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**The Authorization of Difference:
Tourism Canada, Multiculturalism and the Commodification of
Canadian Ethno-cultural Difference**

by

Nicole Bennett

**A thesis submitted to
the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in partial fulfilment of
the requirements for the degree of**

Masters of Arts

Department of Sociology and Anthropology

**Carleton University
Ottawa, Ontario**

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THE AUTHORIZATION OF DIFFERENCE: TOURISM CANADA,
MULTICULTURALISM AND THE COMMODIFICATION OF
CANADIAN ETHNO-CULTURAL DIFFERENCE

submitted by Nicole Bennett, B.A.
in partial fulfilment of the requirements for
the degree of Master of Arts

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Abstract

This thesis examines a *rapprochement* which took place between Tourism Canada and multiculturalism in the late 1980s. The thesis explores attempts by tourism policy makers to bolster Canada's share of the United States pleasure travel market by selling Canada as a nation of interesting, "multicultural" people. It argues that this *rapprochement* was entertained because of an understanding of ethno-cultural difference which was common to both Tourism Canada and Canada's early "celebration of difference" model of multiculturalism. The thesis draws upon the work of post-colonial theorists who reexamine the concepts of difference and identity, in order to analyze the "difference" which early multiculturalism in Canada attempted to celebrate. It argues that this understanding of difference is one which is consistent with the needs of "cultural" and "ethnic" tourism which were being promoted by Tourism Canada. It suggests that although the efforts to market Canada as a multicultural tourist site took place at a time when the more equality-based, social justice model of multiculturalism had taken hold in Canadian state policy, tourism policy makers nonetheless harkened back to the earlier "celebration of difference" model of multiculturalism. This is due in large part, it is argued, because the ways in which difference is conceptualized within this earlier model of multiculturalism facilitate the commodification of ethnicity and the production of simple, unproblematic, and non-threatening signs for tourism's marketing needs.

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Any errors, deficiencies or omissions in this thesis are of course wholly my responsibility.

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Introduction

Too often, we pour the energy needed for recognizing and exploring difference into pretending those differences are insurmountable barriers or that they do not exist at all...either way, we do not develop tools for using human difference as a springboard for creative change within our lives. We speak not of human difference, but of human deviances.

(Audre Lorde, 1984:115)

In the 1980s Tourism Canada first began selling Canada as a multicultural tourist site. In order to sell "multicultural Canada" to tourist customers, Tourism Canada began promoting new forms of tourism based on the commodification of ethnicity and culture. I argue that the incorporation of multiculturalism into Tourism Canada's representations of Canada was made possible by a common understanding of ethno-cultural difference shared by both the tourist industry and by the early "celebration of difference"¹ model of multiculturalism in Canada.

Throughout this thesis, I am concerned with examining various concepts of ethno-

¹ As I will discuss further in the body of my work, I use the term "celebration of difference" to refer to early multiculturalism policies and programs in Canada which concentrated upon cultural preservation and the sharing of cultural festivals, heritage languages, cuisine and dance. This model of multiculturalism concentrated upon celebrating 'cultural' differences assumed to have been brought to Canada with immigrating individuals and communities.

cultural difference. It was in an attempt to better understand ethno-cultural difference and how it informs the ways in which we perceive and act in the world that I started on the way to considering tourism and multiculturalism in the 1980s in Canada as a case study. This case reveals important insights into the way in which ethno-cultural difference is understood in contemporary Canadian society and into how these understandings affect contemporary struggles for social justice and equality. It was in an exploration of conceptualizations of difference that I began to find the answers to some of the questions which seemed to arise naturally out of an examination of this case study.

In examining shifting perceptions of ethno-cultural difference this thesis has allowed me to explore some of the more "ideological" questions which have concerned me for some time. In examining the way in which these conceptualizations relate to policy choices, it has also allowed me to ground my analysis in the concrete issues in contemporary Canadian society. My work shows how "difference" in Canada has been one of the many 'ideological' sites through which the state has struggled to maintain hegemony. As such, it draws indirectly upon the work of Antonio Gramsci, who addressed the question of how bourgeois ideology is used to help reproduce the existing social order within the capitalist state. Gramsci (1971) examined how dominant "historic blocs" use ideology to secure legitimacy for their projects and "assimilate other groups to them." To the extent that such blocks are successful they achieve hegemony. Gramsci's work demonstrates how the reproduction of the existing social order is achieved not only through "the apparatus of state coercive power which 'legally' enforces discipline" but also through "'spontaneous' consent which is given by the great masses

of the population" which is "'historically' caused by the prestige and consequent confidence which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production" (1971:12).

Kay Anderson has stated that "race has been a most effective unifying concept in the making and extension of European global hegemony" in Canada, and that through the racialization of some communities, the state has acted as a "private apparatus" of European hegemony which was "centrally implicated in the making of Canada's social order" (1991:25). My research suggests that state policies developed in the late 1960s and early 1970s in Canada which responded to earlier racist policies, can also be seen as maintaining hegemony in Canada.

My thesis examines notions of difference through the case of a *rapprochement* between Tourism Canada and multiculturalism. In December of 1985 representatives from Tourism Canada and the offices in charge of multiculturalism, along with members of the Department of Communications signed a "memorandum of understanding" supporting joint efforts to link tourism, culture and multiculturalism in Canada. During the late 1980s Tourism Canada actively began promoting Canada as a multicultural tourist destination through a series of advertising campaigns aimed at our primary tourist customers: citizens of the United States. As well, Tourism Canada supported a series of regional initiatives which sought to highlight culture and multiculturalism in various tourist packages across Canada. The memorandum of understanding along with 'multicultural' tourist ad campaigns and regional initiatives which followed it, are evidence of a deliberate shift made by Tourism Canada to incorporate multiculturalism

into the Canadian tourism industry.

My concern in this thesis is to explore this shift in which Tourism Canada began selling Canada as a multicultural tourist destination. Many questions arise out of an examination of the shift. How can we explain Tourism Canada's choice to change the way in which it represented the nation to potential tourists? Why were the tourist industry and multiculturalism seen to be compatible? What can we learn about the nature of Canadian multiculturalism in the 1980s, and about "ethnic" and "cultural" tourism from an examination of this particular shift in emphasis? And finally, what, if anything, does this tell us about the way in which Canadians deal with race and ethnicity in our contemporary society?

In exploring these issues, my work integrates research on Tourism Canada and the history of Canadian state policies dealing with race and ethnicity, with theoretical debates concerning the nature of Canadian multiculturalism, the nature of ethnic and cultural tourism, as well as recent theories and critical work which explore various understandings of ethno-cultural difference in contemporary societies. I examine the history of state policies concerned with "differences" amongst citizens and locate three distinct periods characterised by various types of policies. Each of these periods is based on a particular concept of ethno-cultural difference. Of particular concern to my study is the second historical period which corresponds with the liberalization of immigration policy and with the introduction of multiculturalism policy. My thesis draws upon the work of cultural theorists who are concerned with understanding how we conceptualize ethno-cultural difference in contemporary societies in order to explore the difference

which the early multiculturalism of this period attempted to celebrate. Through this exploration, I argue that the state does not merely make policies about the differences which already exist amongst its citizens. I demonstrate that the state is itself implicated in the very formation of differences through policies aimed at managing difference. I show that within what I refer to as the "celebration of difference" model of early multiculturalism, the way in which ethno-cultural difference is conceptualized enables the state to contribute to the construction of a system of difference that reduces possible challenges to the status quo, serving to sustain the unequal relations of the existing social order. It is my thesis that the conceptualization of ethno-cultural difference used by the tourist industry in general and Tourism Canada in particular, is consistent with the conceptualization of ethno-cultural difference associated with Canada's first stage of multiculturalism policy. In this conceptualization of difference, some individuals are positioned as part of the norm or mainstream and some individuals are positioned outside the norm, as objectified, essentialized, ethnic Others. In this understanding of difference, some individuals and groups are positioned as inherently and permanently different from 'mainstream' Canadian culture. As such, these communities within the Canadian population are ethnicized and/or racialized. This way of understanding ethno-cultural difference treats difference as an unchanging attribute of birth and kinship rather than as a structurally defined and shifting cultural category. Ethno-cultural difference is treated as static and permanent. Cultural markers such as language, costume, and cuisine are uprooted from their shifting contexts and treated as unchanging representations of the ethnicity and culture of various social groups. At the same time difference, as it relates

to differential power dynamics, privilege and inequality, is hidden. In the celebration of cultural difference, the positioning of individuals as objectified Others serves to mask the complex relationships of power which exist between different groups in contemporary society as well as the role that the articulation of difference itself plays in reproducing inequalities. This conceptualization of difference takes place in a context where few have the power to define the boundaries of what is considered the norm. This way of conceptualizing difference has many implications for the way in which Tourism Canada incorporated multiculturalism. These include choices over which communities within the Canadian "mosaic" were singled out as ethnic Others in an attempt to provide tourist visitors with a sense of the exotic Other, as well as choices over which aspects of difference were to be highlighted.

I argue that it was in fact this conceptualization of difference which made multiculturalism attractive to tourism policy makers in their search for ways to bolster Canada's share of the United States pleasure travel market. Because of the ability to commodify ethnicity and culture within this concept of difference, tourism policy makers appealed to the early model of multiculturalism even though it had been widely criticized by the very communities which it helped to constitute and was, by the time of Tourism Canada's *rapprochement*, being rejected as insufficient for dealing with the many aspects of difference amongst Canadians. The common conceptualization of difference of Tourism Canada and early multiculturalism both helps to explain why multiculturalism and tourism were seen as compatible, and sheds light upon questions of how Canadians understand and mediate the complex make-up of our contemporary society.

I show that although evidence indicates that Tourism Canada operates on a market driven model, it was not only market considerations which lead to the decision of whether and how to represent cultural exoticism in Canadian tourism publicity. Both market forces (demand created by the American consumer's desire to experience the exotic 'other' without the hassles of overseas travel), and domestic concerns (in particular the conceptualizations of ethno-cultural difference associated with early multiculturalism) played roles in influencing Tourism Canada's decision of how to change the way it represented Canada to potential tourist customers. The shift towards incorporating multiculturalism into its publicity was undertaken partially because of the resonance of a particular form of multiculturalism which predominated in Canada up to the mid-1970s.

Chapter Summary

In the first chapter I am concerned with providing a foreground or context for the discussion of tourism and multiculturalism. In it I review the history of state policies which construct and manage "differences" amongst Canada citizens. I provide a periodization which locates three periods of state policies concerned with ethno-cultural difference in Canada. The first period is one in which a racist, "whites only" immigration policy dominated state efforts to deal with difference by keeping "unassimilables" out of Canadian borders. The second period saw the introduction of the points system to immigration policy and the introduction of the multiculturalism policy. In this second period, as ethnicity replaced race as the main marker of difference, state policy shifted to a liberal pluralistic framework in which difference was to be celebrated. The final period which I outline in chapter one corresponds to the more equality-based, anti-racist

programs within multiculturalism in the 1980s and 1990s. During this final period, the state also established the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and state affirmative action programs.

In chapter two I draw upon contemporary post colonial cultural theorists' discussions of difference and identity in order to outline how the early celebration of difference model of multiculturalism conceives of ethno-cultural difference. I argue that the notion of difference which is celebrated in early multiculturalism in Canada is one in which some individuals are positioned as essential ethnic Others, in opposition to the white Anglo and Franco Canadian cultural mainstreams. I argue that in celebrating 'traditional' cultural differences such as costume and cuisine, this understanding of difference masks the more relational, structural aspects of difference in contemporary hierarchical societies. By celebrating the effects of the articulation of difference, the celebration of difference hides the role of the articulation of difference in the reproduction of the status quo. This notion of difference, I point out, is easily paraded for celebration in liberal pluralistic societies. It is also increasingly commodified by capital in which ethnicity is presented as a sort of cultural spice.

Chapter three aims to document some of the elements of the *rapprochement* between Tourism Canada and multiculturalism in the mid nineteen-eighties. In anticipation of further discussion in chapter four, I comment briefly in this chapter upon conceptualizations of culture within the Tourism Canada publications associated with the *rapprochement*. I have, however, attempted to keep this chapter more descriptive in nature, aiming to use it not to explain the *rapprochement*, but merely to provide the

reader with some of the details of the *rapprochement* and the types of initiatives which it involved.

Chapter four provides the primary explanatory site for my thesis. I begin the chapter by exploring some of the particularities of "cultural" and "ethnic" tourism in which the commodification of culture is a primary element. By examining recent studies of the role of the state as promoter of ethnic tourism, I explore some of the possible implications of my research. Drawing primarily upon the work of Leong (1989) and Wood (1984), I explore the ways in which the state, as promoter of cultural or ethnic tourism, can effect local understandings of ethno-cultural difference. While drawing upon their work, I caution that the Canadian example must be analyzed in terms of our own particular history of state related policies of ethno-cultural difference as discussed in chapter one.

Finally I examine the central question of tourism and conceptualizations of difference. Reflecting back on earlier chapters, I summarize the way in which the tourist industry typically represents the ethnic Other in its attempt to commodify and sell "ethnic" and "cultural" tourism. I demonstrate that conceptualizations of difference associated with Tourism Canada's *rapprochement* with multiculturalism coincide with the early celebration of difference model of multiculturalism which predominated prior to the 1980s. The special role of the commodification of otherness is also examined as I discuss the way in which culture is typically represented within the tourist trade.

In the conclusion, I review my main arguments concerning the authorization of difference, and the *rapprochement* of Tourism Canada and multiculturalism in the 1980s.

As well I provide a brief discussion of where this thesis may lead: to the questions that it raises but does not answer, and to suggestions for further research.

Chapter 1

The Canadian State and the Politics of Difference

This chapter situates multiculturalism within the historical progression of state involvement in ethno-cultural issues in Canada, with a view to understanding multiculturalism's importance in state efforts to influence systems of difference in recent Canadian history. I argue here that the introduction of the liberal pluralistic multiculturalism policy in 1971, and the subsequent shift to issues of anti-discrimination and equality within multiculturalism in the 1980s, are important elements in the shifting politics of ethno-cultural difference in recent Canadian history. I outline three periods of state policies aimed at influencing systems of ethno-cultural difference in Canada, and begin to discuss conceptualizations of ethno-cultural difference which I will evaluate in greater detail in future chapters. The first period which I discuss lasted from the early years of confederation up until the liberalization of immigration policies in the 1960s. It is characterized by racist exclusionary and assimilationist state policies. The second period is a period of liberal pluralism in which immigration legislation was reformed and multiculturalism policies introduced. The third period is characterised by the movement beyond the early "celebration of difference" model of multiculturalism to a set of policies which included a more anti-racist, equality-based notion of multiculturalism. This periodization demonstrates that the Canadian state has a long history as a major actor in

constituting systems of ethno-cultural difference in Canada and in shaping the dynamics of those systems in efforts to mediate and control how ethno-cultural difference affects other issues. It also allows me to demonstrate that multiculturalism has become the central framework through which the Canadian state has attempted to manage ethno-cultural difference. Through this periodization I also demonstrate how multiculturalism policies and programs have been gradually expanded beyond the early emphasis upon the folkloric to address issues of social justice.

It is the second period which I outline here, and more specifically its model of multiculturalism and associated concept of ethno-cultural difference, which is of primary interest to my study. I will show that even though temporally the *rapprochement* between Tourism Canada and multiculturalism took place during the third of the periods which I outline here, tourism policy makers harkened back to the earlier "celebration of difference" model of multiculturalism of the second period in their attempts to marry multiculturalism and tourism in Canada. The explanation for this, I argue, lies in large part in the way that difference is conceptualized in the early "celebration of difference" model. As I will discuss in greater detail in the following chapters, the difference which is celebrated in the multiculturalism of the 1970s is less threatening and more easily commodified than that which has gradually replaced it in the final of my three periods.

1. Exclusionary and Assimilationist State Policies: Early confederation to the late 1960s

Canada has had a long history of state involvement both in determining what ethnic groups had access to Canadian citizenship, and in deciding what groups within Canada

would be ethnicized and racialized and how each was to be incorporated into the Canadian context. One of the main means through which the state has historically intervened in issues of ethno-cultural difference in Canada is immigration policy. Through immigration policy, the Canadian state has historically played an important role in managing Canadian ethnicity by shaping Canadian demographics. Although "births had, and continue to have, greater significance for population growth in Canada than immigration," as Warren Kalbach reminds us, immigration has been particularly important in shaping the 'ethnic make-up' of the population as a whole (1987:89-90). Through restrictive immigration policies and practices, the Canadian state has been able to play a large role in the historical transformations of Canadian demographics.²

Concerns about ethno-cultural difference can be traced back to the pre-Confederation era. Kalbach notes that both the predominantly French speaking colonists of Lower Canada³ and the residents of other areas which would later join Confederation expressed concern over the types of immigrants allowed to settle in their regions well before Confederation:

As early as 1760, French-speaking Canadians were concerned about the quality of the first British immigrants whom they described as 'the most

² This brief review of Canadian immigration policy is based primarily upon information presented in the work of Warren Kalbach (1970) and Freda Hawkins (1972, 1982, 1989).

³ Anderson and Frideres raise a noteworthy point concerning the politics of ethno-cultural difference in New France: the relatively low levels of racism against native peoples when compared with the relations of British colonialist and aboriginal peoples. They not only describe a more "reciprocal and somewhat dependent relationship" between early French settlers and native populations, but also theorize why racism was, as they put it, "precluded" in New France (1981:218-222). Their discussion of the reasons for the lack of racism in New France is based both upon material conditions and the ideological beliefs of the French in the region. They argue that because "the French were not colonialists in a true sense," and because "they were Catholic in their religious ideology," they were able to "establish better relationships with the Native and non-white peoples of Canada." (1981:218)

cruel, ignorant, rapacious fanatics who ever existed.' (1970:10)

and

In 1815, the Nova Scotia Assembly expressed alarm over the influx of Negroes from Bermuda, and by the latter part of the 19th century there was growing concern over the consequences of increasing numbers of Asiatic as well as other immigrants whose customs would appear to make their assimilation either difficult or impossible. (1970:11)

Kalbach rightly points out that while the anxiety about the racial/ethnic make-up of immigrants may be rooted in the pre-Confederation era, this anxiety has persisted throughout Canada's history (1970:11). And, as we shall see, it has been reflected at the federal level until only recently in immigration policies aimed largely at keeping 'undesirable' races/ethnic peoples out.

