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Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha

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SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP RIGHTS OF CANADIAN MUSLIM YOUTH: YOUTH RESILIENCIES AND THE CLAIMS FOR SOCIAL INCLUSION

Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha

INTRODUCTION:

THE CONCEPT OF "SOCIAL CITIZENSHIP" is increasingly utilized to define governmental as well as grass roots activist organizations' social policy outcomes. This can in part be explained by the fact that in liberal Western democracies social citizenship rights are emblematic of society's equal care and concern for all its citizens. There are basically two ways by which social theorists define social citizenship. They are either understood in terms of material redistribution, such as the rights of all citizens to subsistence allowance so that no citizen is left without enjoying at least basic standard of living (Roche 2002: 70). Alternatively they are defined in cultural terms as "recognition" rights that interpret societal care and concern in terms of social inclusivity where all citizens are acknowledged and experience themselves as equally valuable members of society irrespective of their race, gender or other social identity locations (Yuval-Davies 1999: 13; Hall and Held 1989: 174). Some theorists (Roche 2002: 72) argue for a definition that combines both the material as well as the cultural aspects of social citizenship rights.

While I agree in principle with the view that cultural recognition rights have material implications and vice versa, over the course of this article I will largely focus on "recognition rights" to analyze the lived experiences of social citizenship that young Muslim men and women spoke of when interviewed as participants of a field study that I conducted recently.

The central argument of this article is that western, secular welfare states such as Canada are severely restricted in their abilities to recognize, and thus address the social needs of faith-based communities such as those of Canadian-Muslims. Without wishing to fall into the trap of Muslim "exceptionalism" I further argue that the political context particularly since the tragic events of 9/11 make it even more difficult for Canadian-Muslims to fully

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Mehmoona Moosa-Mitha is Assistant Professor in the School of Social Work at the University of Victoria, Canada.

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integrate as full and equal members of Canadian society (Siddiqui 2006: 11). This, I argue, results in limiting the social citizenship rights of Canadian-Muslim communities, particularly in the case of youth. I attribute difficulties of the Canadian Welfare state's relationship *vis-à-vis* social citizenship rights of faith-based communities to several things: the Canadian welfare state as a Post-Enlightenment project; the particular definition of secularity that it employs; the blurring of ethnic/cultural claims of recognition with religious ones and the particularly hostile post 9/11 environment that influences Canadian state's relationship with its Muslim citizens.

Preliminary analysis of themes that emerge from these narratives of Canadian-Muslim youth (ages 18-24 yrs.) will be used to initiate a theoretical discussion of the tensions and limitations that exist between a secular welfare state and faith-based communities' claims for social inclusion, particularly those of Muslim communities, which mark and define their experiences of social citizenship as Canadian subjects.

Using the field study as a reference point I undertake this discussion by basing it on three thematic areas emerging from the narratives of the participants of the field study, and which are experienced as both sites of resiliencies and exclusions by the youth in this study. The thematic areas are: vision, visibility and voice. Under the theme "vision" I discuss the narratives of Canadian-Muslim youth participants on this study that attest to the importance of imagining themselves as a part of something greater than an individual self in supporting them when navigating everyday social issues. Yet the Canadian Welfare state envisions citizens in individualist terms whose ties to faith-based communities are overlooked and found irrelevant to public policy or public space. The second theme to emerge was that of "visibility" and it refers to the importance the participants of this study place on wanting to be acknowledged on the basis of their "*difference*," both as young people and as Muslim-Canadians. Yet in an environment where being a Muslim is visible largely in stereotypical and pejorative ways (Meer 2008; Birt 2006: 5) Canadian-Muslims are visualized only in particular and exclusionary ways. The third theme to emerge was "voice" where participants spoke of the importance of having a voice in participating in society rather than being viewed as passive recipients. Acknowledgment of their participation in society was identified as another source of resiliency. These youth rejected being viewed as passive recipients of adult care and concern and affirmed a level of self-confidence that they derived from being participants in society, enabling them to deal with social issues that they faced in their everyday lives. However this too is a site of tension as the state, and by extension society, is inclined to treat youth as "passive" citizens on the basis of their age (Moosa-Mitha, 2005). Moreover the Canadian Welfare state goes to great lengths to interpret civic participation in largely secular terms, overlooking particular claims of civic participation by faith-based communities (Dinham and Lowndes 2008). I end this paper by initiating a preliminary exploration of alternative ways by which the Canadian welfare state can recognize the social citizenship rights of Canadian-Muslim youth without losing its secular character.

