form of suburbanization (Keil, 2018) that has been accompanied by informal housing settlements (Roy, 2005). Yet, despite this ongoing formal and informal growth in the urban periphery, the interviewees demonstrate that the state continues to place a focal point on the urban centre. This points to a lack of democracy where rural dwellers generally possess limited access to democracy when compared to their urban counterparts. The impact is most noticeable in access to key infrastructure like schools, employment, and government resources or services. Whether in Ecuador, Sudan or Syria, movement across rural and urban spaces is needed to access spaces of employment and key infrastructure that are disproportionately out of access for rural dwellers.

In Syria, the state has increasingly adopted economic liberalization policies while doing very little to enable political liberalization for Syrians. The struggle for political liberalization has manifested itself into the current civil war in Syria where the state continues to take fierce measures against its citizens, most recently by chemical attacks that have left hundreds of

Syrians, including children dead (BBC, 2018). Democracy deficits are evident for all Syrians, but exacerbated by the geographical area where people live.

Tibetans continue to have a precarious statehood condition where the Central Chinese government maintains political control over a state boundary that has historically been Tibetan lands. Despite being under Chinese control, Tibetans continue to engage in annual political activism regardless of geographical location. The 10 of March is a day that unites Tibetans in the struggle for state sovereignty despite being thousands of miles away from Tibet. The Central Chinese government also continues to maintain influence over Hong Kong where the two-country, one-party system does very little to open opportunities for political engagement among Hong Kong's citizens. The split between mainland China and Hong Kong also produces divisions among the Chinese population. The state has produced a citizen that is more accustomed to "doing what they're told" as opposed to embarking on wide-scale political engagement (Interviewee 2).

The urban periphery presents itself with a lack of access to opportunity for those living in Ecuador's rural areas. Importantly, race said to be a significant factor in determining access to services and amenities where white Ecuadorians possess a greater access to state services when compared to Indigenous counterparts. However, access to essential services remains a significant issue for many Ecuadorians living in the rural areas of the state. Finally, the politics and power of the state of Sudan has consequential impacts on the everyday lives of women, particularly by failing to tackle the issue of female genital mutilation. While the negative impacts associated with female genital mutilation are well documented, the state of Sudan continues to allow this practice to persist. The advocacy by Interviewee 1 demonstrates that there is a will on behalf of citizens to end this practice, but it is met with significant state-led barriers that seek to maintain power over women.

### **Points of reference for multicultural urban planning**

This Major Paper's theoretical examination of the theory and practice of multicultural urban planning is not meant to remain a theoretical abstraction without practical relevance. An analysis of democracy in the multicultural city of Toronto is grounded on a greater fight for a voice and representation for communities that are continuously underrepresented in the

planning process. Planning practitioners are in a tough position when attempting to further enhance democracy. However, the practice of urban planning or planning more generally is not limited to conventional land use planners. What has been argued in this paper holds great significance for those working in health or social services, urban planning, and community organizations (etc.) looking to enhance democracy for those often underrepresented.

Transnational experiences in the country of origin and Toronto offer us an insight into potential opportunities to produce a greater public engagement. A notable example includes the notion of place-making. In the field of urban planning, place-making focuses on the immediate neighbourhood surroundings, walkability to amenities that are within proximity to one another. Following the discussion with the interviewees, I have proposed looking at place-making from a macro-scale of the city that places greater emphasis on the connectivity between different neighbourhoods and spaces in the city. Rather than focusing on the immediate surrounding area, this framework proposes to look at neighbourhoods from a multi-scalar approach.

This framework can be most suitably implemented through a comprehensive planning study, namely the secondary plans. These plans must be contextualized within the broader city. These studies are based on the road map of the city policies in the Official Plan, but in order to ensure that the city's neighbourhoods are connected to people, businesses, places of worship, etc., then these plans must bear in mind the diversity of users outside of the immediate context area.

The case of racialized seniors provides us with an example that people remain intimately connected to communities outside of their surrounding neighbourhoods and changes to these spaces has wide-ranging community effects. For example, recommending certain land use and zoning by-law changes in frequently used retail areas that are used by those who do not live in the area, but support local businesses. The intent is not to diminish the fact that Toronto is a city of neighbourhoods where Torontonians define themselves (Hume, 2009). Instead, the intent is to further connect the city's neighbourhoods and mitigate the issues related to neighbourhood marginalization, lack of investment, etc. We can begin to dismantle negative stereotypes that persist in neighbourhoods if we begin to see how the ethnic retail shops in

Jane and Finch are connected by people and business to the retail shop in the old city of Toronto or Scarborough.

The interconnectedness of the events in East Chinatown and Scarborough further illuminates the need to adopt a multi-scalar approach. The case demonstrates that people's attachment to various businesses, other people, public or private spaces, places of worship (etc.) is not only something to consider as an inevitable result of living in the city. Rather, this case reminds those of us interested in the practice of urban planning to become constantly attuned to the way space is used across various visible and invisible borders by people, or businesses for reasons that are economic, religious, cultural, political, or for leisure.