Until the 1960s, the Canadian state's immigration legislation and practice were largely based upon what Hawkins (1972, 1982, 1989) characterizes as a "whites only" policy. The first legislation to address issues of immigration after confederation was the British North America Act of 1867 which, while dividing responsibility for immigration between both the Federal and Provincial jurisdictions, gave the Federal levels of government overriding authority (Kalbach 1970:12). Early immigration to Canada was largely unregulated in terms of ethnicity or place of origin.⁴ Until approximately 1895 Canada was largely unconcerned with immigration policies. Thus, Alan Anderson and James Frideres characterize this early period as "a free entry period" (1981:222). It was Clifford Sifton, as Minister of the Interior, who was largely responsible for the

⁴ During this early period, it should be noted that there had been a specific campaign to recruit Chinese labourers to help with the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railroad which was completed in 1885. However, as Elliot and Fleras (1990:53) note, they were never considered more than "transient cheap labour".

development of Canada's first real immigration policy. Sifton's policy was concerned primarily with the settlement of western Canada. Hawkins, in a discussion of the history of Canadian immigration, outlines Sifton's success in creating an organized, immigration infrastructure and strategy:

Shortly after his arrival in Ottawa, Sifton began to develop a well organized immigration Branch within the Ministry of the Interior...He appointed a Superintendent of Immigration based in Ottawa with a corps of civil servants to assist him. Most of them were "Sifton men," often westerners, chosen by the Minister himself. The Ottawa group was to be responsible for recruiting immigrants in the United States, Britain, and Europe, as well as supervising the government agents who would promote immigration to Canada and do the actual recruiting. A subdivision of the Immigration Branch was established in Winnipeg to look after the placement and settlement of these new immigrants in the West....Sifton planned to settle the West with farmers, experienced farmers from the American Middle West and Britain (if available), peasant farmers from Europe, or simply people who had been born on the land, preferably in northern regions, and who were accustomed to a pioneering life. (Hawkins 1989:5)

Sifton's structure for recruiting and placing new immigrants in Western Canada,⁵ marked a radical departure from the relatively open door period which had preceded it. He set up a policy which actively sought out a particular type of immigrant from specific countries. Settlers were sought, he stated, primarily from three sources: the United States, northern Great Britain, and Scotland. By recruiting immigrants from these limited areas, Sifton argued that his Department was able to recruit "the very best settlers in the world" (Sifton 1975:34). Sifton had a clear idea of the ideal immigrant for settling the Canadian west:

⁵ It should be noted that although Sifton's plan was to find settlers to open up the Canadian west, not all of the immigrants which his program attracted actually settled in the west. As Hawkins notes, "[m]any were attracted to the growing cities and towns in the east" (Hawkins 1989:4).

I think a stalwart peasant in a sheepskin coat, born on the soil whose forefathers have been farmers for ten generations, with a stout wife and a half-dozen children is good quality. (Sifton 1975:35)

Although legislation did not exclude non-white immigrants, "careful administrative procedures" ensured that they would not end up in the Canadian west. As Hawkins notes, the implementation of immigration policy by the Immigration Branch "was undoubtedly in tune with public opinion in the west and elsewhere in Canada...which was totally opposed to the admission of Negroes" (1989:7). Prior to the First World War, immigration increased and recruitment shifted from agriculturalists to unskilled labourers reflecting the needs of the Canadian labour market. These changes were accompanied by a change in the ethnic composition of immigration as a greater percentage of immigrants to Canada came from central and southern Europe (Elliot and Fleras 1990:55).

Following Sifton's efforts to settle western Canada, immigration policy and practice gradually shifted from its emphasis on actively searching out settlers to attempts to keep 'undesirables' out. With the Immigration Acts of 1910 and 1919 specific reference was first made to 'races' deemed unsuitable to Canada's needs. Section 38 of the 1910 Act provided the Governor-in-Council the authority to:

(a) Prohibit the landing in Canada or at any specified port of entry in Canada of any immigrant who has come to Canada otherwise than continuous journey from the country of which he is an active or naturalized citizen, and upon a through ticket purchased in that country, or prepaid in Canada.

(b) Prohibit the landing in Canada of passengers brought to Canada by a transportation company which refuses or neglects to comply with the provisions of this act.

(c) Prohibit for a stated period, or permanently, the landing in Canada, or the landing at any specified port of entry in Canada, of immigrants belonging to any race deemed unsuited to the climate or requirements of

Canada, or immigrants of any specified class, occupation or character.

While it is clause (c) which makes reference to unsuitable races, clause (a) pertaining to "continuous journey" was also enacted with a view to keeping undesirable peoples off Canadian soil. First issued as an order-in-council, it was aimed largely at restricting entrance of East Indians and Japanese who would normally have made a stop in Hawaii on their way from Asia to British Columbia ports (Hawkins 1989:17).

Elliot and Fleras point to some contributing factors in bringing in the new restrictive policy. They note that efforts to accommodate the large increase of immigration just prior to the war were "hindered by the fact that Canadians from British Isles and northern European backgrounds tended to regard the immigrants from central and southern Europe as 'culturally inferior,' valuable only for their brute strength and manual labour" (Elliot and Fleras 1990:55). These ethnocentric beliefs coupled with fears of the exportation of the Russian Revolution led, they argue, to the restrictive policies introduced in the period (Elliot and Fleras 1990).

The act of 1919 expanded one of the critical clauses related to issues of difference and admissibility:

(c) Prohibit or limit in number for a stated period or permanently the landing in Canada or the landing at any specified port or ports of entry in Canada of immigrants belonging to any nationality or race or of immigrants of any specified class or occupation, by reason of any economic, industrial or other condition temporarily existing in Canada or because such immigrants are deemed unsuitable having regard to the climatic, industrial, social, educational, labour or other conditions or requirements of Canada or because such immigrants are deemed undesirable owing to their peculiar customs, habits, modes of life and methods of holding property, and because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated or to assume the duties and responsibilities of Canadian citizenship within a reasonable time after their entry (Hawkins

1989).

These two acts "greatly increased the powers of immigration officers to reject undesirable elements" (Hawkins 1989:8). With the beginning of the First World War the state saw fit to place harsher restrictions on the overall number of immigrants accepted into Canada; "World War I...ushered in a new era in which Canadian immigration would be severely restricted and prejudice would be the order of the day" (Hawkins 1989:8).

The power to exclude would-be immigrants, which was established in the 1910 and 1919 Acts, was to become increasingly important as Canadian officials actively sought to quell immigration of various 'undesirable' racial and ethno-cultural groups. Amongst those labelled undesirable, unsuitable or unassimilable were most people of Chinese and Japanese descent, East Asians and almost all other "Asiatics"⁶ A series of orders-in-council brought forward during the 1920s and 1930s firmly established Canada's "whites only" immigration policy, providing legislation which enabled the exclusion of almost all 'Asiatics' from entering Canada (Hawkins 1989:20). The racist "whites only" policy lasted from the 1920s until the early 1960s. Throughout this period, selective immigration was used by the state as a means of controlling Canadian demographics. The state's restrictive and racially discriminatory policies were supported by many Canadians who desired to keep Canada white.⁷

⁶ As Hawkins notes, the understood meaning of Asians and Asiatics by officials during the period in question was such that it included people from almost everywhere in the Eastern Hemisphere save Europe. "Although 'Asiatic' was mainly applied to the Chinese, East Indians, and Japanese, the term 'Asia' embraced a large part of the globe." And "...by excluding Asians or 'Asiatics' and by association and extension Africans also...Canada was prepared to accept only one kind of immigrant from the Eastern-Hemisphere--the immigrant of European origin." (1989:21)

⁷ For a detailed discussion of the lobbying efforts in favour of the "whites only" policy see Hawkins (1972, 1989).

Canada's "whites only" immigration policy relied upon notions of ethno-cultural difference based primarily on ideas of biological races common during the period. As Satzewich notes in his discussion of the political economy of race and ethnicity in Canada, broadly speaking the concept of race "has tended to be defined by reference to either phenotypical or genotypical criteria;" that is, either in association with particular physical criteria or in reference to genetic criteria (1990:253). Race was seen as a concept with scientific legitimacy referring to supposedly objective, biologically-based groups of people. As a social construction, race enabled people to conceptualize difference in terms of biologically-determined membership in distinct 'racial' groupings. These biological racial groupings were not only thought to be relatively homogenous in their make-up, but were also believed to be primary cultural determinants (Satzewich 1990:254). As Satzewich and others have noted, both the phenotypical and the gene-based strategies or understanding of race are problematic. While race is often associated with a particular set of physical characteristics such as skin colour and hair colour and texture, "the choice of criteria is ultimately arbitrary and cannot be justified scientifically" (Satzewich 1990:253). Efforts to define race in terms of genetic criteria have been proven equally unscientific. Research has shown that, in fact, "genetic variation within any population is usually greater than the average difference between populations" (Satzewich 1990:254).

In her discussion of the social construction of 'Chinese' in British Columbia, Anderson notes the importance of recalling that race is/was not simply a social construct but also a political force:

Racial classifications have been cultural ascriptions, but their history reveals that they have also assuredly been political phenomena. Race has not been just another social construction. Like many categories of common cognition, racial representations have to do much less with "truth" (a one-to-one correspondence with what is "out there") than with faith and material interests. Indeed systems of racial classification have been linked so indelibly to historically situated power relations that it is impossible to study anything so benign as the simple ideas of a ... race and place. (1991:20)

The notion of distinguishable, biological races was central to pre-1950s Canadian immigration policy and the way in which policy was implemented by various government officials. The conceptual categorization of people into various racial groups, defined for the purposes of immigration policy in terms of places of origin, was used to justify the admittance of some individuals and the exclusion of others in accordance with the period's predominant Anglo-conformity ideology of assimilation. While the discriminatory policies were most often justified as being in Canada's best interest, at times they were also said to be in the interest of those who were turned away as evident in this quote from Mackenzie King:

It was clearly recognised with regard to emigration from India to Canada, that the native of India is not a person suited to this country, that, accustomed as many of them are to the conditions of a tropical climate, and possessing manners and customs so unlike those of our own people, their inability to readily adapt themselves to surroundings entirely different could not do other than entail an amount of privation and suffering which render a discontinuance of such immigration most desirable in the interest of the Indians themselves. (Cited in Hawkins 1989:17-18)

Immigration levels increased significantly in Canada after the end of the Second World War. Nonetheless, the state continued to restrict particular groups in attempts to shape the demographic make-up of the country by refusing entry to "unassimilables." In a statement outlining Canada's post war immigration policy, Mackenzie King, while on the

one hand affirming Canada's "moral responsibility" in accepting displaced persons resulting from the war, and on the other hand indicating the desire that immigration continued to help increase population, nonetheless reaffirmed the Canadian policy of maintaining Canada's predominantly white, European demographic look. Immigration should not, King warned, fundamentally alter what he saw as the Canadian demographic balance:

The policy of the Government is to foster the growth of the population of Canada by the encouragement of immigration. The Government will seek by legislation, regulation and vigorous administration, to ensure the careful selection and permanent settlement of such numbers of immigrants as can advantageously be absorbed in our national economy....There will, I am sure be general agreement with the view that the people of Canada do not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of our population. Large-scale immigration from the Orient would change the fundamental composition of the Canadian population. Any considerable Oriental immigration, would, moreover, be certain to give rise to social and economic problems of a character that might lead to serious difficulties in the field of international relations (Mackenzie King 1975:61).

With the end of the war, there were to be no changes to the four broad categories of admissible persons which King outlined as;

1. British subjects from the United Kingdom, Ireland, Newfoundland, New Zealand, Australia or the Union of Southern Africa, who possessed sufficient means to maintain themselves until employment was secured.
2. United States citizens, similarly possessed of means of maintenance.
3. Wives, unmarried children under 18 or fiancées of men resident in Canada.
4. Agriculturalists with sufficient means to farm in Canada. (Mackenzie King 1975:59)

Rather than opening up the categories of who was admissible, the numbers of individuals from these already determined 'assimilable' groups was to increase in response to Canada's improved economic condition.

Up until the 1960s, Canada's immigration policies were based primarily upon the discrimination against those peoples considered undesirable and unassimilable; "the list of preferred countries underwent adjustments, but the basic discriminatory logic remained unchanged"* (Elliot and Fleras 1990:56). The Canadian state attempted to manage ethno-cultural difference through discriminatory immigration policies and policy implementation aimed at ensuring that those not seen as assimilable into the dominant British and French ethnic groups would not be granted entry:

The immigration policy bore hardest upon those peoples who were considered unassimilable. They included people physically different from the dominant groups, and it is unnecessary to repeat the history, now widely considered to have been shameful, of overt and covert exclusionary measures directed against Chinese, Japanese, South Asians, and blacks. As late as the 1950s one federal minister of immigration after another had to defend regulations on allegedly scientific grounds that most natural and social sciences regarded as nonsensical; for example, the restrictions of black immigration were said to have been imposed because it had been "scientifically proven" that blacks could not endure cold climates. The Jews were also considered unassimilable. (Burnet 1978:66)

While the state attempted to effect Canadian demographics by excluding all those regarded as unassimilable, state attention was also directed at mediating the politics of difference as it related to non-immigration issues. The state was also involved in influencing which groups already in Canada were racialized and ethnicized and in how these groups, once defined, would be incorporated into 'mainstream' Canadian society. Time and space limitations do not permit a detailed discussion of the myriad of cases in this period in which the state had contributed to the racialization and ethnicization of

* One interesting change in wording of the Acts is worth mentioning. The relevant passages of the 1952 Act, while containing similar wording to the 1919 expanded clause (c) on prohibited groups, has one significant change: the term ethnic group is used instead of race. (Hawkins 1989:17)

groups of people in Canada. Nonetheless, I would like to touch briefly on this issue inasmuch as it further demonstrates the history of state involvement in Canadian politics of difference. Some of the most notable cases arise out of wartime policies. During the First World War, the state defined 8 000 Ukrainians, many of whom were already full citizens, as "enemy aliens" and interned them without due process (Elliot and Fleras 1990:56). This pattern was repeated in the Second World War:

With the outbreak of the Second World War, several hundred German and Italian Canadian residents and citizens and 22,000 Canadians of Japanese descent were interned in prison camps in Canada. After the bombing of Pearl Harbour, Hawaii, by the Japanese in 1941, all Japanese residents, including citizens were removed from the coast of British Colombia. No person was ever charged with an act of disloyalty. (Elliot and Fleras 1990:56)

Both through immigration and other policies, up until the 1960s, the Canadian state attempted to manage ethno-cultural difference through a combination of exclusionary and assimilationist policies based on racial classification. In the 1960s the state, in response to a number of changing conditions, moved into a new period of intervention in which liberal pluralistic policies replaced the exclusionary racist policies which had dominated state interventions in the politics of difference since early confederation.

2. Liberal Pluralism:

State Policies in the 1960s and early 1970s

i. Immigration reform:

In the 1960s the state, by making changes in the immigration act, transformed the ways in which perceptions of ethnicity (linked in policy to country of origin) affected

who could become a Canadian. Traditionally, as we have seen, the Canadian state had actively encouraged immigration from some areas (the United Kingdom, Northern Europe, and the United States) and restricted immigration from other areas (Asia, South America, Africa). New "universal" policies introduced in regulations in 1962 and 1967, based the acceptance/rejection of immigration applicants primarily upon education, skills and talents, family reunification, and humanitarian consideration (this last area was primarily related to refugee applicants) (Hawkins 1982:75). In 1967 a "points system" was introduced in which individuals are assigned points in nine areas: education and training, personal qualities, occupational demands in Canada, occupational skill and education, arranged employment, knowledge of English and French, presence of a relative in Canada, and general employment opportunities (Anderson and Frideres 1981:227). The changes in policy reflected Canada's changing labour market needs. With the rapid industrial growth of the post-war period, Canada's need for human resources was both expanded and transformed. Education and skills requirements meant that, as a nation, Canada no longer wanted or needed large numbers of unskilled labourers. The new labour requirements along with shifting attitudes concerning ethno-cultural difference combined to create a rationale for changing the "antiquated" whites only policy.⁹ In 1976, the government brought in a new immigration Act which replaced the outdated Act

⁹ Freda Hawkins has argued that the move away from the whites only discriminatory immigration policy in 1962 was not, as one might expect, the result of pressures placed upon the government by either popular protest or by opposition parties. Her analysis points to another factor influencing the change in policy. She argues that the change was initiated by Ottawa government bureaucrats who reasoned that "Canada could not present a good image to or function well in, the UN or in the multiracial Commonwealth with the burden of a racist immigration policy around her neck" (1988:13).

of 1952 which had remained on the books despite the above mentioned changes. The new act reflected Canada's need for skilled labour as well as recognizing that racial restrictions were increasingly seen as completely irrelevant to this need. It eliminated criteria based upon country of origin, ethnicity and race and created three classes of immigrants: family, independent, and refugee. This was felt to be much more progressive and just policy (Elliot and Fleras 1990:57).

The changes in immigration policies and practices of the 1960s and 1970s have lead to a significant shift in source countries for Canadian immigration and a resulting change in Canadian demographics. New immigrants have come increasingly from those areas whose peoples were formerly deemed unassimilable, namely from Asia, Africa and other areas of the south. The effects of the more open selection process was, as Kalbach notes, "a significant shift in the rank order of the leading source countries of immigrants." The dominance of European source countries has given way as non-European sources in Asia, the West Indies and elsewhere have risen. "There is little doubt," Kalbach continues "that Canada has become a prime destination for potential immigration from the world's developing countries" (1970:26-27). The liberalization of the immigration policy, along with large-scale population displacements and the growing number of refugees has had significant changes on the ethno-cultural make-up of the Canadian population. Since the late 1960s increasingly large numbers of Canadian citizens belong to 'visible minority' groups who trace their ancestry to the ex-colonies of the south.

In its liberalization of immigration policies in the 1960s and 1970s, the Canadian

state might have been seen as moving away from its previously central role in intervening in issues of ethnicity and difference within Canada. With the new points system the government set out to create a 'colour blind' immigration policy which was to judge immigrants on personal suitability (assumed to be unaffected by issues of ethno-cultural difference) in keeping with Canada's changing labour demands. However, shortly after it revamped immigration policies the Canadian government introduced multiculturalism as Canadian federal policy which put to rest any beliefs that the state was giving up its role as a central player in issues of ethno-cultural difference in Canada.

ii. Early Multiculturalism:

In October of 1971, Prime Minister Trudeau introduced multiculturalism policy in Canada. Multiculturalism provided the state with a new dynamic and innovative way to manage ethno-cultural difference in Canada. Multiculturalism policies and programs allowed the state to respond to the changing nature of the Canadian population and the demands of 'new Canadian communities' while ensuring that the state would remain a central player in organizing Canadian systems of difference. Over the past three decades, multiculturalism has become the central framework through which the state intervenes in issues of ethno-cultural difference.