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THE FIELD STUDY

From 2006 to 2008, I conducted a series of focus groups across Canada where around two hundred and fifty Canadian-Muslim youth, aged 18 to 24, participated in the study. The aim of this study was to identify the life experiences of young Canadian men and women by exploring social issues that they experienced in daily life as well as identifying resiliencies that they brought to bear when navigating social issues. One objective of the study was to gain insight into the resiliencies of these youth so as to identify ways by which the Canadian welfare state could effectively intervene in the lives of Canadian-Muslim youth that was socially inclusionary and which centered the voices of the youth themselves.

A qualitative approach to research was used through the utilization of a semi-structured interview guide. The interview guide was divided into two parts; one of which was dedicated to exploring in depth the nature of social issues that the participants experienced in their daily lives as Canadian-Muslim youth. The other was concerned with identifying strengths, supports and resiliencies that youth used to navigate social issues. All participants, facilitators and the research team were Muslims, and the context of the discussion was very much about the lived experiences of being young Canadian-Muslims.

The following discussion is a preliminary analysis of three thematic areas, vision, visibility and voice, as three resiliencies that emerged as significant for the participants of this study. Interestingly the social issues and experiences that the participants narrated as experiencing could also be clustered around these three themes, depicting the obverse effects of lacking these resiliencies. For example, having a voice and participating as an individual in the life of the community and society was identified as really important to creating self-awareness that allowed youth to negotiate social issues through the use of their own faculties. On the other hand, peer group pressure on individual youth to have a particular body type or wear particular kinds of clothing could be analyzed as a demand for conformity that denied youth the resiliency of owning an individuated voice. However over the course of this article I will be focusing on a discussion of the resiliencies identified by the participants of this study.

SOCIAL INCLUSION AND RECOGNITION RIGHTS

Social inclusion is a useful concept because it translates "recognition rights" in a pragmatic manner, spelling out what they look like in practice. The ensuing discussion on various aspects of "social inclusion," using citizenship theory which has its basis in the works of theorists that center their analysis on the lived experiences of marginalized populations will serve to provide an organizing framework, and will then be applied to the discussion on social citizenship of Canadian-Muslim youth and their resiliencies.

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Two ways of defining social inclusion are discernible in the literature on the subject. The first is a result of the work of economic and sociological theorists (See O'Brien and Penna 2007; Reimer 2004; Shucksmith 2001) who draw on the works of economists like Karl Polyani and sociologists such as Emile Durkheim to define social exclusion/inclusion. These theorists define social exclusion/inclusion in systemic terms. The focus of their analysis is on the barriers and other forms of dysfunctions that exist between social systems, as well as on individual's access to these systems that prove to be exclusionary to the full and equal social integration of all citizens.

An alternative analysis, which I find more compelling for present purposes, locates social exclusion/inclusion within political theory, particularly citizenship theory to explore its manifestations (see Wagner 2008 and Turner 2001). Drawing on the work of Hannah Arendt, Jurgen Habermas as well as T.H. Marshall, these theorists examine both the subjective factors such as identification of one self as a fully integrated and valued member of society, as well as objective factors such as access to resources to explain the experiences of social inclusion/exclusion of various sectors of society. Rather than formal and legalistic definitions of citizenship as status, citizenship is understood in relational terms as a dynamic process by which members of society relate to and interact with each other in society.

Thus social inclusion, using the lens of citizenship theory, is understood in a multi-modular and dynamic fashion that considers the lived context within which interactions and inter-relationships between citizen and society exist as being significant to the realization of social citizenship (Roche 2002: 74; Gingrich 2008: 383). Other citizenship theorists whose work is grounded in the lived experiences of marginalized communities, and whose analysis I discuss a little later in this section, have greatly enhanced present understandings of social inclusion by basing their analysis on the experiences of social exclusions encountered by certain groups in society on the basis of their gender, class or race (Hobson and Lister 2002; Lister 1997; Stasiulis and Bakan 1997; Yuval-Davies and Webner 1999; Hall and Held 1989).

It is significant that the popularization of the concept of social inclusion by public policy makers in the European Union was itself the result of a reaction to the backlash and resistance activities of its own disillusioned and marginalized Muslim citizenry (Wargner 2008: 93; Gingrich 2008: 381). Thus there is a close alliance between the concept of social inclusion and the experiences of social citizenship of marginalized populations.