Transnationalism was the main point of analysis for this Major Paper. I began this investigation with an understanding that people's experiences from 'back home' are carried across visible and invisible borders. However, less clear were the implications of these experiences in the (urban) planning process and regarding questions of democracy once racialized migrants arrive to the neoliberal multicultural city. I was also concerned about the fetishization of ethnocultural diversity in a city where trends show that diverse migrants continue to be represented on the lower end of statistics for economic opportunities, income, or childhood poverty (Social Planning Toronto, 2017). None of these statistics made much sense in a city that prides itself through the motto 'Diversity Our Strength' (Pitter, 2016). These curiosities opened a space for further inquiry.

This Major Paper considers the particular state of some women across borders, particularly because of patriarchy. Women move across borders but their role as caregivers remain central to the family structure and it is compounded by further responsibilities in the new home city. For the planning process, it means considering ways for women to come to public engagement activities, such as providing childcare. It also means that we find ways to engage racialized women in the spaces that they have re-made into their own, ironically by way of their caregiving practices. This reinforces the need to go to where communities are rather than bringing them to the planning professionals. Once again, this is *not* to suggest that this is the only way to engage racialized women. I have instead argued that many women in fact

remain primary caregivers and there remains a need to understand the context of the local neighbourhoods to uncover the types of activities that racialized women participate in.

My research also reveals that investigating people's trauma across borders was crucial to understand public engagement in planning processes. It became increasingly evident that this trauma is closely tied to people's (lack of) engagement across borders in their former home city. The lack of political liberalization in Syria, lack of women's power in Sudan, lack of state sovereignty in Tibet (among others), lack of political engagement in Hong Kong, and the marginalization of indigenous and working-class in Ecuador's rural areas are examples of the state playing a central role in diminishing the capacity for public engagement. Yet, we cannot ignore the role of the multicultural city in failing to draw the links between these transnational experiences. People's complex experiences across space need examination to further understand its implications for public engagement in the multicultural city.

#### **Limitations and future research**

Despite the opportunities afforded by this Major Paper, I acknowledge that there are various limitations to my research. The first and most evident limitation is the number of participants in the research. The participants shared insightful experiences about living around the world but there is a need to understand the experiences of living in these places from a more diverse group of people. For example, what is the experience of the LGBTQ+ community in these places and how does the state further marginalize them on the basis of their identity? How did the LGBTQ+ community navigate through issues such as deficits in democracy or gender and race marginalization? The diversity that exists within and between communities are infinite. This fact is precisely the point in pursuing a transnational framework in the planning process to further uncover the diversity outside of ethnoculturalism. Uncovering diversity also includes a range of ideologies that may place tension in the pursuit for a more equitable city. However, deliberation and discussions in the planning process is a planner's most effective tool to ensure that voices are equally heard through the various stages of a development review or a major planning study.

Second, a thorough overview of the history of these countries is limited by the time and space afforded for this paper. The state may inadequately engage its citizens but deeper

historical research would uncover the history of pre- and post-colonialism or imperialism in these states. Historical accounts would allow us to identify points of progressiveness or regression in the state's history and consider whether contemporary state actions are a result of current global and local conditions or whether the state also experienced various periods of progressiveness and wide-ranging public engagement. Third, expanding the interviews to municipal planning staff and private consultants may have been provided further insight into the potential for the current and future status and opportunities for progressive action in the planning process. Finally, the complexities of Indigenous people in the multicultural city were not included in this paper despite a brief overview.

My original intention for this research was to place racialized migrants and their community's stories at the forefront of the discussion. More participants from other places around the world may have provided further details about living in places across the globe and now living in the multicultural state. An acknowledgement of experiences across space can allow practitioners to contextualize racialized migrants within the global processes of economics or politics, and local cultures, religion, traditions, traumas, or violence. Ongoing conflicts present the state and its citizens or residents with complexities that are sometimes most dangerously felt on the ground. To understand the rippling effect of these experiences and to start thinking about their implication for planning was precisely the intention behind my research.

This Major Paper is not only important for the discussion of planning practice. This Major Paper is also relevant because of today's nationalist and anti-globalist rhetoric. The current Trump administration's nationalist and anti-immigration rhetoric increasingly raises serious concerns for the status of new immigrants in the United States and how it affects Canadian politics and citizens. The recent rise in anti-Muslim hate speech in Toronto is a clear indication of this (Silverstein, 2018; CBC News, 2018). The Trump administration cites terrorism concerns as the most pressing reason for a closure of state borders (Kharrazi, 2018). Public engagement is the planning practitioner's greatest tool to ensure that communities, regardless of race, colour, or religion, are constantly recognized in our democracies and recognized as equal citizens and residents in our cities.

This Major Paper justifies the need to maintain a commitment to understanding the various processes that occur outside of our state borders. As a country of immigrants, Canada – and as a city of immigrants, Toronto – cannot afford to close its borders or end its commitment to the influx of new migrants. In fact, the multicultural state requires a *deeper* examination of transnational borders to understand how we can better integrate people into everyday life, while providing them with opportunities beyond mere survival or precarity. Only when we follow this path can we create a multicultural city and state that is truly representative of the diversity that exists in the city of Toronto.

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