The original model of "multiculturalism within a bilingual framework" had four main objectives:

1. To permit cultural groups to retain and foster their identity
2. To assist cultural groups to overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society.
3. To promote creative exchanges and interchanges among all Canadian cultural groups
4. To help newcomers acquire at least one of the official languages.

(Ministry of State 1978:51)

It has been over two decades since multiculturalism was declared official government policy in Canada. In the ensuing decades, multiculturalism has had shifting meanings as policy, ideology and as a way for Canadians to deal with our complex social make-up. As government policy and as ideology, multiculturalism has been called upon, and used in various ways by the state and other social groups in attempts both to maintain and to challenge the Canadian status quo regarding ethno-cultural difference.

James Frideres has noted that with the introduction of multicultural policy, the federal government "has become involved in the issue of ethnic maintenance, [and heritage] retention"¹⁰ (1989:viii). The government's funding of ethnic organizations through multiculturalism has been seen by some (Kallen 1981, Anderson and Frideres 1981) as a means of state control over particular Canadian communities at precisely that moment when those communities were gaining a voice in Canadian politics and making demands upon the state: "At the level of social reality, it is argued, government funding of minority ethnic organizations legitimated under the multicultural policy represents a major technique of dominant management of minority ethnic demands" (Kallen 1982:59). The effects of multicultural funding are argued to be profoundly disempowering for some community groups. As a result of this new way for the state to intervene in issues of ethno-cultural difference in the Canadian context, Frideres argues, "grass roots voluntary

¹⁰ While Frideres is absolutely right when he indicates that multiculturalism policy moved the state into new areas such as ethnic maintenance and heritage retention, he overstates the change when he states that multiculturalism resulted in "the introduction of the government as a major actor" in the area of ethnic relations. (1989:viii) As my discussion has shown, the state had, in fact, long been a major actor in issues of ethno-cultural difference in Canada.

ethnic organizations have reduced their role in maintaining the ethnic traditions of their groups." Their main function has shifted, he states, from that of protectors of ethnic traditions to pressure groups who deal primarily with government agencies (1989:viii). Opinions of the new policy varied considerably, with some seeing it as liberating, others as controlling, and some as a combination of the two. There has nonetheless been general agreement that it has had profound influences on the politics of ethno-cultural difference in Canada.

The notion of ethno-cultural difference is central to Canadian multiculturalism; the "compartmentalization of ethnic identities and its activation at appropriate junctures lies at the core of Canadian multiculturalism" (Fleras and Elliott 1992:51). At the centre of debates over multiculturalism have been questions of how we understand this compartmentalization of ethnic identities and of which groups and individuals are considered 'multicultural communities' or 'ethnic communities' within the larger 'Canadian community.' As such, multiculturalism has been at the heart of recent debates over different conceptualizations of ethno-cultural difference in Canada.

Multiculturalism since 1971 has served not only as a guideline for government policy at both the federal and provincial level, but also as a framework for national discourse on the reconstruction of Canadian Society. (Elliot and Fleras 1990:62)

Much discussion can be found in the critical literature on Canadian multiculturalism speculating on the driving motives of the Liberal government which, in bringing in the legislation, gave a high priority to the state's role as manager of ethno-cultural difference. As Hawkins notes, Liberal ministers no doubt had "an awareness of the increasing numerical strength within the Canadian population of groups of non-

British and non-French origin and their undoubted electoral importance, particularly at a time of possible long term changes in the Liberal Party's sources of electoral support" (Hawkins 1982:76). Other possible factors include the influence of increased international acceptance of cultural pluralism, and increased emphasis upon human rights, a decline in racism, and the growing influence of theories of cultural relativism (Palmer 1975). The direct or immediate cause, however, as Trudeau pointed out when he introduced the policy, can be found in the recommendations of the Royal Commission on Biculturalism and Bilingualism (Trudeau 1975:135).

The Royal Commission's mandate was to "inquire into and report upon the existing state of bilingualism and biculturalism in Canada and to recommend what steps should be taken to develop the Canadian Confederation on the basis of an equal partnership between the two founding races, taking into account the contribution made by other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution..." (Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism 1965:151). Born out of concerns surrounding the growing separatist/nationalist movement in Quebec, the Royal Commission's original mandate did not place much of an emphasis upon questions of difference laying outside of the escalating conflict between Canada's two charter groups. Rather, the Commission's mandate reinforced the Anglo (and Franco) conformity model for assimilation. As Burnet has documented, this was reflected in the early approach of the Commission to the "other ethnic groups;"¹¹

¹¹ It is interesting to note that while multiculturalism was born, at least in part, out of a desire to deal with the 'Quebec question,' it was quickly dismissed by many in Quebec as being incompatible with the

The first intention of the commission was to deal with the other ethnic groups only as they affected English-French relations and to fulfil its mandate in a literal, if limited fashion" (Burnet 1978:68).

The Royal Commission...was set up...to deal with a crisis in English-French relations. The terms of reference were framed with respect to that crisis; the ten commissioners were selected with it in mind; the research department was established to look into English-French relations. (Burnet 1989:10)

When other groups were to be a part of the Commission's studies they were discussed in relation to the dominant cultures. Thus, Burnet notes that studies of Italians in Montreal and Edmonton "were to be studies of immigrant adjustment...they were composed of immigrants on their way to assimilation" (Burnet 1989:11). Burnet argues that this all changed as vocal members of Canadian communities outside the two charter groups expressed great concern over the bicultural framework in which they felt they were being relegated to second class citizens. Out of these protests and a subsequent process of consultation arose the decision in 1966 to devote an entire volume of the Commission's report to the "other cultural groups." *Book Four*, according to Burnet (1989:16), was "an attempt to move away from the idea of a British and French mainstream and numerous miscellaneous tributaries, whose destiny it was to disappear" and towards cultural plurality.

As policy, ideology, and as fact, there has been, from the beginning, room for alternative interpretations of multiculturalism fitting different political projects. From the start, both inside and outside of Quebec, multiculturalism has been associated by some primarily with people outside of the two colonizing (or founding charter) cultural groups.

concerns of Quebec nationalism; and continues to be viewed by many *Québécois* as a threat to the special position that the *Québécois* have within the Federal system.

Once primarily associated in popular conceptions with white non-charter groups in Canada (such as Ukrainians and Italians), the word multiculturalism in the 1980s and 1990s seems to conjure up, for many Canadians, policies directed at non-white, so-called 'new immigrant' communities, many of which can trace their ancestry back to poor southern nations. Others note that multiculturalism does, or should, refer to *all* ethno-cultural groups who find themselves within Canadian borders including both the charter groups and the various native peoples (status and non-status Indians, Metis and Inuit) as well as the 'new immigrant' communities.

As state policy, multiculturalism has undergone an important shift from a policy of celebrating cultural diversity to a more progressive and far reaching policy aimed also at examining and redressing social, economic and political inequalities related to ethno-cultural difference in contemporary society. As such, it has been at the heart of a gradual shift in state conceptualizations and policy towards ethno-cultural difference at the federal level. In its early years, however, multiculturalism neglected issues of equality favouring instead the "celebration of difference:"

Geared toward European immigrants and their needs, federal multiculturalism had focused initially on cultural preservation and sharing as reflected in festivals, organizations, heritage language classes, and dance troupes-"celebrating diversity." (Fleras and Elliot 1992:74)

Prior to 1972 multiculturalism remained under the auspices of the Secretary of State in which it occupied a Directorate. The Multiculturalism Directorate's main objectives were:

to encourage and assist, within the framework of Canada's Official Languages Policy and in the spirit of existing human rights codes the full realization of the multicultural nature of Canadian society through

programs which promote the preservation and sharing of cultural heritage and which facilitate mutual appreciation and understanding among all Canadians. (Ministry of State 1978:16)

Multiculturalism and the Government in Canada published by the government in 1978, in order to explain and sell multiculturalism to the Canadian public, strongly reflects the "celebration of difference" model. While the quotation above indicates that the Directorate was to implement policies in the spirit of existing human rights codes, the emphasis of the Report (and of the policy as it was implemented) was placed clearly upon the maintenance and celebration of the various "cultural heritages," which were "possessed" by Canadians. The six multiculturalism programs which are outlined in the Report are all consistent with the "celebration of difference" model of multiculturalism. Of the six programs (Multicultural Grants, Cultural Development Program, Ethnic Histories, Canadian Ethnic Studies, Teaching of Official Languages, and the Programs of the Federal Cultural Agencies), few offered any hope of moving beyond the limiting idea that difference is something which some Canadians "possess," brought to Canada from "the old Country" upon immigration. The Report lists two lines of approach for the Directorate to achieve its overall goals:

One is directed specifically towards Canadian cultural groups and organizations to help them to articulate their needs and achieve their individual aspirations and the other is directed at society at large to increase awareness and appreciation of the bilingual and multicultural nature of our country. (Ministry of State 1978:16)

While the first approach sets out to help cultural groups articulate their needs, there is no mention of any way to change society at large in order to meet those needs other than increasing awareness and appreciation (Ministry of State 1978:16). Also, as Lupul has

noted, it was significant that while both the Federal and Provincial governments have studied attitudes towards multiculturalism, no government "has seen fit to commission similar research into how well power and socio-economic opportunity are distributed amongst ethno-cultural groups in Canada" (Lupul 1989:7). Early multiculturalism in Canada relied upon the "celebration of difference" as a means for managing ethno-cultural difference and the demands made by various communities in the Canadian population. It held that all that was needed to address problems related to difference was for Canadians to accept each other's cultural heritage as a sort of cultural spice in order to promote national unity.

Multiculturalism policies and programs have...centred on two themes: cultural retention and sociocultural integration. In the early 1970s, multiculturalism programs, both federal and provincial emphasized the first theme with support for activities expressing the folkloric and artistic heritage. (Labelle 1989:3)

In his "insider's" discussion of multiculturalism in Canada, Greg Gauld stresses integration in his argument that the early period was one in which the "celebration of difference" predominated. For Gauld, in the early years multiculturalism did not go far beyond questions of integration:

The newly established multiculturalism directorate took over responsibility for the earlier programming, which was restructured but which retained elements relating to long-term integration. While the policy did not close the door to equality issues, new programming concentrated on the cultural-retention concerns of communities and on cultural sharing. (Gauld 1992:10)

In the early 1970s, the "celebration of difference" model of multiculturalism placed an emphasis upon the folkloric, upon encouraging the retention and promotion of ethnic identities on some levels, but also on the continued integration of what were defined as

ethnic groups and communities into mainstream institutions. As I will elaborate more fully in my next chapter, the new federal multiculturalism policy implicated the state once again not only in the management of differences, but in the construction of the very differences which it then managed. Multiculturalism policies provided a dynamic new way for the state to play a central role in shaping systems of difference in Canada. It also provided a means through which the state could manage those systems by becoming involved in the promotion of cultural festivals, by legitimizing different groups and activities through its funding processes, and by creating a framework through which ethno-cultural difference is understood in Canada.

Interestingly some of the harshest criticisms of the early model came from the very groups whose "difference" it sought to celebrate. Many argued that the new policies set them off as second class "multicultural" citizens whose role was to provide a cultural spice to the Canadian mainstream through cultural festivals, and heritage costumes, music, dance and cuisines. Multiculturalism, it was argued, failed to address how ethno-cultural difference was linked to the vertical nature of the Canadian mosaic. Increasingly it was recognized that multiculturalism had to move beyond simply celebrating difference.

3. Anti-Racism, Social Justice and Equality:

State Policies from the late 1970s to the Present:

As the 1970s progressed, the Canadian state again shifted its focus with regards to questions of difference, as it began to place issues of social justice and equality in higher priority. During the 1970s the state ratified three important United Nations

conventions which helped to change the direction of state policies relating to ethno-cultural difference in Canada. These concerned the elimination of racial discrimination, the guaranteeing of civil and political rights, and the guaranteeing of social, economic and cultural rights. As well, in 1977, it introduced the Canadian Human Rights Act which "gave Canadians legal protection from, and recourse against, individual discrimination" (Gauld 1992:10).

As both the international and local politics of difference turned to issues of equality, social justice, and anti-discrimination, Canadian multiculturalism came under attack from a wide variety of sources within the country for its limited view of multicultural difference. Jackie Wilson summarized what many felt about the new multiculturalism policy:

The Canadian multiculturalism policy seems to guarantee that we can each do our little dances and flash our pretty, lacy petticoats while we drink our ethnic drinks and admire each others's handicrafts, as long as we realize that in reality the mosaic is vertically organized. It says little about meeting the needs of those of us whose place is at the bottom of that vertical column, who can not find decent employment or housing, where creative spirit is crushed by poverty and incessant insecurity, whose children are destined only to replace us in our bottom slots. It does not speak to the injustice that pervades our daily lives if our hair style or skin color is unlike that of the members at the top of the column.(Wilson, Jackie cited in Bullivant 1981:12)

Brian Bullivant was also amongst those who called for changes on the basis that multiculturalism in its early years supported rather than challenged the status quo:

It may encourage the "ethnics," who are very often at the lower end of the socioeconomic continuum, to think that their problems can be eased thorough retention of identity, customs, and language when their real problems reside in much broader social, political and economic arenas. The government with the aid of "spokespersons" for the ethnic population-spokespersons who are often well-ensconced and secure in mainstream

society- can therefore coopt the masses of ethnic origin and in the long term, do them a grave disservice. (1981:21-22)

The policy was also sharply criticized as reproducing a distinction between two groups of citizens; mainstream Canadians and ethnic groups. Peter, for one, calls the "we" (or mainstream) and "they" (or ethnic) syndrome set up by multiculturalism as a "devious concept" which "relegates the role of ethnic groups to that of contributors of quaint practices and upholders of individual identities, while at the same time it denies them a political and economic reality in Canadian life" (1981:57).

With hindsight, it is clear that the early multiculturalism policies held little hope of making any significant changes in the politics of privilege and marginalization associated with ethno-cultural difference in Canada. Authors such as Hawkins argued that the legislation was intentionally designed so as not to fundamentally alter the politics of ethno-cultural difference in Canada. As Hawkins states:

There was never any intention of making any dramatic change, indeed any change at all, in the political structure on behalf of the ethnic communities. There was never any intention of engaging in power-sharing...Multiculturalism did give them better access to government and more money when they needed it, but it did not actually give them more power, nor was it intended to." (1988:17)

In response to both changes in international and local politics of difference, and to the more direct challenges brought against the "celebration of difference" model of multiculturalism, the policies were gradually transformed. As Palmer notes, one of the driving forces behind the shift in policy was the concerns of the increasingly large numbers of Canadians who had immigrated from the south:

Third World immigrants gave a new impetus and rationale for multiculturalism and shifted the policy in new directions. The non-white

Third World immigrants were concerned about racism and discrimination. Consequently they lobbied for more government emphasis on human rights. (1991:24)

In the early eighties, multicultural policies in Canada began to focus more upon issues of equality and social justice. While the importance of cultural heritage and "cultural sharing" remained (and remains today) an important part of multicultural programming, an increasing number of programs were established in order to examine and deal with the discrimination faced by socio-cultural groups in Canada. The "celebration of difference" programs were gradually "balanced" with "the more difficult efforts to remove social and cultural barriers separating minorities from majority groups in Canadian society" (Labelle 1989:3).

It is difficult to place an exact date on the shift from the early "celebration of difference" model to the more progressive model which includes anti-racism and anti-discrimination measures. As early as 1975, the government was responding in some measure to claims that early multiculturalism programs "did not place nearly enough emphasis on eradicating racism in Canada." In that year the Minister in charge of Multiculturalism announced a shift "from language and culture to group understanding" in multicultural program emphasis (Kallen 1982:59). However this early step toward a reconceptualization of difference and a shift in focus of multiculturalism seemed primarily limited to research concerned with examining attitudes in Canada towards different ethnic communities.

By the early 1980s other policy changes dealing with ethno-cultural difference were being introduced in Canada. These included the enactment of the Charter of Rights

and Freedoms in 1982 which "recognized multiculturalism for the first time in federal legislation..." (Labelle 1989:2). The following sections of The Charter guaranteed equal protection and benefit for all Canadians free from discrimination related to ethno-cultural difference and ensured that Canada's multicultural heritage define the way in which the entire Charter is to be read and interpreted:

Section 15:

(1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental and physical disability.

(2) Subsection (1) does not preclude any law, program or activity that has as its object the amelioration of conditions of individuals or groups including those who are disadvantaged because of race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.

Section 27:

This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians.
(Labelle 1989:1-2)

As well, in 1985, following the recommendations of the Equality Now and Abella reports, the federal government introduced employment equity programs aimed at reducing the discrimination against Aboriginal peoples, women and disabled persons in Canada (Gauld 1992:11). The position of Multiculturalism within the state bureaucracy was also changed in 1985, as it became a full sector within the Secretary of State. Increasingly, multiculturalism funding was directed to affirmative action and anti-racist programs:

Assistance has been given to the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) for a training program for members of visible minorities. A study

was made on audience reaction to the CBC drama "Reasonable Force" about the harassment of a Sikh family. The Ontario Federation of Labour received a grant for an advertising program on the theme "Racism Hurts Everyone." The National Film Board received financing to produce a film by a black filmmaker about Caribbean Canadians in North York. (Labelle 1989:5)

In a discussion of the evolution of multiculturalism policy, Gauld enumerates some of the issues which emerged in the eighties, which he argues influenced the shift in multiculturalism policy. The "new considerations" which Gauld says influenced the decision to bring in a new Multiculturalism Act in 1988 include:

1. that equality issues facing communities were in many cases systemic and beyond the capability of the community to resolve, requiring the cooperation and active involvement of government, and of Canadian institutions;
2. that there existed the need for positive measures such as employment equity, and for building a certain degree of acceptance for them;
3. that, within more and more established communities, it was becoming an issue that they be recognized as a part of the Canadian mainstream, not something apart from it. (Gauld 1992:11)

One of the main changes in the new act which we can see as reinforcing the commitment on the part of the federal government to take a different approach to questions of ethno-cultural difference is the creation of a race relations and cross-cultural understanding program through which "activities to combat racism and systemic discrimination were promoted" (Gauld 1992:12).

The new policy "recognizes the diversity of Canada as regards to race, national or ethnic origin, colour, and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society." As such it neither positions ethnic minorities as groups outside of the mainstream nor as communities still to be assimilated into Canadian culture. As Gauld notes the new act "is much more than a cultural policy or cultural integration policy"

(1992:11). Rather its mandate is not only "to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canada" but also to achieve the "equality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada" (Gauld 1992:11). As such, it is a much more comprehensive and progressive policy towards issues of ethno-cultural difference.