In spite of these theoretical claims, social inclusion in Europe and Canada has largely been defined within a neo-liberal, market oriented discourse to mean integration into the labor market and work-force participation (Gingrich 2008: 383). However citizenship theory based on the insights of the authors cited above can usefully provide alternative conceptualizations of "social inclusion" that are more closely linked to the realities of Canadian-Muslim youth. There are three areas of citizenship theory that I would like to focus on as being the most pertinent to the elucidation of the thematic areas of vision,

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visibility and voice that Canadian-Muslim youth identified as being integral to experiences of citizenship that are socially inclusionary.

The first theoretical contribution under discussion, corresponding to the notion of vision, is the challenge that radical citizenship theorists pose to the values that define the moral base by which liberal welfare states envision themselves. John Rawls (1971) was one of the first contemporary thinkers to analyze and influence liberal understandings of the values upon whose edifice the modern welfare state is built. There were two values that he singled out for particular attention, that of autonomy and equality. Autonomy was largely understood in individualistic terms as citizen's freedom to pursue their self-interest and equality was understood in universalistic terms as the right to be treated as equal because we all share in the same humanity. It is noteworthy that Rawls also articulated equality as a secondary moral principle that provided a regulatory function to citizen's rights of autonomy by ensuring that the least worse off in society were the object of care and concern by the most well off. Increasingly though expressions of neo-liberalism in contemporary politics, that define autonomy and equality with reference to the market place has come to mean citizens' rights of equal opportunity to participate in the market-place in order in the free pursuit of one's own interests (Hobson, and Lister, 2002). The universal terms within which these values are defined emphasize sameness of all citizens, who are all assumed to have the common purpose of pursuit of self-interest in an individualistic way and whose equality is grounded in abstract notions of sharing a common humanity rather than in their lived experiences of social inclusion/exclusion.

Alternative theorization of autonomy and equality posit a more relational definition of both these terms that are rooted in the lives of citizens. Associational notions of autonomy emphasize that the meaning of freedom is revealed through the particular and specific context of citizens' lives and with reference to and interaction with others (Yuval-Davies and Werbner 1999). Similarly equality is understood through the particular and in relational terms as the self-conscious tolerance of the "other," however this may be defined within particular circumstances of people's lives rather than within universalistic terms that centre sameness (Lister 1997).

A pertinent example that reveals the distinction assumed by liberal as opposed to radical theorists is reflected in the debates that surrounded the infamous Danish Cartoon affair. In 2005 a Danish newspaper *Jyllands-Posten*, decided to publish a series of eleven cartoons depicting the Prophet Muhammad in various guises as a blunt challenge to Danish Muslim sensibilities, especially their practice of avoiding visible representations of the Prophet. In publishing these cartoons the newspaper cited "freedom of speech" as its main incentive for commissioning and printing them. In the ensuing furor, the debate largely centered on the freedoms of citizens of secular welfare states to critique religions as an important dimension of the rights of autonomy enjoyed within liberal citizenship (Hansen 2006: 11).

Muslim response to this statement, which was varied and sometimes violent, was to express outrage at having their religious sensibilities overlooked

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within societies of which they were supposedly equal citizens. In effect the Muslim response was to argue for a relational notion of autonomy that considered freedom of speech of the mainstream population to be tempered by care and concern for the sensitivities of those citizens who were related to them as fellow citizens. It called for a more nuanced and less legalistic understanding of autonomy. Mainstream Danish citizens may have the legal rights to publish the cartoons (although this too is arguable), but a notion of autonomy that is grounded in people's relationships with each other would also have to take into consideration the limitations of their Muslim counterparts to express their culture in particular ways. Madood (2006: 4) captured this nuanced distinction when he argued for a censuring of the cartoon by Dutch society rather than censoring (a legalistic response) of the cartoons which implied certain sensitivities by non-Muslim Danish citizens to the differences of Muslim sensibilities from that of the mainstream secular society. This, Madood (2006: 7) argued, would not restrict people from critiquing faiths but would impose on them the necessity to be informed about Islam, and enter the feelings of Danish Muslims from the "inside" (Bhargava 2006) thus conditioning their interactions and response to their fellow Muslim citizens.