State policy has undergone important transformations since the "whites only" immigration period. The more open immigration policy introduced in the 1960s and the introduction of multiculturalism in a bilingual framework represent a fundamental change in state policies aimed at managing ethno-cultural difference in Canada. In the past three decades multiculturalism as a set of policies, programs and as ideology has provided a central framework for debates and struggles concerning ethno-cultural difference in Canada. The shift from the early "celebration of difference" to more recent models of multiculturalism also represents a fundamental change. Multicultural policies (and ideology) in the 1980s and 1990s are based on a very different construction and understanding of the nature of ethno-cultural difference in contemporary society. This 'new' conceptualisation of difference demands that we move beyond simply 'celebrating' cultural difference.

In the next chapter I will explore in greater depth the difference which is celebrated by Canada's early model of multiculturalism by drawing upon recent theories of difference and identity which call for the type of reconceptualization which would address contemporary ethno-cultural difference as a powerful (often oppressive) relational construct. In discussing conceptualizations of difference I will demonstrate that there are many similarities in the concepts of difference associated with the first two periods that

I have outlined here, even though state policies in the two differ considerably.

Chapter 2

What is the "Difference" in the "Celebration of Difference?"

In this chapter I draw upon recent theories and critical work regarding "difference" in order to examine the "difference" of the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism. I draw upon the work of various post-colonial, black, and feminist cultural theorists who call for a renewed attention to issues of difference. These authors have pointed to the importance of reconceptualizing the positionality of the individual in contemporary society. It would be overstating it to say that the authors whose work I discuss in this chapter speak from a common school of thought. However, I do see a common trajectory in the way that they address and analyze difference. They argue for new ways of conceptualizing difference which both recognize that culture is an important site of struggle, and allow for new research into the ways in which struggles over cultural meaning are related to other more material struggles in contemporary social hierarchies.

They call for a new cultural politics and theory which challenges the dominant conceptualizations of difference hidden in the polarities of white/black, masculine/feminine, hetero/homosexual amongst others:

a cultural politics that can address difference [in order to offer] a way of breaking these hierarchies and dismantling this language of polarity and its material structures of inequality and discrimination. (Rutherford 1990:10)

Many have advocated an analysis of the ways in which individuals are both positioned and position themselves within the hierarchical polarities of hegemonic understandings of contemporary social, political, and economic orders. In their emphasis upon positionalities, some scholars have pointed to the multiplicity of ways in which a given individual is socially positioned. They call for a cultural theory which recognizes that each of us has not one identity but many in accordance with the many intersecting subject fields within which we operate:

[W]e all have multiple positions in terms of constructing our identities; there's no such thing as having one identity or of there being one essential identity that fundamentally defines who we actually are. (West 1992:20)

In examining representations of difference, they challenge theorists to go beyond the misguided conclusion that racist, sexist, or homophobic representations are simply distorting reality as "a mirror held up to a reality that existed outside of itself" (Hall 1992:14). We must, they argue, examine the role of representation (in particular media representations) as a part of the very formation of difference. Race, ethnicity and other markers of difference are, as British cultural theorist and sociologist Stuart Hall has stated, "media-mediated" (1992:14).

I use the work of these contemporary cultural theorists to examine the notion of difference assumed by the early celebration of difference model of multiculturalism in order to outline the "difference" which it seeks to celebrate. This conceptualization of difference, I argue, treats difference--through positioning some individuals as ethnic Others and some as part of the 'mainstream,' or 'norm' in Canadian cultural milieus--as a characteristic of particular groups of individuals rather than as a relational social

construct. It treats ethno-cultural differences as static, traditional and inherent to particular groups of individuals who are then 'accepted' in the name of liberal pluralistic tolerance. I argue that in this conceptualization of difference, the more relational and structural aspects of ethno-cultural difference associated with economic and political power within the Canadian vertical mosaic (Porter 1965), are masked. As well, I point to how, in focusing of the *effects* of the enunciation of difference, this understanding of difference hides the role that the enunciation of difference itself plays in the reproduction of the status quo.

In the previous chapter, I outlined three periods of state policies aimed at negotiating the politics of difference in Canada. As I have outlined in that chapter, the shift in state policy which took place in the 1960s with regard to ethno-cultural difference in Canada lead to significant changes in the local politics of difference. My discussion of difference in this chapter shows that regardless of this, the shift was not based on a fundamental change in conceptualizing difference. The pre-1960s overtly racist state policies and the more liberal early multiculturalism policies and programs in Canada were based upon similar ways of conceptualizing difference which in the process of positioning some individuals as ethnic (or racial) Others -in marking them as ethnically (or racially) different from the norm- conceptualizes difference categorically rather than relationally. This way of understanding difference positions some individuals as inherently different; as ethnic Others who are differentiated from an often unarticulated, but nonetheless well defined, norm. Otherness in this process is conceptualized in terms of what the other *is*, not in terms of how they are positioned within the larger social

context. Differences are seen as permanent characteristics of particular groups of individuals.

While, as we have seen in the previous chapter, racial otherness was based upon beliefs about phenotypical or genotypical difference, in the celebration of difference model of early Canadian multiculturalism, otherness is defined or articulated through the appeal to cultural distinctions (such as costume, cuisine, and dance). These cultural distinctions are linked to kinship ties and country of ancestral origin, and are represented as traditional and unchanging. Individuals are positioned permanently as ethnic Others in this process by virtue of their membership in supposedly 'culturally distinct' groups. Difference is limited to cultural characteristics; such as quaint colourful costumes, spicy exotic foods, and heritage languages. Difference as a shifting relational social construct or as the contested terrain in which social struggles are articulated is ignored.

In appealing to this way of understanding difference, early multiculturalism programs in Canada emphasised the folkloric, and celebrations of cultural heritage, while for the most part avoiding social inequalities. Ethnicity, like race before it, was seen as an objective and permanent classification, a matter of fact, out there in some individuals and groups to be discovered, represented and even valorized. In this understanding of difference there is no room for examining how the very articulation of difference is implicated in socially positioning some individuals as Other within the Canadian context. By examining only the effects of the enunciation of difference, the production of difference in the process of enunciation itself is ignored.

This limited notion of difference understands difference only in terms of the

different cultural traditions and heritages which various ethnic communities are assumed to have brought with them to Canada upon immigrating. These traditions and heritages are authorized by the state and paraded in full view as evidence of the country's ability and willingness to tolerate and even encourage difference.

1. Ethnicizing the Other:

One of the ways in which difference is articulated in the celebration of difference is in the ethnicization of some individuals and groups. In the articulation of difference, some individuals are positioned as members of what are assumed to be fairly homogeneous and permanent 'ethnic' groups. Ethno-cultural difference is seen as a thing which some groups within society possess, brought to Canada from elsewhere primarily through the immigration process. 'Mainstream' white Anglo and Franco cultural groups remain the unarticulated norm from which these groups are differentiated. This conceptualization of difference is popular in liberal pluralistic capitalist societies where the 'natural' differences of 'ethnic communities' are said to be accepted and celebrated rather than scorned. While rhetorically the state has attempted to argue that within multicultural Canada, "we are all ethnic," in the early celebration of difference model of multiculturalism only some groups are ethnicized. They are set off as inherently different from what is perceived as the 'normal' or 'mainstream' Canadian culture defined primarily in terms of the two charter or 'founding' groups of the Anglo Celts and French.

While the state authorises ethno-cultural differences in the celebration of difference model, the ethnic Other remains marginalized from the mainstream. This

understanding of difference, while claiming to be non-pejorative in its celebration of ethno-cultural difference, while claiming to be "value free," often hides what Paula Rothenberg calls "the stigma of inferiority:"

Claims about difference are often difficult to deal with precisely because they are offered under the guise of value-free descriptions yet smuggle in normative considerations that carry with them the stigma of inferiority. Where white, male, middle-class, European, heterosexuality provides the standard and the criteria for rationality and morality, difference is always perceived as deviant and deficient. (Rothenberg 1990:43)

Audre Lorde uses the concept of the "mythical norm" to refer to what is seen as the 'mainstream' or 'standard' from which the Other is differentiated. For Lorde the mythical norm, residing "somewhere on the edge of consciousness," is where "the trappings of power reside within...society" (1984:116). Those without power, are defined and define themselves with the way in which they differ from the mythical norm. Their lack of power is then attributed to this difference.

In an interview in the book: *Identity: Community, Culture, Difference*, post-colonial literary theorist Homi Bhabha discusses the difference between his understanding of "cultural difference" and "cultural diversity." I think that the distinction which Bhabha makes between these two concepts is a useful one for exploring how the celebration of difference model presents some groups as essentialized ethnic Others. For Bhabha, "cultural diversity" refers to the recognition and celebration of various cultures within a society such as we find in early Canadian multiculturalism. As Bhabha notes the celebration of ethno-cultural diversity is a common element in many contemporary societies. He states that it "is commonplace of plural, democratic societies to say that they can encourage and accommodate cultural diversity;" that in fact "the sign of the

cultured or civilized attitude is the ability to appreciate cultures in a kind of *musée imaginaire*; as though one should be able to collect and appreciate them" (1990:208). Bhabha cautions that while cultural diversity acknowledges or authorizes a limited type of difference, it also serves to contain true difference by always defining difference in reference to a social norm. "A transparent norm is constituted, a norm given by the host society or dominant culture, which says 'these other cultures are fine, but we must be able to locate them within our own grid'" (Bhabha 1990:208). That is, while there is an entertainment and encouragement of cultural diversity, there is always also a corresponding containment of cultures. The issue of who is, or is not, "ethnic" illustrates well the existence, within the early Canadian multiculturalism context, of the type of grid which Bhabha describes in which 'ethnics' were distinguished from mainstream Canadian society. As Manoly Lupul argues, one of the problems with multiculturalism is that white Anglos and Francophones do not see themselves as ethnic; multiculturalism refers to others:

[E]ven though the federal authorities in particular keep insisting that multiculturalism is a policy for all Canadians, it is now amply clear that, if this is true, multiculturalism means different things to different Canadians...to see multiculturalism primarily in ethnic terms--the most common way of seeing it--means that multiculturalism will be largely meaningless to the vast majority of today's Anglo-Celts and French in Canada...neither the Anglo-Celts nor the French, who make up 75 per cent of Canada's population, see themselves nor care to be seen as ethnics (Lupul 1988).

The celebration of difference model fails to see how difference can be understood as part of the process which created and recreates the inequalities felt by marginalized and essentialized Others. Within the celebration of difference, the essentialized ethnic, as

Peter notes, is relegated to that of "contributors of quaint practices and upholders of individual identities." The very same "celebration of difference" denies them the subjectivity to define and articulate their own understandings of the political and economic reality in Canadian life (Peter 1981:57).

The universalism that Bhabha states is associated with cultural diversity masks the underlying ethnocentric norms, values, and interests associated with this type of authorization of diversity. As he notes, "in societies where multiculturalism is encouraged racism is still rampant in various forms" (Bhabha 1990:208).

Cultural diversity positions the ethnic Other inside, yet marginalized within, the social order. 'Ethnics' are incorporated into the diversity or plurality of the society, however, they are also simultaneously distinguished or set apart from the social norm (or the "mythical norm" as Audre Lorde has called it). For Bhabha, multiculturalism represents "an attempt both to respond to and to control the dynamic process of the articulation of cultural difference, administering a *consensus* based on a norm that propagates cultural diversity" (1990 208-209). Cultural diversity as I see it, is what allows us to find pleasure in difference (tasting Chinese food one night, eating Ethiopian the next), at the same time as it allows for the maintenance of the dominant culture. Cultural diversity allows us to experience the pleasure of racial and ethno-cultural difference while, at the same time, it relegates anyone who does not fit the norm to the lesser category of ethnic Other. It is important that we remember that the implications of this positioning as Other are not merely discursive. There are, of course, a whole series of material implications to being positioned as ethnic Other.

According to Bhabha "cultural difference," unlike cultural diversity, has a critical edge to it. It openly questions the liberal universalistic framework. The concept of cultural difference acknowledges what cultural diversity does not, that differences actually articulate in challenging ways whether positively or negatively often conflictually and sometimes incommensurably (Bhabha 1990:208). For Bhabha, talking about cultural difference rather than cultural diversity acknowledges that the "liberal relativist perspective is inadequate...and doesn't generally recognize the universalist and normative stance from which it constructs cultural and political judgements" (Bhabha 1990:209).

The difference of cultures cannot be something that can be accommodated within a universalist framework. Different cultures, the difference between cultural practices, the difference in the construction of cultures within different groups, very often set up among and between themselves an *incommensurability* (Bhabha 1990:209-emphasis in original).

The concept of cultural difference, in acknowledging that differences among cultures are something that cannot necessarily be accommodated within a universalist framework, opens up a space for conflict and for change. With the notion of cultural difference, Bhabha allows for the object of his *musée imaginaire* to gaze back critically at the norm. He allows for the possibility that in this act other ways of understanding positionality, its causes and implications may arise. It allows an understanding that with true difference the ethnic other retains the subjectivity to define and articulate different understandings of the political, social and economic reality than that proposed by the mainstream. Cultural difference challenges the liberal norm which naively believes that if we assert that we can celebrate our differences often enough, all the problems associated with difference will disappear.

Bhabha's distinctions are useful in unpacking how difference is understood in the early multicultural model. By focusing on what Bhabha calls cultural diversity the celebration of difference limits the challenges which can be brought to mainstream society through an acknowledgement and exploration of the deeper structural and relational complexities of difference. Bhabha's distinctions help unpack how groups of individuals in the celebration of difference model are represented as cultural, racial, or ethnic Others. His analysis allows us to see how early multicultural constructions of difference in Canada tend to essentialize the ethnic Other while at the same time masking the role that these constructions of difference play in setting up hierarchies and power imbalances which serve to marginalize those groups which are being represented as Other, and thereby negate the possibility of true difference. Using Bhabha's terms, the early celebration of difference model of multiculturalism has tended to celebrate cultural diversity, while it denied true cultural difference. To allow for true difference would mean acknowledging the existence of the mythical norm, it would mean examining the grid and critically viewing how it is used to construct some individuals and groups as essentialized ethnic Others.

2. Ethno-cultural Difference as Static:

Difference is not only seen as something essential to the ethno-cultural Other which sets them apart from the mythical norm. It is also seen as static or unchanging. In representing difference in terms of kinship groups and tradition the more dynamic shifting nature of differences as they are manifested in cultural identities are disregarded. The ethnic Other tends to be represented as different in terms of supposedly essential

unchanging traditional characteristics. Unlike the melting pot policy approach in which difference is assumed to fade away, this conceptualization sees difference as a relatively permanent thing. The fact that ethnic classifications like the racial ones which preceded them are both socially constructed and constantly in flux is denied. This belief in the permanence of difference has been behind very different state policies in Canada. Prior to the 1960s the state claimed that permanent difference made some individuals 'unassimilatable' and attempted to exclude those labelled "different" through restrictive, racist immigration policies. With the introduction of the early multiculturalism model, the state, while retaining the notion of the permanency of difference, chose to authorize and celebrate rather than to attempt to keep out difference.

This notion of difference as a permanent unchanging fact has come increasingly under attack as theorists acknowledge the more dynamic ways in which individuals and groups experience difference in contemporary societies. Hall, in an essay on difference and cultural identity, states:

Identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think...instead of thinking of identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of identity as a 'production,' which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside, representation. This view problematises the very authority and authenticity to which the term, 'cultural identity' lays claim. (Hall 1990:222)

Hall's understanding of ethnicity and identity acknowledges that they are neither essential to any being, nor are they fixed and unchanging. Rather, ethnicity, like cultural identity, has to do both with the constantly changing ways we are positioned within society and the ways in which we position ourselves. Hall, in discussing the awakening of cultural

identities amongst Jamaicans makes the point:

Cultural identity...is a matter of becoming, as well as of being...It is not something which already exists, transcending place, time, history and culture. Cultural identities come from somewhere, have histories. But, like everything which is historical, they undergo constant transformation. Far from being eternally fixed in some essentialised past, they are subject to the continuous 'play' of history, culture and power. Far from being grounded in a mere recovery of the past, which is waiting to be found, and which, when found, will secure our sense of ourselves into eternity, identities are the names we give to the different ways we are positioned by and position ourselves within, the narratives of the past. (Hall 1990:225)

In its attempt to authorize Canadians to celebrate their differences which are assumed to come unchanged from diverse heritages, the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism denied that ethno-cultural difference and identities are, as Hall reminds us, as much "a matter of becoming" as they are a matter of being.

3. Masking the Relational Nature of Difference:

In highlighting supposedly static cultural differences, the "celebration of diversity" conceptualization of difference masks other aspects of difference in contemporary Canadian society. While highlighting "cultural diversity" the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism masks the way in which difference is implicated in political and economic inequalities as well as in relations of dependency and marginalisation. Difference is often conceptualized in terms of individual characteristics rather than relationally:

The call for tolerance of difference is framed in terms of respect for individual characteristics and attitudes; groups' differences are conceived categorically and not relationally, as distinct entities rather than interconnected structures or systems created through repeated processes of enunciation of difference. (Scott 1992:17)

This way of dealing with difference perpetuates inequalities through the denial of difference as a relational phenomenon, through a denial of difference as hierarchy:

The perception of Otherness is not just one of difference but inherently one of hierarchy. Whom do we identify as others? Not those we identify with, but those we believe inferior or superior to us, or potentially subservient or dominant... The implicit hierarchical nature of otherness invites seemingly innocuous practices of representation that amount to (often unknowing) strategies of domination through appropriation. (Dominguez 1987:131-132)

In examining how the celebration of ethno-cultural diversity focuses upon celebrating categorical difference, and the way in which it masks the relational aspects of difference, we can begin to understand the repressive power which is hidden in the moment of perception and enunciation. We can begin to see how through the very act of reiterating and celebrating difference, inequality is perpetuated. As Paula Rothenberg reminds us, "the construction of difference is central to racism, sexism and other forms of oppressive ideologies" (1990:42). Difference, seen in this light, is nothing to celebrate.

4. Examining the Articulation of Difference:

Within the Canadian context, various authors have recently re-examined the history of different 'ethnic groups' arguing that group identities are formed in response to the racialization/ethnicization within Canada of particular groups of people. Their analysis draws attention to the processes involved in the construction of the types of ethno-cultural differences which the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism authorises. Nino Ricci, in an article which responds to claims that multiculturalism in Canada has merely reinforced the ghettoization of ethnic communities, analyzes the way in which the shared sense of community within the Toronto Italian community was

influenced by the discrimination which members experienced. Ricci points out that

Too often ethnicity is taken as a given, as some essence that immigrants carry within them on their arrival here; I would argue instead that what we commonly regard as ethnic identity cannot be understood outside the context of the immigration process itself and of the cultural forces it sets in motion, and that only through an analysis of these forces can we begin to move beyond a definition of immigrant cultures that tends to exclude them from the mainstream even while it claims to valorize them. (1992:6)

As Ricci notes, what solidarity did arise in the Toronto Italian community was "largely the result of the unifying forces brought about by immigration itself...[out of] the sense of common interest fostered by discrimination" (1992:6). Ricci explains that although Italian immigrants had a diversity of origins and experiences, the effects of ethnicization after their arrival in Canada "is exactly to create that expectation of solidarity that itself then reinforces the process of ethnicization" (1992:6).

As a result, what is often regarded by the larger society as the community's "ethnicity" is not so much the reflection of its true cultural complexity and flux or even some original culture imported from the homeland as of the symbols of solidarity and homogeneity created as the community evolves a public persona in response to the experience of immigration. (Ricci 1992:6)

What Ricci's analysis shows us is that ethnicity is not as simple as once thought to be. His analysis exposes that ethnicity rather than "some essence" that groups carry with them is at least in part the result of a process of ethnicization which is carried out in the very act of the articulation of difference. It is in the enunciation of difference that groups are singled out from the norm as 'ethnic' or 'racial' Others. While this process has often lead to, and resulted from, discrimination against various groups, the underlying process is the same within the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism which claims to attach positive rather than negative value to the characteristics associated with being

an ethnic Other.

One of the ironies of this type of notion of difference, as Lorde has noted, is that marginalized groups often reproduce these essentialized identities in their struggles against marginalization. They identify with one way in which they differ from the mythical norm and then imagine the cause of their oppression to lie in that difference. This type of identification and reproduction of dominant conceptualizations of difference has lead many seeking to fight various oppressions to base their struggles in various identity politics. In reproducing dominant notions of difference, identity politics, like the repressive politics which it seeks to confront, examines only the results of difference, but fails to see how difference arises within contemporary societies.

A less limited notion of difference than that which I have been describing would open up the possibility of acknowledging and critically examining how difference and marginalization are linked in liberal pluralistic notions of ethno-cultural diversity. With regard to ethnic diversity in Canada it would mean acknowledging the vertical nature of our mosaic and examining the role that the enunciation of difference plays in keeping it vertical. It would also mean allowing "ethnic communities" and others to use difference by allowing for various identities not only to be articulated but also to challenge each other. It would mean acknowledging that often 'multicultural' and 'ethnic' do not refer to *all* of our society, that there remains a norm from which the 'ethnic' is distinguished.

5. Power in Representation:

Within this representation of difference there is often a sense of normal and other in a orientalist type framework. In *Orientalism* (1978), Edward Said attempts to describe

the definitional power of western discourse of and about the so called Orient. Orientalism as an ongoing, powerful discourse, has a power beyond the mere representation (or misrepresentation) of some real thing that is the Orient. Orientalism, Said argues, is largely responsible for the creation of the Orient, and for its subjugation to the West. As a text, *Orientalism* attempts to explore the role that conceptualizing difference has had on the historical subjugation of East by the West, of the way in which meaning and representation are powerful tools which have been used in the colonial and post-colonial history of East-West relations.

What Said's notion of orientalism brings to my examination of difference is the notion of a relationship of power, and of domination within representations. The orientalist discourse is one in which only one group of individuals maintains definitional power. In orientalist discourse, that power is used to reiterate and accentuate difference in such a way as to reinforce other forms of power. Said's work helps shed light on the power which is invested in discourses about ethno-cultural or racial difference, and on how difference can be used as a means of control and subjugation. His analysis exposes how the articulation of difference is used to absolve "those with power from any responsibility for the condition of the inferior group and thus blames the victim for its victimization" (Rothenberg 1990:45). Allowing for true difference would involve recognizing the power that this notion of difference has in reproducing social inequalities.

Early multiculturalism policy in Canada² was built upon a modification of already existing conceptualisations of ethno-cultural difference. In celebrating what Bhabha calls cultural diversity, early multiculturalism in Canada attempted simply to attach positive

values to those ethno-cultural characteristics associated with groups who had for some time felt marginalized to the Canada white Anglo and Franco mainstream. In doing so, it neglected to truly challenge either the positionality of the mainstream or the structures and processes implicated in that positioning and in the creation of various ethno-cultural groupings.

This discussion of difference allows us to see that while the introduction of the points system in Canadian immigration policy and the introduction of multiculturalism policy in Canada do represent greater tolerance or acceptance of ethno-cultural differences on the part of the Canadian state, these changes were not based in a fundamental reconceptualization of the notion of difference. They are important, however, because of how they differ from what came before them; that is, because they were so much more progressive than previous state policies and practices. They are also important in as much as they provide an important base upon which further changes were made. Although they were certainly not perceived this way by those involved at the time, I see them as a sort intermediate stage, as providing the groundwork for further struggles regarding difference. The more fundamental reconceptualization of difference which many of the authors I examine here are calling for would not be possible without the early modification in understanding as 'ethnicity' replaced 'race' as the dominant marker of ethno-cultural difference.

6. The Commodification of Ethno-cultural Difference:

Before closing this chapter and moving on to examine the *rapprochement* between Tourism Canada and multiculturalism, I want to introduce a few comments concerning

the selling of difference which I will return to in chapter four. Conveniently for capital, the celebration of difference has paved the way for the marketing of cultural and ethnic differences as a sort of cultural spice.

The commodification of difference has exploded in recent years. Hall notes that while it is true that "certain forms of modern advertising are still grounded in the exclusive, power, dominant, highly masculinist, old Fordist imagery," along side of them has come a new form of imagery: "the new exotica" (1991a:31). "To be at the leading edge of modern capitalism" states Hall, "is to eat fifteen different cuisines in any one week, not to eat one" (1991a:31). Difference as it is conceptualized in the celebration of difference readily lends itself to commodification for the market. Difference has become the darling of capital:

[C]apital has fallen in love with difference: advertising thrives on selling us things that will enhance our uniqueness and individuality. It's no longer about keeping up with the Joneses, it's about being different from them. From World Music to exotic holidays in Third-World locations, ethnic tv dinners to Peruvian knitted hats, cultural difference *sells*. This is the 'difference' of commodity relations, the particular experience of time and space produced by transnational capital. (Rutherford 1990:11)

That this understanding of difference is easily commodified is an important point for my analysis. As I will explore further in chapter four, it is this "commodifiability" which made multiculturalism attractive to tourist policy makers in the first place. Without it, there would have been no attempts at marrying multiculturalism and tourism in Canada.

Chapter 3

The Marriage of Tourism Canada and Multiculturalism

1. Tourism Canada: A brief introduction:

The Canadian Government office of Tourism (Tourism Canada) is a part of the federal Department of Industry, Trade and Commerce whose goal is to "support and promote international competitiveness and excellence of Canadian industry." Tourism Canada's objectives are:

to increase the demand for travel facilities and services; expand and increase the efficiency of Canada's tourism industry; coordinate tourism-related activities with other federal departments, the provincial/territorial tourism departments and private industry; and to provide and maintain a centre of information on tourism. (Canadian Government Office of Tourism 1982:57)

It is the business of Tourism Canada to support and bolster Canadian tourist revenues by (a) promoting travel to Canada from abroad, (b) coordinating federal, provincial and private promotional activities outside Canada, and (c) cooperating with the various provinces to promote travel by Canadians in Canada (Industry Canada 1968:3).

Tourism Canada traces its history back to 1934 when the federal government established the Canadian Travel Bureau.¹² The bureau was first placed in the department

¹² This very brief introduction to the history of Tourism Canada is based primarily upon documents obtained from Tourism Canada's library. Two publications published by the bureau itself (Industry Canada 1967, 1968) provided most of the information for this section.

of Railways and Canals (which was renamed the Department of Transport in 1937) and was subsequently shuffled from department to department, some of which seem rather ill-suited to house an institution whose aim is to promote tourist visits to Canada. In 1941 it was transferred to the Department of National War Services. With the end of the war, it was moved to the Department of Trade and Commerce. Three short years later, it moved to the Department of Reconstruction and Supply and then was moved again in 1950 to the Department of Resources and Development. In 1962 it was returned to the Department of Trade, Industry, and Commerce, where it has since remained. Under the auspices of the Department of Industry, Tourism Canada's position within the government structure reinforces its natural links to private business interests. Tourism is, after all, ultimately a business, and while as I will argue further below, the industry may at times be seen to be a part of Canadian nation building, of defining what it is to be Canadian, ultimately its goals are economic. While the way in which Tourism Canada represents Canada as a nation is an indicator at some level of how we see ourselves as a nation and of how the state attempts to define Canada as a nation, these issues of national identity are secondary to the business aspects of tourism in Canada.

In its early years, the bureau concentrated almost exclusively on attracting visitors from the United States which was then, and continues today, to be Canada's main international tourist market. Through the 1960s the Bureau expanded its focus, as it sought to attract potential European travellers and was built up in anticipation of the large influx of visitors for Expo '67. Tourism Canada sees itself as "the only entity that sells 'Canada' as a whole in travel markets." As such, it sees its role as providing potential

visitors with a vision of the whole spectrum of attractions in Canada in order to complement the more narrowly focused marketing efforts of provinces, territories or members of the private sector. The Bureau, once geared primarily towards the provision of tourist information to potential tourists, has gradually moved into other areas. Activities now include information gathering in the form of market studies, and industry planning and development.

2. Early Canadian Tourism Representations:

Prior to the mid-1980s Tourism Canada did not actively promote Canada as a "multicultural" tourist destination. The diversity of Canadian people was not the primary object of Canadian campaigns to bring visitors from abroad. Rather, with the exceptions of 'Mounties' and 'Indians' Canadian tourist advertising tended to emphasize Canada's natural landscapes and its city scapes without much attention on the Canadian people. Although some campaigns did point to the attraction of Canada's cosmopolitan cities, these were not the major focus of many advertising promotions; Canada continued to be promoted primarily as 'the great outdoors.' Emphasis was often placed upon Canada as a site of natural beauty and as a place where visitors could engage in outdoor recreational activities. This emphasis influenced the way we were perceived as a country. Amongst Americans we had the stereotypical image of 'moose, Mounties, and mountains:'

Canada has a relatively weak image with regard to cultural activities.... Foreigners most often think of Canada as a country which offers outstanding natural beauty and sightseeing opportunities. (Canada Council 1984)

Murphy, writing in 1983, remarked both on this bias in our tourist industry and on the

need for changing representations:

...our prime attractiveness is our scenery, open space, and outdoor recreation opportunities. But there is also our sense of security and cultural links to Europe to consider. There is also room for image improvement, particularly with regard to our cities and their cultural and gastronomical potential. (25-26)

Murphy notes that Tourism Canada was, in the early eighties, attempting to modify the traditional 'open landscapes' and 'natural beauty' image of Canada by incorporating more city and people oriented images and messages in its advertising to foreign markets (Murphy 1983:26). As early as 1973, in fact, the Canadian Government Office of Tourism was responding to studies indicating the need to give travellers a better idea of the diversity of activities available in Canada. Gordon Taylor, in discussing potential tourist trends for the 1980s, illustrates Tourism Canada's efforts to move beyond the limited image of Canada as "having outstanding scenery, lots of wildlife...and security." As Taylor notes, previously, Canada was "not seen [by potential tourists] as a place for food, shopping, nightlife, and having cultural, or historic interests" (1983:39). This was true not only for potential visitors from the far away, smaller markets of Japan, France, and the United Kingdom, but also for individuals from our largest and closest market: the United States. The following ads are presented by Taylor as exemplifying a new effort of the Canadian Government Office of Tourism to diversify its advertising to include not only images of outdoor wilderness, but also urban and cultural attractions.

Figure 1: Source Gordon Taylor, "Canada's Tourism Trends for the 1980s"

3. Marrying Multiculturalism and Tourism in Canada

While the early eighties saw Tourism Canada attempting to incorporate more urban and 'cultural' images in advertising promotions, it was in the later half of the decade that its new attention to culture took on multiculturalism. Within an overall shift to change the image of our tourist product around the world, multiculturalism was

highlighted in connection with our single most important market: the United States. In the late 1980s Tourism Canada appealed to multiculturalism in an attempt to better sell Canada as a tourist destination to the United States pleasure traveller. In December of 1985, Tourism Canada, the Secretary of State (then in charge of Multiculturalism) and the Department of Communications signed a memorandum of understanding supporting joint efforts to link tourism, culture, and multiculturalism:

The Canadian government must now take the initiative to develop effective and productive liaison between tourism and culture. There is a need to take advantage of Canada's cultural diversity and assets through increased tourism activity. (Quoted in "Making Connections" 1988:3)

Together the offices developed a three-staged preliminary strategy aimed at taking advantage of our 'multicultural nature' in order to increase tourism revenue from United States sources. The three stages consisted of a period of information collecting, followed by the development of a series of pilot projects aimed at selling Canada's cultural diversity to the United States tourist consumer, and finally the staging of a national conference on tourism and culture ("Making Connections" 1988:4).

The *rapprochement* between Tourism Canada and multiculturalism took place at a time when the Canadian tourist industry was feeling threatened by a decline in its share of the United States market. Statistics show that fewer Americans were choosing to spend their tourist dollars in Canada. As Taylor notes there were two major trends in the Canadian tourist travel industries in the 1970s: a serious decline in United States visitors, and a smaller (but by no means insignificant) increase in overseas travellers. The overall result was a decrease of one million international visitors in the latter half of the 1970s.

[W]hile international arrivals world-wide have grown by 30 percent,

arrivals in Canada decreased eight percent. Consequently, Canada's share of total world arrivals declined from 6.6 percent in 1975 to 4.6 percent in 1979. When receipts are considered, Canada's share fell from 3.6 percent to 2.8 percent. Thus on a global basis, Canada's international tourism business did not keep pace with that of the rest of the world. The basic cause of this loss of position has been the decline in the number of American visitors. (Taylor 1983:30)

One might have expected the industry to be encouraged by the increase in overseas travel. However it is important to remember that the United States has always been a much larger market for the Canadian tourist industry:

In 1980 [the United States] accounted for 62.3 percent of Canada's tourism receipts and 85.5 percent of tourist arrivals. Five years earlier, in 1975, the shares stood at 73.2 percent and 91.5 percent respectively. (Taylor 1983:30)

Clearly the increase in overseas travel, while significant, did not really lessen the overwhelming importance of the United States market to the Canadian industry nor did it lessen the concern felt within the industry at the decline in United States pleasure travellers in Canada.

i. The Longwoods Study

In an attempt to assess the situation and come up with suggestions for action, Tourism Canada commissioned an extensive survey of American tourist travellers. The survey, which was entitled *The 1985 U.S. Pleasure Travel Market Study* (USPM) and undertaken by Longwoods, was one of the main elements in the information gathering stage of the cooperative strategy. One of the purposes of the USPM survey was to find out what the American tourist traveller wanted that Canada could provide. It sought to determine what we had that the American tourist felt would entice him/her to spend his/her tourist dollars in Canada rather than in the United States or elsewhere. It sought

to determine what the American tourist thought was our comparative advantage (Longwoods 1986a:4).

In order to understand the importance of the USPM study and of the United States market for the Canadian tourist industry, one need only note that in the past 20 years, tourists who entered Canada from the United States have consistently made up over 80% of Canada's overall tourist visitors. As well, over the same period American tourists have consistently accounted for more than 80% of our direct tourist income (OECD 1970-1992). As the survey report states: "the United States is, and will continue to be by far the most important market for tourism to Canada" (Longwoods 1986b:1).

Results from the USPM study showed that Canada had a 'natural' advantage over other foreign destinations due to its proximity to the United States. It also indicated that our image was strongest with respect to areas such as our beautiful scenery and clean air, lots to see and do, and winter sports (Longwoods 1986a:76). However these 'strong points' were also areas in which the United States itself was found to have a very good image. In fact the survey results showed that although Canada enjoyed a relatively positive image, in most areas the United States rated higher. "The problem appears to be that while Canada is viewed positively, United States pleasure travellers see their own country even more positively" (Longwoods 1986a:76).

In searching for something which would provide us with a 'comparative advantage,' the report pointed to Canada's image as a place which, although relatively close, enabled the American tourist to experience Canada's "foreign mystique:"

[Canada's] one advantage over the US...is that it is different; it is a foreign destination with a different culture and a way of life; it is

Canadian. -- It is Canada's people, cultures, heritage and ethnic mosaic that makes Canada substantially different from America. (Longwoods 1986b:19)

The one area in which respondents expressed an advantage of Canada over the United States was with regards to "different cultures and ways of life." The Longwoods survey report states that:

None of Canada's individual products, including its great outdoors, its major cities and its resorts has an image that stands up well to competition ... instead, Canada's strength lies in the fact that it is a *foreign* destination, close and familiar, and yet somehow different. (Longwoods 1986a-emphasis in original)

This image of Canada as a source of the exotic, of foreign mystique, was highlighted by Tourism Canada as a possible source of added income for Canada's tourist industry. In response to the customers' desire to see Canada's culturally distinct people and cultures, Tourism Canada focused upon representations of Natives and multiculturalism:

While Canada can offer neither the spectacular cultural sites of Europe, nor the "peasant" peoples of third world countries, state tourism texts repeatedly remark that Canada does have a rich multi-cultural heritage and the presence of Native peoples which can be promoted for cultural tourism. (Blundell 1993:4-5)

The 1985 survey was followed by a shift in advertising emphasis which reflected the belief that there was money to be made in selling Canada as a land of interesting 'multicultural' people. This new emphasis on 'multicultural' Canada can be seen both in the more specific initiatives which emphasised our cultural diversity, and in more general advertising campaigns. The "world next door" banner for example served as a unifying theme under which our "distinctive" culture was promoted to potential visitors from the United States. At a time when there was a fear of losing our share of the American

market, when there was a belief that Canada had to specialize and target particular tourist markets, Tourism Canada turned to multiculturalism as our special playing card, as the source of a Canadian comparative advantage.

ii. Cultural and Multicultural Tourism Pilot Projects

The second phase of the strategy involved the development of a series of pilot projects which, it was hoped, would help define and develop the special role that Canadian culture and multiculturalism could play in attracting visitors. Tourism Canada helped set up five pilot projects aimed at emphasising Canadian culture and multiculturalism. These pilot projects received financial support from all three levels of government as well as the tourist industry. The projects designated Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver as cultural destinations, and Winnipeg (Folklorama) and parts of Nova Scotia (Scottish festivals in Northumberland shore and Cape Breton areas) as ethno-cultural destinations (Ekos 1988).

Under the Toronto for the Arts program, performing arts were packaged and offered through a promotional campaign. Activities included music, dance and theatre performances. Also part of the program was the marketing of tickets for the Art Gallery of Ontario and the Royal Ontario Museum. The Toronto program sent direct mail outs to approximately 480 000 arts subscribers and households in the United States as well as placing ads in newspapers and radios and establishing a toll free telephone number for bookings and inquires.

The Montreal cultural destination project involved promoting eleven "special events" occurring in the Montreal region during the summer of 1986. The "Montreal:

Yours to Treasure" program included "cultural" activities (such as the *Chine: Treasure et splendours* exhibition and the *Festival international de Jazz de Montreal*) and sports events (for example the *Players Challenge* tennis tournament). The Montreal project concentrated not only on the Northeastern United States market but also targeted three Ontario cities. The Winnipeg project was divided into two distinct campaigns. The first project which took place in the summer months included the Folkarama Festival and concentrated mainly on multiculturalism. The second, smaller package, offered United States citizens a special discount rate during the 1986/87 winter season for two nights at participating hotels and tickets to a hockey game or cultural event such as a Royal Winnipeg ballet performance, or a Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra concert. The Vancouver/Victoria project focused upon offering discounts through a tourist booklet which offered 'two for one' admissions to "cultural" events along with discounts on hotel and travel fares. The Highland heart Campaign "aimed to promote the Northumberland Shore and Cape Breton as multiculturalism destinations" through the promotion of traditional Scottish festivals (Ekos 1988:6-9).

The five pilot projects attempted to sell specific Canadian destinations as either "cultural" or "multicultural" destinations thus making a clear distinction between the two. Through an examination of the difference between these two conceptual categories (multicultural or cultural), an understanding emerges of how multiculturalism and difference were conceived by Tourism Canada.

In a report assessing the five projects, authors bemoan the lack of consistency and clarity in the use of the terms "culture" and "cultural tourism" in the various

projects. They note (Ekos 1988) that often when the pilot projects mention "culture" they are actually referring only to "high culture" or the professional arts. For the purposes of their assessment they discuss contemporary understanding of culture and attempt to isolate a working definition:

In its broadest...sense, culture is defined as the collection of material and symbolic products of a society which characterize its way of life... The more contemporary social scientific view of culture is to view it as strategic and adaptive. Culture is the set of symbols and codes which permit individuals to cope with their environments. Culture in this sense is a kind of mental map which provides meaning for the individual. (Ekos 1988:10-11)

Working with these definitions and with that of Bernard Ostry who "defined culture as 'artistic and creative expression, or expressive symbolism,'" they state:

If modern definitions of culture revolve around the notion of symbol systems which produce meaning in society, then for the purposes of this report we will be concerned with *expressive creative symbolism*. (Ekos 1988:11-emphasis in the original)

Multiculturalism was defined as the public policy translation of multi-ethnicity. The term multiculturalism is said to refer to the ethnic diversity of Canadian society:

[It] is displayed and bounded through a series of physical and abstract symbols. These include the usual cultural media such as language, neighbourhoods, material culture, lifestyles, commercial activities, kinship networking...The two dominant ethno-linguistic groups -our British and French charter cultures - form an important ingredient of this ethnic environment. (Ekos 1988:12)

They provide the following schematic outline for culture and its sub-categories:

Source: Ekos *Culture, Multiculturalism and Tourism Pilot Projects and Related Studies: A Synthesis*

The report claims that Canada's two charter groups -Anglo Celts and French - are considered an important part of our multicultural/ethnic make up. However, the way in which culture is divided both in the five pilot projects and in other related papers, between multiculturalism, popular and folk culture, and high culture indicates that there are distinctions which are being made which may contradict this claim. The distinction between ballet as high culture and powwows as multicultural provides one example. Both are dance, but they are categorized very differently by the tourist industry. Tourists are invited to visit China town as a multicultural site but are never encouraged to visit a suburb to see how our Anglo middle class lives. Examples indicate that despite statements that all cultural groups are ethnic, Tourism Canada specifically and the travel industry in general, actually position some Canadians as 'ethnic' or 'multicultural' and others as 'normal' Canadians from which ethnics are distinguished and differentiated. One report from the "Making Connections"

conference defines multicultural performing arts groups as "Groups engaged in singing, dancing, or playing musical instruments in a way which represents a minority culture, heritage or tradition to an audience" (Multiculturalism Canada 1988:1).

Rarely, does the tourist industry classify tourist sites as multicultural where the host community represents one of the two charter groups. When the culture of one of the charter groups is the focus of tourist packages, it is rarely represented as "multicultural." Also, when 'mainstream Canadian culture' is the tourist attraction, there seems to be a greater care to distinguish 'ancient' festivals or activities which are depicted for the tourist from current cultural forms. This type of distinction is not necessarily made with other cultural groups. Multiculturalism in the tourism industry as elsewhere is more often associated with minority cultures, as opposed to 'mainstream' Canadian culture. In its assessment of the five pilot projects, the report points to the need to view the various cultural domains (defined as multiculturalism, popular and folk culture, and high culture) in terms of their position in the overall cultural system. It suggests that tourists often do not make distinctions between the three different cultural domains (high culture, multicultural and popular culture):

Tourists perceive and consume culture in the more global sense of the total system of meaning and symbols associated with a society or community. Although there are some pure high cultural tourists...they constitute a very small market segment. The more impressive market segment is the overall symbolic tourist. For example, there is an apparent resonance or sympathy between the arts and multicultural domain which is under-exploited. We believe that the overall compartmentalization of culture into a series of discrete boxes denies the reality of visitor cognition and behaviour. There are distinct advantages for locating future efforts within a broader cultural envelope. (Ekos 1988:13)

Nonetheless, there is a clear distinction which is made between those aspects of the

projects which deal with culture (high culture) and which deal with multiculturalism ('ethnic' culture) within project papers.¹³ It is interesting to note that although there was much rhetorical support for a new-multicultural tourism in Canada, most of the five projects were not defined as multicultural but rather as high cultural events. Out of the five, only two (the Highland Heart Campaign in Northumberland, Nova Scotia and the summer program in Winnipeg) included multiculturalism as an explicit component of its advertising package (Ekos 1988:26). A lack of information on the multiculturalism-tourism links in papers following upon the projects is also lamentable. Although the projects aimed to provide Tourism Canada, and the industry as a whole, information on the role that culture and multiculturalism could play in attracting visitors, information on the latter is sadly lacking in the discussion which followed the projects' implementation.

The separation of culture into the three conceptual categories of high culture, popular and folk culture, and multiculture within the literature associated with the five projects, as well as the way in which different tourist events are categorized leads to questions about the way in which Tourism Canada and the tourism industry as a whole conceptualize difference.

iii. The "Making Connections" Conference

In 1988, Tourism Canada, in concluding the preliminary phase of the

¹³ Though the report separates culture into the three interrelated domains of high culture, multiculture, and popular and folk culture, this last category is not considered important to the tourist industry: "We can locate the two major subdivisions of culture which are of particular concern [to the tourist industry]-high culture (creative expressive symbolism) and multiculturalism (ethnic and linguistic symbols). The residual components of culture are mass or popular culture and perhaps science or religion" (Ekos 1988:20).

rapprochement with multiculturalism, held a national conference on tourism and culture in which over 400 individuals participated. The conference entitled "Making Connections" included representatives from Tourism Canada, from the offices in charge of Multiculturalism, as well as representatives from 'cultural and ethno-cultural' communities. The aim of the conference, which focused on tourism, culture, and multiculturalism, was to encourage the cooperation and staging of joint projects between the tourist industries and the cultural and multicultural communities ("Making Connections" 1988).

A number of papers were presented at the conference by ministers and academics associated with tourism and multiculturalism. Despite the fact that the bulk of the papers failed to address the multiculturalism-tourism issue except in the most general of terms, overall they expressed optimism about the prospects for a happy marriage between multiculturalism and tourism in Canada. Various rationales were put forward supporting mutual cooperation:

There are a range of policy rationales for buttressing the bond between multiculturalism and tourism...The most obvious positive impact of the multiculturalism - tourism link, particularly when thinking of the broad ethnic environment is on overall tourism. We might also consider the benefits of symbolically displaying Canada to Canadians and the world as a harmonious, multi-ethnic society...Clearly there are [also] potential economic benefits to the ethnic businesses selling services and products for tourists. (Ekos 1988:17)

The conference report highlighted past Canadian successes in marrying multiculturalism, culture and tourism. It cited several examples of successes in selling both high culture (performing arts) and multicultural tourist attractions. These include the "saloon" atmosphere of Dawson City, Vancouver's Chinatown, and

Winnipeg's Folklorama ("Making Connections" 1988). The conference, which concluded the initial phase of *rapprochement*, while it paid little direct attention to the details of the link was nonetheless extremely optimistic about the compatibility and mutual benefits which could result from a *rapprochement* between the tourist industry and Canada's 'multicultural' communities ("Making Connections" 1988).

The Making Connections conference seems to typify the overall *rapprochement* which took place between Tourism Canada and multiculturalism in the eighties. While policy statements and promotional material seem to reflect a great deal of optimism and zeal for the prospects of a profitable and happy marriage between multiculturalism and tourism, it was often other aspects of culture (especially 'high' culture) which actually ended up receiving the bulk of the attention during the preliminary strategy. With hindsight it does seem as though the optimism expressed over the possibility of highlighting multiculturalism in the Canadian tourism industry was misguided. Multiculturalism became no more than a very minor aspect of the Canadian tourist industry market strategies. In their assessment of the five pilot projects, Ekos researchers point to one clue to the lack of forward movement following the Longwoods study conclusions. They note that one problem lies in how we understand the "something different" that respondents in the study pointed to as a desirable aspect of Canadian culture. "We do not know," they caution, "what is meant by 'something different;' we cannot conclude that they meant something multicultural" (Ekos 1988:20). However, tourism policy makers did conclude that they meant "something multicultural." And more than this, the policy makers

appealed to a particular form of multiculturalism in their attempts to provide United States tourism consumers with the "something different" that the survey respondents said made Canada a desirable location.

Chapter 4

Tourism Canada and the Commodification of Ethno-Cultural Difference

In this chapter I will pull together some of the issues I have raised in earlier chapters and provide a discussion of conceptualizations of difference within the *rapprochement* of Tourism Canada and multiculturalism. I will demonstrate here that the representations of ethno-cultural difference found in the types of tourism which Tourism Canada promoted during its *rapprochement* with multiculturalism are consistent with the limited conceptualization of difference which I described in chapter two as typical of the early celebration of difference model of multiculturalism. I suggest that although the efforts to market Canada as a multicultural tourist site took place at a time when the more equality-based, social justice model of multiculturalism was already well established, tourism policy makers nonetheless harkened back to the early 'celebration of difference' model of multiculturalism. This choice, I argue, was due in large part to the fact that the ways in which difference is conceptualized in the earlier model more easily facilitate the commodification of ethnicity and the production of simple, unproblematic and non-threatening signs for tourism's marketing needs.

I begin the chapter with what I think are helpful discussions on some of the particularities of "ethnic" and "cultural" tourism. I propose a definition of these terms based upon the work of contemporary theorists of tourism and examine the notion of

ethnic and cultural tourism as forms of ethnic relations. Through a discussion of Dean MacCannell's work concerning tourism and authenticity, I begin to demonstrate that the representations of host communities in ethnic and cultural tourism are consistent with the limited conceptualization of difference outlined earlier.

I then examine the role of the state as a promoter of these types of tourism. Drawing upon other studies I put forward the position that the way in which the state represents the nation (and its ethnic minorities) to outsiders through the promotion of ethnic and cultural tourism has an impact upon internal politics of difference: that how we are represented by the state to others affects the way in which we see ourselves.

In the third section, I examine Tourism Canada's *rapprochement* with multiculturalism in terms of tourism industry representations of ethno-cultural difference. I discuss how in selling multicultural Canada, Tourism Canada represented difference in ways that are consistent with the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism of the early 1970s. Using Canadian examples I explore how in ethnic and cultural tourism, host communities are represented as existing outside of the modern world or as islands of traditions within modern society. In examining David Lai's discussion of the potential of various Chinatowns in and around Vancouver, I show how Tourism Canada decisions were affected by notions of ethno-cultural difference.

In concluding the chapter, I discuss the commodification of otherness which is central to the types of tourism promoted in Tourism Canada's *rapprochement* with multiculturalism. This commodification, I argue confines the way in which difference is represented in the tourism industry, resolving in part the question of why Tourism

Canada harkened back to the earlier model of multiculturalism.

1. Ethnic and Cultural Tourism

Prior to the 1970s tourism could scarcely be described as a topic of serious academic study. Tourism was for the most part ignored in academic writing. Since the early 1970s there has been a veritable explosion of academic interest in tourism. This interest has no doubt been fuelled by the increased volume of tourism on a global scale. Another factor in the increased attention given to the tourism industry by academics has been the importance that tourism has taken on for 'underdeveloped' nation-states, as their economic planners search for new ways to increase foreign earnings in attempts to service increasingly astronomical debt burdens. In the mid 1970s two influential texts on tourism (MacCannell 1976, and Smith 1989--first published in 1977) helped to spawn further interest in tourism in academic circles. Also during the seventies, the *Annals of Tourism Research* was established providing an international interdisciplinary forum for discussing various aspects of tourism. As a result, a strong base of case studies and theoretical research exists upon which new scholars of tourism can draw today.

Tourism, as pleasure or leisure travel, almost always involves an element of novelty or strangeness. The importance of this "strangeness" is highlighted by van den Berghe and Keyes when they state that the basic commodity of tourism is exoticism:

The tourist seeks an experience that cannot be replicated in his ordinary place of residence. The tourist endeavours to make contact with a different reality, manifest in undomesticated nature, in relics from the past, particularly an alien past, or in the behaviour of culturally distinctive strangers...In this quest for the exotic, one must leave the familiar surroundings of everyday life and work and cross the boundaries of the social world that one knows. It is in this sense that the tourist always travels to foreign parts, although he need not go to the antipodes to

encounter the exotic; indeed, one might be a tourist in an alien ethnic enclave within one's home community. (1984:345)

While all tourism involves a displacement or period of liminality, a sense of the exotic is more central to some forms of tourism than others. The exoticism which is commodified for the tourist customer may be related to the physical geography, the historical importance of the site, or the people and culture. My concern here, however, is with forms of tourism in which it is the people who live in a place, their culture, way of life, habits and traditions rather than, or more than, the physical place itself which are considered exotic and which become the central tourist objects. Theorists of tourism have named these types of tourism "ethnic" and "cultural" tourism. Valene Smith's fivefold typology of tourism based upon the "kinds of leisured mobility undertaken by the tourist," provides a useful starting point for distinguishing tourism types:

Ethnic Tourism., according to Smith, is tourism which "is marketed to the public in terms of the 'quaint' customs of indigenous and often exotic peoples." Activities associated with this form of tourism include "visits to native homes and villages, observation of dances and ceremonies, and shopping for primitive ware" (1989:4).

Cultural tourism includes the "'picturesque' or 'local colour,' a vestige of a vanishing life-style that lies within human memory with its 'old style' houses, home spun fabrics, horse or ox-drawn carts and plows, and hand rather than machine made crafts." Here activities "include meals in rustic inns, folkloric performances, costumed wine festivals, or rodeos reminiscent of the wild west" (:4-5).

Historical tourism is described by Smith as the "museum-cathedral circuit." Historical tour activities include "guided tours of monuments and ruins, and ...light and

sound performances that encapsulate into a brief drama, the lifestyle and key events that text books record" (5).

Environmental tourism is said to be "ancillary to ethnic tourism, attracting a tourist elite to remote areas such as Antarctica to experience a truly alien scene." Environmental tourism is primarily geographic and includes activities where the tourist can witness "man-land relationships" (:5)¹⁴

Recreational tourism, Smith's final category, includes "sun, sea and sand" trips. Activities in recreational tourism "centre upon participation in food and convivial entertainment. Las Vegas epitomizes another type of recreational centre gambling,...shows and away from home freedom to indulge in the new morality" (5)¹⁵

While I find Smith's typology quite useful, I would agree with Wood (1984) when

¹⁴ I think that Smith's use of the name 'environmental tourism' is somewhat misleading. What she refers to as environmental tourism is tourism where natural geography is somehow important. It does not have any necessary relationships to the environmental movement (which is more associated with what has come to be known as eco-tourism.) Because her 'environmental tourism' includes destinations such as "tours of local industries such as tea farms and processing plants in Japan or Ceylon, or salmon canneries in Alaska," (Smith 1989:5) I think some other title would have been less confusing.

¹⁵ There are two relatively new forms of tourism which I would append to Smith's typology: *eco-tourism* and *endemic tourism*.

Born out of the environmental movement, *eco-tourism* attempts to merge a respect and concern for the physical environment with pleasure travel:

An Eco-vacation takes into consideration the impact our travels will have on the air, earth and seas. There are two styles of Eco-vacation. First you can choose activities which don't pollute...Second you can take part in preserving what we have. (Kaye 1991:8)

Eco-tourism seeks to minimize the harmful environmental effects of tourism, incorporating environmental awareness. Often it also involves tourists engaging in reparative actions. While one does not have to be in a "natural" setting to engage in Eco-tourism, this does seem to be the norm.

Endemic tourism is similar to Eco-tourism but instead of valorizing a place, it valorizes a people and culture. A relatively new form of tourism, it is similar on some levels to ethnic tourism except that it seeks to move beyond the normal 'destructive' effects that ethnic tourism are said to have on cultural communities. It seeks to move beyond the simple stereotypical relations between hosts and guests which are normally associated with ethnic tourism. In endemic tourism the tourist encounter is used to attempt to foster greater cultural understanding on the part of the tourist of the marginalized peoples who act as both hosts and educators.

he states that her first two categories are not as clearly distinguished as they might be.¹⁶ Other theorists such as van den Berghe and Wood have provided what I feel are more useful definitions of ethnic and cultural tourism. These definitions are also those which have become common usage within academic writing on tourism.

Ethnic tourism, according to van den Berghe, is "that variety of tourism in which the cultural exoticism of the 'natives' is the principal attractant" (1992:235). Wood, while attempting to clarify terms introduced by Smith in her typology of tourism, argues that "ethnic tourism should be defined by its direct focus on people living out a cultural identity whose uniqueness is being marketed for tourists" (1984:361). He distinguishes this from cultural tourism:

Cultural tourism, on the other hand, may be defined in terms of situations where the role of culture is contextual, where its role is to shape the tourist's experience of a situation in general, without a particular focus on the uniqueness of a specific cultural identity. The focus here is much more on artifacts, particularly buildings, vehicles, food stalls, clothing, etc., rather than on the concrete cultural activities of people. (1984:361)

It should be noted that as with many categorical typologies, the lines separating any two categories are much clearer in theory than in the 'real world' that they seek to explain. While either ethnic or cultural tourism may in any given case take on a greater importance in the definition and representation of the tourist package/site, it is rare that

¹⁶ While I would agree with Wood's description of Smith's cultural and ethnic tourism classification, as "unclear and inconsistent" (1984:360), I am not convinced that his reading of her typology is the only possible one. Wood's reading leads him to the conclusion that Smith's mistake "is to rest the distinction on the nature of the cultures involved" (1984:361). I would argue that we could also make an argument that for Smith, the distinction seems to lie in the relationship between the tourists and guests. In her typology, ethnic tourism might involve going to see a more foreign or exotic culture/people while cultural tourism refers to trips centred on peasant lifestyles which even when visited abroad, take the (normally western) tourist back to his or her cultural past in some way. In this reading the distinction lies not in the host culture but in the relationship between the two cultures of the tourist and the hosts.

one is present to the exclusion of the other. Often it is not at all clear which is the dominant form in a given case. As well, these two forms share many characteristics in common. As such, I have drawn from the work of scholars concerned with both of these forms in my analysis of multiculturalism and tourism in Canada and have avoided making claims about which of the two is dominant in the examples that I use.

i. Ethnic and Cultural tourism as ethnic relations

Because ethnic and cultural tourism almost always involve the meeting of people from different ethno-cultural categorizations, they form a particular type of ethnic relation. As van den Berghe and Keyes have noted, these forms of tourism share several basic characteristics with other "ethnic encounters:"

1. A superficial, segmentary, instrumental, affectively neutral or aversive type of interaction;
2. The formation of largely negative stereotypes arising from these truncated interactions; and
3. The relative absence of trust and prevalence of deceit and manipulation in contacts. (1984:346-347)

They also list the characteristics of ethnic tourism which they feel make it "a very special type of ethnic relationship:"

1. The tourist is a transient, and, therefore relationships are particularly open to deceit, exploitation, and mistrust since both tourists and natives can easily escape the consequences of hostility and dishonesty.
2. The status of the tourist is inconsistent. On the one hand, he generally comes from either affluent societies or from the more affluent classes of poorer societies, and is often envied for his wealth, leisure, and material artifacts (cameras, tape recorders, motorcars, fancy camping equipment). On the other hand, he is relatively ignorant of local conditions, and thus often appears incompetent, ridiculous, gullible, and eminently exploitable.
3. Integration between tourists and tourees is intrinsically

asymmetrical, not only in terms of disparity of wealth (favouring the tourist) and information (favouring the touree), but also insofar as the tourist is a spectator and the touree a performer. The touree not only interacts with the tourist across a cultural and linguistic gap to achieve a common end; the touree also plays at being himself for the enjoyment of the tourist. The touree literally makes a spectacle of himself. (1984:347)

Van den Berghe and Keyes fail to highlight what I feel is one of the most important aspects of ethnic encounters: the commodification of ethno-cultural difference. This commodification more than these other characteristics serves to define the boundaries of how difference is understood in the ethnic and cultural tourism encounter, ensuring that the tourist industry's celebration of difference remains unproblematic and non-threatening. The fact that the tourist industry engages in a commodification of Otherness limits it in its conceptualization of difference, forcing it to reduce complex cultures and relationships into quaint, simple signs easily recognized, purchased, and consumed by the tourist, which are consistent with the understanding of difference outlined in chapter two.

ii. Authenticity and Staged Authenticity in the tourist encounter;

Dean MacCannell provides other insights useful to a discussion of ethnic and cultural tourism and ethno-cultural difference. MacCannell sees the tourist encounter as modern people's pilgrimage for that which is lacking in their lives, a sense of the real, of authenticity. Authenticity, he argues, is thought to be lost in the modern world; "the progress of modernity...depends on its very sense of instability and inauthenticity" (MacCannell 1976:3). Authenticity, according to MacCannell, is assumed to be elsewhere in "simpler," and "purer" times, places, and cultures which tourists then seek out in their

travels. MacCannell's discussion of the assumed lack of authenticity in the modern and its existence elsewhere is consistent with predominant beliefs in what James Clifford has called the "salvage paradigm" in anthropology:

In a salvage...set up most non-western peoples are marginal to the advancing world system. Authenticity in culture or art exists just prior to the present--but not so distant or eroded as to make collection or salvage impossible. Marginal, non-western groups constantly (as the saying goes) enter the modern world. And whether this entry is celebrated or lamented, the price is always this: local, distinctive paths through modernity vanish. These historicities are swept up in a destiny dominated by capitalist west and by various technologically advanced socialisms. (Clifford 1987:122)

Assumptions about authenticity, as Clifford argues, serve to reinforce linear western predominant notions of cultures:

In western taxonomy and memory the various non-western "ethnographic presents" are actually pasts. They represent culturally distinct times ("traditions") always about to undergo the impact of disruptive changes associated with the influence of trade, media, missionaries, commodities, ethnographers, tourists, the exotic art market, the "world system," etc. A relatively recent period of authenticity is repeatedly followed by a deluge of corruption, transformation, modernization. (Clifford 1987:122)

The ethnic Other as the source of some lost authenticity is clearly positioned outside of modern society. This positioning serves to mask the connections that exist between the culture, economy and politics of the visiting tourist and that of the host communities. Rather than seeing their lives as structurally related, they are presented as separate, unrelated, completely distinct. As such, the encounter in no way raises the possibility of addressing or questioning the positionalities of its various players. With the exception of the tourist encounter itself, the host community is often presented as untouched by the outside world. This (misguided) representation has lead many to lament the loss of traditional cultures to the tourist hordes:

The ultimate irony of ethnic tourism is that, as it invades the most isolated refuges beyond the pale of the global village, it threatens to destroy the very commodity it seeks: the unspoiled authentic other. Second-class busses now reach almost everywhere, and the backpack tourist is never far behind. (van den Berghe 1992:217-218)

While van den Berghe's work demonstrates that he does have an awareness of the shifting cultural roles that hosts play as they attempt to fulfil the tourist desire to know the authentic natives, he nonetheless reproduces the belief that these people are somehow outside of modern realities prior to the tourist encounter. What van den Berghe and others do not recognize is that the 'unspoiled authentic other' is largely a construction of the hype of the tourist trade.

As Blundell notes, scholars have critiqued representations of authenticity in the tourist industry:

Critical scholars have vigorously challenged constructions of tourism that locate authenticity outside tourists' own everyday lives. They argue that too often tourist attractions developed and promoted as the loci of "authentic" experiences get designed to provoke nostalgia rather than critical thought. As contrived simulacra that romanticize and sanitize the past, they work to hide from visitors current social inequities and their real historical sources. Critics worry that when tourism is promoted as a kind of time-travel into a past-preserved-in-the-present, aboriginal, ethnic or rural peoples become recruited to act as traditional peoples for others, and to produce quaint, exotic-looking forms that conform to the false presumption that they preserve premodern ways of life. (1993:5)

Blundell is absolutely right in pointing to the way in which the nostalgia evoked in celebrating the essential traditional Other precludes critical thought. The tourist industry, as I have already implied is not primarily concerned with promoting critical thought but rather with the economic side of the tourist-host encounter.

MacCannell makes another claim about tourism which, while not necessarily

representative of tourism in general, does apply to ethnic tourism; that it often involves staged authenticity. For MacCannell, the modern tourist desires "to share in the real life of the places visited or at least to see that life as it is really lived" (1989:96). However, with increased tourist traffic, the authenticity of local cultures and relations are destroyed by tourism itself. As a result, the industry attempts to fulfil the tourist's desire by presenting her/him with a type of "staged authenticity." MacCannell envisions a continuum of authenticity based on Goffman's front-back regions dichotomy in which tourists continually seek to move beyond frontal social spaces to get to the 'real,' 'authentic,' back cultural regions. However the tourist is often fooled as s/he is presented with a "staged" back region:

Touristic consciousness is motivated by its desire for authentic experiences, and the tourist may believe that he is moving in this direction, but often it is very difficult to know for sure if the experience is in fact authentic. It is always possible that what is taken to be entry into a back region is really entry into a front region that has been totally set up in advance for touristic visitation. (MacCannell 1989:101)

While I would argue that MacCannell overstates the importance of staged authenticity by applying it to tourism in general (therefore implying its importance for all forms of tourism), I do think that his comments are relevant to ethnic and cultural tourism. Within these particular types of tourism, the industry does often attempt to fulfil the tourist's desire for real, authentic experiences by producing the type of false back regions to which MacCannell refers. These constructed back regions, it should be noted, serve to reproduce images of host communities as both traditional and unchanging in that they attempt to hide the many ways in which the host community is a part of rather than separated from the modern world. The essentialized ethnic Other is presented as

occupying a position held at a distance from the modern society from which the tourist trade finds its customers.

Van den Berghe's taxonomy of the types of individuals involved in ethnic tourism also provides a useful clarification for my discussion of tourism and multiculturalism in Canada. Van den Berghe describes three groups of people who interact in the ethnic tourist encounter; "tourists," "tourees," and "middlemen" (1992:236). Tourists are defined as people who are "not on home turf...seen as temporary residents and consumers who are [in the tourist site] by choice." The tourees in the ethnic tourism encounter, according to van den Berghe, are the subject of the tourist's quest; they are both the hosts and objects of the tourist encounter. They are quite literally the spectacle and the principal attraction. Whether reluctantly or willingly, tourees are "on show" (van den Berghe 1992:236). As van den Berghe notes, tourees are more often than not marginalized peoples; whether by virtue of being citizens in the poorest and most isolated of the 'underdeveloped' countries, or as communities which are economically and politically marginal and culturally distinct from the dominant groups in their country of residence (1992:237). In terms of ethno-cultural orderings, van den Berghe notes that tourees tend to be viewed as ethnically distinct from both tourists and from his last group of individuals: the middlepeople;

The third group, the middlemen, are those people who, in an ethnic tourism situation, mediate, facilitate and benefit from the tourist-touree interaction. Middlemen not only occupy all the niches of the hospitality industry (hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, taxis, etc.), but they also use their knowledge of the local situation to bring tourists and tourees together. They act as guides, interpreters, sources of information, providers of transport to remote mountain villages, organizers of "treks," and so on. (1992:236)

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In the case of tourism and multiculturalism in Canada, Tourism Canada provides an institution from which the state can act as a sort of collective middleperson.

2. The State as Promoter of Ethnic/Cultural Tourism:

Recently authors such as van den Bergh and Keyes (1984), Wai-Teng Leong (1989), Robert Wood (1984), and Kay Anderson (1988) have singled out for study the intersection of tourism, culture and ethnicity. Many have examined the role of state initiatives on ethno-cultural fields. They point to the influential role that the state as promoter of tourism can have in transforming local politics of difference.

Leong, who examines state sponsored tourism in Singapore, notes that for former colonies, tourism plays dual roles, both of which are closely related to nation-building. Firstly, he argues, tourism often plays a central role in the economic planning of newly independent nations as they attempt to compensate for declining export sectors and seek to find sources of much needed foreign currency. Secondly, he argues that tourism provides a means for the state to manage its national image:

The link between the state and tourism lies not only in the fact that tourism is a source of foreign exchange income which states seek to reap but also in the role tourism plays in national image management. A given nation-state always seeks to be a cultural and political entity, distinct and separate from other nation-states. And national tourism presents images to the international world of the distinctiveness of the nation-state. The cultural image of the nation-state as presented in tourist paraphernalia and travel brochures is therefore both political and economic. (1989:359)

Robert Wood, in an article discussing ethnic tourism in southeast Asia, raises a related point. He argues that as states become involved in tourism promotion, especially cultural and ethnic tourism, they become involved in "making new kinds of cultural statements" (Wood 1984:365). While these "new cultural statements" are more often than not

directed primarily outside the country's borders, ultimately they constitute a "statement about national identity which is conveyed to both tourists and locals" (Wood 1984:365). Wood's analysis of ethnic tourism in southeast Asia leads him to the conclusion that state choices surrounding local tourist attractions "affect local perceptions of national identity and cultural heritage" (1984:366). What we tell others about ourselves reflects upon how we see ourselves.

Leong and Wood's analyses provide persuasive arguments that international ethnic and cultural tourism publicity affect local perceptions of ethno-cultural difference. There are many points in which the state's involvement in promoting ethnic and cultural tourism may affect local perceptions of ethno-cultural difference. In Canada, media publicity campaigns aimed at United States tourism consumers are likely to be viewed also by Canadians who regularly tune in to United States television channels and purchase United States magazines. The representations of difference at the tourist sites themselves may also form a sort of framework through which local perceptions of difference may be influenced. However, there are also reasons to question the direct application of Leong and Wood's arguments to the Canadian context. Canada's history is considerably different from the areas discussed by Leong and Wood. As such, the particular role that tourism plays in state economic and political strategies is bound to differ somewhat from the cases mentioned above. The examination of the Canadian state's role in mediating ethnicity presented in chapter two, allows for the grounding of cultural/ethnic tourism in Canada within larger state initiatives at dealing with ethno-cultural difference and brings into question the extent to which tourism representations are likely to influence

local understandings of difference and identity. It is important to note that Tourism Canada rarely couches its work in terms of nation building. Rather, Tourism Canada as an institution links itself to more 'neutral' economic development objectives of the state.¹⁷ It is in other areas, some discussed here (multiculturalism and immigration policies) and some not, (state support for "national" cultural activities for example radio/tv broadcasting) that the Canadian state has primarily attempted to build a sense of nationhood and involved itself in ethnic relations. Tourism Canada's choice to reach out to multiculturalism as a means of luring more United States pleasure travellers across the border was, it seems, far from an act of charting new radical politics for Canadian state policies in the politics of difference. Rather, Tourism Canada's incorporation of multiculturalism reflects an appeal to the early celebration of difference model of multiculturalism at the very time when that model was being rejected as insufficient for dealing with difference in the Canadian context.

As we have already seen, Tourism Canada's choice to market multiculturalism and the type of projects which it established during its *rapprochement* with multiculturalism were shaped by market research. Tourism Canada in commissioning the USPM study was looking to unearth the desires of the United States traveller. The 1985 USPM study seemed to point in one direction: to presenting the United States traveller

¹⁷ While this is generally the case, there are exceptions. One example can be found in *Tourism in Canada: Past Present, Future* which was published by the Government Office of Tourism in 1982. While *Tourism in Canada* maintains that the main goal of tourism promotion is to further economic development, it does mention other benefits derived from tourism promotion:

Tourism also contributes to important non-economic goals. It fosters the understanding of Canada by both Canadians and the peoples of other nations, enhances the awareness of the heritages of the various Canadian communities, provides opportunities for both physical and educational self-improvement through the constructive use of leisure time, and provides an essential break from the modern work place. (1982:7)

with Canadian exoticism. Wood is absolutely right when he states that

an interesting aspect of [the state's involvement in tourism] is the way responsiveness to the interests and culture of tourists may affect the definition of national identity and cultural heritage that governments implicitly present through tourism. (1984:365)

It seems clear that coming as it did on the heels of the USPM study and couched in terms of that study, Tourism Canada's shift to multiculturalism was born out of a desire to be responsive to the interests of the United States pleasure traveller. However, the question of the way in which the nature of the interests and culture of the United States influenced those aspects of Canadian national identities that were presented is not something which I am seeking to highlight here. I have chosen instead to focus more on internal politics of difference. There are several reasons why I think this is a justifiable route to take in examining the shift to multiculturalism. Firstly, by the mid-1980s, when Tourism Canada moved towards incorporating multiculturalism into its representations, multiculturalism policy was well established (although it remained controversial) in Canada. A well established set of policies, and ideologies about the Canadian multicultural mosaic already existed which Tourism Canada could simply tap into in order to give United States travellers the exotic Canadian experience that it believed would lead to added tourist revenues. Also, as I have already noted, Tourism Canada did not commission further studies to determine just what exactly it was that United States travellers meant when in the Longwoods study they identified a desire to experience "Canada's people, cultures, heritage and ethnic mosaic that makes Canada substantially different from America" (Longwoods 1986b:19). Rather than seeking to define Canadian difference in response to particular United States cultures and desires, it was assumed that the Longwoods

survey had 'discovered' what it was that gave us an advantage: exoticism, heritage: our ethnic mosaic.

3. Tourism Canada, multiculturalism and tourist industry representations of difference:

The representations of Canadian ethno-cultural difference in the *rapprochement* as a whole, treat Canadian multiculturalism as an already accomplished fact, not as a shifting notion/set of policies. Multiculturalism for Tourism Canada was not a difficult process but a simple unproblematic fact of Canadian population statistics which could easily be packaged and marketed for the United States tourist customer. In packaging Canadian multiculturalism, the state relied upon the dominant representation of ethno-cultural difference found in ethnic and cultural tourism. In so doing, the state presented host communities as traditional, simple, pre-modern. It represented them as occupying a social space at a distance from the tourist consumer's community located in contemporary society. Wherever possible, the historical relations between the host communities and mainstream modern Canadian society were downplayed in favour of representations of culture as traditional and premodern. As such, the ethno-cultural difference presented in Tourism Canada's *rapprochement* with multiculturalism in ethnic and cultural tourism coincides with difference understood in the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism.

Touristic representations of difference tend to locate host communities either outside of modern societies or as islands of tradition within them. The representation of the ethnic Other as traditional, is carefully staged within ethnic tourism for the benefit of the visiting 'guests.' Valda Blundell, who has studied the representations of Canadian

Aboriginal peoples in the tourist industry, provides us with excellent examples of this in her work. Blundell, in an essay entitled "The Tourist and The Native" examines how images of Canadian Aboriginal peoples in the tourist industry harken back to so-called primitive times. With reference to the coding of powwows for tourist visitors, she states that "the powwow is inscribed [for the tourist] as a surviving art of the past, rather than the creative and dynamic production" that she has documented it to be (Blundell 1989:52). Through the use of tourist publicity and the other elements of the tourist discourse, the natives are not presented as living in the present but are seen as being a part of some idyllic past; as such they are de-historicized. The complexity of their current conditions and current struggles are *not* represented as part of the tourist package. The tourist construction of the powwow effectively separates the tourists from the everyday life of the native people. All the tourist is shown is the idyllic vision of the 'ancient traditions' of pre-contact times which are represented as having endured unchanged into the present:

Falsely encoded as 'surviving primitives,' the native peoples of developed nations provide [tourists] with an ideal signifier of ... promised experiences. They are put forward as the 'other' whose primal lives have the solidarity lost in the modern world. (Blundell 1989:52)

While the presentation is said to be one of a snapshot of the past, it is not necessarily a realistic snapshot. Blundell supports this when she states that natives thus portrayed do not exist, and never have existed (53). The point is stressed again in a more recent essay in which she discusses the representation of aboriginal Canadians in the Canada-The World Next Door Campaign. As Blundell notes, the magazine ads associated with the campaign "do not present contemporary lived sites [nor do they] promote actual

encounters with first peoples" (1993:25). Native forms, Blundell notes, are used instead "as handy signs of Canada, and as signifier of...promised experiences of the otherness of Canada" (25).

The publications which were put out by Tourism Canada during its *rapprochement* with multiculturalism provide further examples of this type of representation of difference in the Canadian tourist industry. Take, for example, this description of one of the tourism-multiculturalism 'success stories':

Vancouver's Chinatown has preserved its authenticity and is an excellent example of an ethnic neighbourhood that encourages cultural tourism. One of the oldest such districts in North America, it has been renovated with the view to preserving its original characteristics. Beautiful gardens and attractive restaurants enhance the exotic atmosphere of the district; the numerous traditional parades and festivals provide employment. However, very few Chinese actually live in the area and there is an ever-present danger that it will lose its lifeblood and degenerate into a tourist trap. ("Making Connections" 1988:11)

Chinatown is argued here to be an "excellent example" of an appropriate site for multicultural tourism. It is seen as providing us with the potential to attract the United States customer to view the objectified multicultural ethnic Other in Canada. Once again we can note the appeal to antiquity and authenticity. Although the writer acknowledges that there are few Chinese that live in the area, it is clearly not the real everyday lives of 'Chinese' (or Asian Vancouverites) who are the author's main concern. We are not concerned with how Asian Vancouverites experience Canada, with the complex ways in which difference is actually experienced within the Canadian context for Asian Vancouverites. The lack of Asian Canadians in the area is only a problem inasmuch as this lack may bring into question the staged authenticity of the site. The ethnic tourist

celebration of difference does not involve tourists coming to Canada to experience or witness what *I* would normally think of as authentic experiences of our "multicultural" nature. The tourist is not invited to see multiculturalism as an ongoing difficult process for Canadians, but is presented with a picturesque wax figure of the Canadian multicultural, ethnic Other.

In an essay on multiculturalism and tourism in Canada, David Lai also address the potential of Canada's Chinatowns. His distinction between 'old' and 'new' Chinatowns and discussion of the tourist potential of each sheds further light on the way in which Tourism Canada attempted to exploit the cultural exoticism of our Canadian objectified Others for tourist profits. Lai characterises the typical 'old' Chinatown as a "Chinese residential commercial and institutional inner city neighbourhood which was established before the second world war." He describes how they often have a distinctively 'Asian' architecture, markets with 'exotic' fruits and vegetables, and plenty of Chinese restaurants which set them apart from adjacent neighbourhoods (1988:5).

The new Chinatowns, according to Lai, are not as well defined in geographical area as the old. Although often located close to neighbourhoods with Chinese populations, they are not themselves Chinese residential areas, but rather more commercial in nature.

Basically a new Chinatown is a new Chinese commercial area, catering mainly to Chinese customers. It is formed by a concentration of Chinese businesses along a section of one or more streets... Another type of new Chinatown is formed by a predominance of Chinese businesses in one or more shopping plazas (Lai 1988:5-6).

Lai is quite clear about which type of Chinatown should be promoted in order to attract

tourists. The old type of Chinatown is seen as a potential source of added tourist revenue, the new type is not (1988:5-6).

What makes old Chinatowns a potential source of revenue is the unique architecture (with an oriental flavour), restaurants, age old character and the feeling of exotic Other which they impart to tourists. Within the old type Chinatown there is more of an ability to position Canadian Asians as the essential ethnic Other. Their communities are set apart from the neighbourhoods around them. Old Chinatowns can be represented as islands of Oriental otherness conveniently located within the Canadian borders. There is the ability to present the Other as age old with references to the "old country" and the maintenance of traditions. Lai, for example, suggests that tourist industries, government offices, and the Chinese communities work to ensure that traditional festivals continue to be located in old type Chinatowns as these are seen as ideal tourist attractions. He also highlights the importance of architectural maintenance and restoration to retain the distinctively Chinese feel of old Chinatowns. The emphasis which tourism places upon maintaining and showcasing the cultural distinctness of old Chinatowns, serves to construct Asian Canadians as cultural Others.

New Chinatowns are not considered a potential source of tourist revenue. Unlike the old type of Chinatown, they do not allow for the same clearly delineated distinctions between the Chinese communities and other Canadian communities. When they are located, for example, in a sub-section of a mall, it becomes difficult for the tourist industry to present them as an island of otherness which is separate from those around them. They cannot be so easily positioned as the ethnic Other. They are also not so

easily represented as traditional or ancient. It is more difficult to mask the relations between the new Chinatown and other Canadian communities. The new Chinatowns are not so easily incorporated into the multiculturalism--tourism *rapprochement*, yet they, as much as the old Chinatowns, shed light on what it is to be an Asian Canadian, of some of the complex ways in which difference is actually played out in the Canadian context.

The distinction between old and new Chinatowns raises again the issue of authenticity and the concealment of the tourist contract. As we have already seen, this concealment is important for ethnic tourism and is given particular attention in ethnic tourism. There is a strong emphasis in ethnic tourism on concealment of the tourist contract. Ethnic tourism attempts to conceal the tourist contract by selling the tourist experience as one in which the tourist is encountering the 'true' 'authentic' 'ethnic' other. The staged nature of the tourist encounter is carefully concealed. It is interesting that in those rare instances in which ethnic tourism does focus upon 'mainstream' Canadian cultural groups --as, for example Upper-Canada Village-- there is a clear contract. Within Upper-Canada Village, historical artifacts and reconstructed buildings are presented for the tourists enjoyment with the aid of paid personnel who act as hosts. The hosts dress in period costume and demonstrate period activities 'in character' such as performing blacksmith work or spinning at the spinning wheel. The hosts in Upper-Canada Village are clearly acting -- everyone is aware that they are putting on a performance for the benefit of the "guests" and are paid to do so. However something is lost in the recreation: the aura of authenticity. Everyone knows it is not "real;" the hosts, the guides, and the tourists. In other areas such as in the case of Chinatown in

Vancouver the aura of authenticity is much more important. This is why it is important for Lai that there be at least a few "Chinese" walking around the streets; so that the aura of authenticity be maintained. The truth is, of course, that tourism representations of old Chinatown experience or the powwow which Blundell refers to is no more authentic than the play put on by the workers at Upper Canada Village. In fact the latter, in not attempting to create a false sense of authenticity, may in the end be the more authentic of my examples. On top of promoting powwows our tourist industry could -if they *really* wanted to promote authenticity; if they wanted to explore more fully the multicultural Canadian experience, take visitors to new Chinatowns, Davis Inlet, or to Oka.¹⁸ These other sites do not allow difference to be easily contained within the traditional ethnic and cultural tourism mode of representation. They provide a context in which it is not so easy to disregard the political and economic inequalities as well as relations of dependency and marginalization which ethnic and cultural tourism normally obscure.

Tourism Canada's choices over which communities would be represented as multicultural in its *rapprochement* with multiculturalism were influenced by how each fit into ethnic and cultural tourism type representations of difference. It should be clear by this point in my discussion that the understandings of ethno-cultural difference common to ethnic and cultural tourism are consistent with the understanding of difference which I outlined in chapter two as that of the celebration of difference model of

¹⁸ I am not *really* suggesting that merely adding these other types of sites to the tourist agenda would sufficiently address the numerous problems which are associated with ethnic tourism in Canada. Questions of who controls how individuals are represented, of who will benefit financially from the ethnic tourist encounter, and of who decides what to do with financial gains are all critical to the assessment of any proposed ethnic tourism project. It is also not clear that this would sufficiently address the issues of representation which are my central concern here.

multiculturalism. One of the reasons why tourism policy makers harkened back to this earlier model of multiculturalism is due to the fact that their agenda was primarily an economic one. Although the conceptualizations of difference associated with the early multiculturalism model may have been found wanting in addressing the complexities of ethno-cultural difference in Canada, they were perfectly compatible with the needs of the tourism industry. They permitted the creation and reproduction of unproblematic, simple signs of the exotic Canadian multicultural Other for tourism marketing and for tourist consumption.

iv. Commodification in ethnic/cultural tourism

As I have already mentioned, one of the main elements in ethnic and cultural tourism is the commodification of otherness. This commodification necessitates simple, marketable, easily consumed signs of the exoticism of host communities. Otherness within ethnic and cultural tourism is presented in commodity form as a sort of cultural spice:

The commodification of Otherness has been so successful because it is offered as a new delight, more intense, more satisfying than normal ways of doing and feeling. Within commodity culture, ethnicity becomes spice, seasoning that can liven up the dull dish that is mainstream white culture (hooks 1992:21).

hooks demonstrates that within contemporary United States and British popular culture, otherness is exploited by mainstream social forces, and that this exploitation serves to maintain the inequalities and structural relations which are associated with difference. As she states;

from the standpoint of white supremacist capitalist patriarchy, the hope is that desires for the "primitive" or fantasies about the Other can be

continually exploited, and that such exploitation will occur in a manner that reinscribes and maintains the *status quo* (1992:22-emphasis in original!).

The commodification of otherness which hooks describes is engaged in similar processes of othering as ethnic tourism. hooks stresses that the commodification of otherness which perpetuates the idea that "there is pleasure to be found in the acknowledgement and enjoyment of racial difference," in no way challenges the existing social hierarchies:

To make one's self vulnerable to the seduction of difference, to seek an encounter with the Other, does not require that one relinquish forever one's mainstream positionality. When race and ethnicity become commodified as resources for pleasure, the culture of specific groups, as well as the bodies of individuals, can be seen as constituting an alternative playground where members of dominating races, genders, sexual practices affirm their power-over in intimate relations with the other (1992:23).

Although ethnic tourism in Canada does not usually involve the sort of intimate relations between the dominating consumer and the ethnic Other which hooks is describing, hooks' comments are nonetheless relevant to the Canadian tourist context. The affirmation of the belief that there is pleasure to be found in an encounter with the other, that there is pleasure in difference, is common to both ethnic tourism and multicultural discourses regarding difference. Like the commodification of otherness to which hooks refers, both in ethnic tourism and in the multicultural contexts the celebration of ethno-cultural difference, ensures that the status quo will not be challenged. It is this commodity form that makes tourism less compatible with the more progressive understandings of contemporary ethno-cultural difference proposed by Bhabha, Hall and other cultural theorists.

Taking pleasure in ethno-cultural difference within ethnic and cultural tourism

rarely involves questioning positionalities or privileges. Rather, as hooks points out, the commodification of ethnicity "reinscribes and maintains the status quo." Whether the possibility exists of alternative construction within tourism which do allow for and perhaps even promote critical reevaluations of difference is doubtful. The commodification of otherness requires that the tourist industry present difference in simple, consumable ways. Ethnic and cultural tourism is sold through the marketing of foreign and unfamiliar cultures to customers who must make decisions about the products they will consume based for the most part solely on industry publicity. The industry by necessity must isolate a small number of signs for particular packages which are then used either to represent the type of experience that the tourist can expect or to typify the tourist object (in this case a people and culture). These signs are, however, not only used in the publicity for the tourist encounter, they are also important in the encounter itself. It is in the end, these very signs which the tourist seeks out and consumes (either in experiences, photos or gifts from the local gift shop) to take home. To reconceptualize difference within the industry would mean to reconceptualize and radically transform both ethnic and cultural tourism which are dependent upon the limited understandings of difference associated with the celebration of difference. It is not at all clear whether this was considered by tourism policy makers as they contemplated and began their rapprochement with multiculturalism in the 1980s. It is clear, however, that even if such a reconceptualization was considered, it was rejected in favour of simply adopting a conceptualization of ethno-cultural difference which was consistent with ethnic and cultural tourism's needs.

I want to return in closing once more to Bhabha's use of the term *musée imaginaire* as I find it is useful in describing the position of the ethnic Other in the tourist encounter. It evokes an image of the objectified ethnic Other on display and powerless within the tourist encounter. The power to define and create alternative understandings of difference within this encounter lies beyond the power of the objectified tourist host whose role is that of playing the simple age old ethnic Other. The tourist as representative of the mainstream remains firmly planted in a position of privilege without ever having to consider how the tourist object looks back at him or her, and at the relationship that they share. The industry protects the tourist in a sort of conceptual bubble which does not allow a space for the object of the tourist encounter to express true difference by providing alternative readings of the difference that separates the tourist from the tourees.

Conclusion

My examination of conceptualizations of difference within the *rapprochement* of Tourism Canada and multiculturalism exposes the way in which constructions of difference can serve to reproduce existing social hierarchies and to limit challenges brought to the existing social order. As I have shown, a similar conceptualization of ethno-cultural difference can be found both in the celebration of difference model of multiculturalism and in the types of tourism which Tourism Canada promoted in its *rapprochement* with multiculturalism in the late 1980s. Even though state multiculturalism policies and programs had moved beyond this limited conceptualization of difference, tourism policy makers tapped into it in an effort to increase tourism profits. I suggest that it was this conceptualization of difference which made multiculturalism attractive to the tourist industry as it allowed for the 'ethnicization' of particular communities who could easily be packaged as the quaint, traditional, multicultural Canadians that the industry believed the United States customer was seeking. Clearly this conceptualization can hardly be seen as opening the doors of cultural understanding. Rather it is a narrow, limiting vision of difference which, if anything, reproduces harmful negative stereotypes about many of Canada's citizens. In its *rapprochement* with multiculturalism, Tourism Canada was not charting a new path for state management of ethno-cultural difference. Rather, the tourism office in its

rapprochement was appealing to an already outdated model of multiculturalism which was for the most part rejected by the very communities whose "differences" it sought to celebrate.

In the preface to the 1989 reprint of *The Tourist*, MacCannell reflects to some degree on the issue of difference and the role of tourism. He asks whether tourism "conceived in the most positive way as a (perhaps final) celebration of distance, difference, or differentiation, ultimately liberates consciousness or enslaves it?" It is an important question which MacCannell admits not to have answered within the body of his work. (1989:xiv) Further on he notes that

[w]hether or not tourism, on a practical level (or philosophy at the level of theory), can ever be a "utopia of difference," ultimately depends on its capacity to recognize and accept otherness as radically other. To me this means the possibility of recognizing and attempting to enter into a dialogue, on an equal footing, with forms of intelligence absolutely different from my own. (1989:xv)

While I do not claim to have answered MacCannell's questions in any definitive way, I think that this case does lead me to believe that contemporary tourism as a form of human interaction does not lend itself easily to the type of utopia of difference that MacCannell envisions. This is precisely because the tourist encounter does not, in its present construction, allow for the recognition and acceptance of otherness as "radically other."

In travel magazines published in the last few years, if one looks hard enough, it is possible to find mention of a 'new' type of tourism which attempts to move beyond the limitations of ethnic and cultural tourism. *Endemic tourism*, it is argued, is for culture, what eco-tourism is for the environment. Its promoters argue that endemic

tourism provides the opportunity for a more respectful interaction between tourists and hosts, for more intimate, less hierarchical and less constructed interactions. It is built on the belief that tourism need not only recreate existing stereotypes; that tourism if reconstructed, holds the possibility of furthering cultural understanding, of surpassing the limitations of the normal host-guest encounter. It seeks out consumers who see tourism as a means of learning about other people, places and ways of knowing, and how all of these are related to their own lives. It seeks tourists who are willing to be 'educated' by the hosts whose communities they visit.

Whether this new form of tourism will succeed in its goal to set up the type of "utopia of difference" which MacCannell envisions will depend in part on the notion of difference which it adopts. Although further study is needed to understand more about endemic tourism, my analysis has lead me to the conclusion that it is unlikely that it will be able to move beyond the celebration of difference and yet still remain within the broad framework of a tourism model. Endemic tourism, like cultural and ethnic tourism will ultimately be based upon a commodity relationship in which middlepeople sell the tourist the experience of the exotic authentic Other.

Endemic tourism, ethnic tourism and cultural tourism are all examples of the increased attention upon the commodification of ethno-cultural difference in contemporary capitalist industries. The commodification of Otherness has also become a central concern in the industries of music, cuisine, and fashion to name a few. Increasingly, difference and diversity are becoming central concepts for marketing strategies. Fashion consultants now talk about adding "ethnicity" to one's wardrobe.

"World beat" music hits are increasingly found on the top of the charts. Restaurant customers now sample the cuisines of the world on a regular basis. Third world craft sales which advertise that a percentage of the profits derived from commodified ethnicity will be used to aid those communities where the products they sell are manufactured are ever more common, as are ethno-cultural "political" products such as ANC T-shirts and (Malcolm) "X" caps, shirts and belts.

While many enterprises are no doubt simply exploiting ethno-cultural difference for profit maximization, some seem to be making genuine efforts to market and sell ethnicity in more respectful ways. Endemic tourism provides one example in which the commodification of Otherness is used in an attempt to wed capitalist profit making with awareness raising in order to move beyond the types of limiting, negative representations of ethno-cultural difference which I have been exploring in this thesis. Increasingly ethno-cultural difference is incorporated into industry in ways that reflect the belief that it is possible to use commodity relationships to foster a more respectful way of understanding difference. Like The Body Shop, and Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream, many enterprises which currently sell 'ethno-cultural products' attempt to wed more progressive politics with commodity capitalism. A whole series of tensions naturally arise out of efforts to wed political and economic goals in the marketing of ethno-cultural difference. While, it may be that a fundamental reconceptualization of difference of the type which this thesis calls for is not possible within those commodity relationships, many enterprises are nonetheless struggling to be more progressive in their use of ethno-cultural differences. Analysis of the various strategies which they use and of their

successes and failures will provide further understanding of how individuals attempt to deal with ethno-cultural difference. This is a fruitful area for further research into the politics of ethno-cultural difference in contemporary societies. It is an area of study which may also shed light upon the question of the possible benefits of locating political action within the sphere of consumption and of the scope of the implications of the commodification of Otherness.

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