Relational notions of equality entail, amongst other things, the provision of public space where difference, both visible and invisible, interact with all members of society, impacting and being impacted by their presence (Phelan 2001). In particular it is the notion that "difference" whether on the basis of age, race, faith or other social identity locations should not simply be tolerated by society by relegating it to some private arena but be accommodated as a part of the wider culture.

Moreover, western definitions of secularism take an enforced stance of separation and distance in relation to religion and faith-based communities, relegating it to a private space that does not impact public policy (Bhargava 2006: 13). This results in the treatment of Muslim citizens as unequal, on the basis of their difference from the mainstream secular community, as they do not share public space with other members of society equally. Moreover it makes it harder to fight discrimination on the grounds of Islamophobia, as reflected by the absence of religion as a category of discrimination in any of the public policies of western liberal secular states (Madood 2007: 68). Needless to say public acknowledgement of religion can be a difficult task filled with contradictory claims of inclusion. This was clearly the case when the Ontario provincial government considered recognizing Muslim Shari'a law as a part of its own civil law and therefore legally binding. Possible injustices that can be committed within faith-based communities are often cited as reasons for the privatization of faith (see Kymlicka 1995). While injustices should be taken seriously, arguably privatizing religion does not necessarily result in eradicating these wherever they may occur. In the concluding section of this article I discuss possibilities of maintaining a public space for faith-based groups whilst addressing issues of social injustices.

The second area of theoretical contributions to analysis of social inclusion by radical citizenship theorists, corresponding to the notion of

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visibility, is to broaden the concept of social inclusion to include recognition of the identities of citizens on the basis of self-description. Marginalized populations do not simply want to be acknowledged within public spaces in society but want to do so in particular ways. In the case of the Muslim population in western countries, the question of self-identification rests on varying interpretations of 'Muslim-ness' by community members themselves. Some want to be visualized in society as an ethnic or cultural group, particularly in the case where they may not be practicing Muslims, for others it is a religious category (Meer 2008: 66). In a later section I discuss in detail the implications of recognizing the religious and/or cultural/ethnic dimension of Muslim identity. The importance of complicating faith-based identity claims becomes clear when considering the issue of banning the wearing of a head scarf by Muslim girls at school by the French as well as the Quebecois governments. If the scarf is not just an expression of faith, but also that of one's culture, then the state cannot legitimately ban women from wearing head scarves in public institutions. This has been argued effectively in relation to the Sikh community (Meer, 2008, 70), who reserve the right to wear turbans when working as RCMP officers, rather then a helmet on the grounds of 'ethnicity' even while Sikhism is a faith-based expression.

A third and final area of analysis of social inclusion, corresponding to the concept of voice, is to emphasize and broaden the notion that social inclusion implies full participation in society (Hobson and Lister 2002; Lister 1997). This aspect of social inclusion is also acknowledged as important within neo-liberal discourses on social inclusion but it is increasingly defined in narrow terms as responsibility and participation-as-employment (Moosa-Mitha 2006; Gingrich 2008: 382). Theorists from a more radical perspective have defined participation more broadly in terms of ownership of agency that can be expressed variously from citizenry participation as traditionally understood in terms of work, wealth and war to sitting on local school boards to undertaking resistance or activist work (Lister 1997). Faith-based communities are more likely to engage in civic participation through volunteering than their secular counterparts a least in the U.K. (Dinham and Lowndes 2008: 820). Yet this participation often goes unrecognized by the Canadian welfare state and is rarely resourced by it unless it is on the condition that services offered by faith-based groups are equally accessible to all citizens. Thus an important aspect of citizenry participation by members of faith-based communities goes unrecognized.

In summary I have discussed various facets of social inclusion, which define what recognition translates into in more pragmatic terms, and are of particular significance to the ensuing analysis of Canadian-Muslim youth's experiences of social citizenship. These can be encapsulated into three distinct aspects that relate to three thematic areas which emerged from the narratives of the participants that I am focusing on in the following sections of the paper. The first aspect of social inclusion that I discussed was concerned with the values of autonomy and equality and the differing interpretations that exist in defining these. This facet of social inclusion corresponds to the discussion of 'vision' as a

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thematic area that emerged from the narratives of the youth. The second idea explored in connection with social inclusion was that of the importance of taking public space and having the ability to define one's presence in society. This correlates to the theme of 'visibility' which I discuss later in the article. Finally a third notion of social inclusion explored above was the means of accommodating full participation from members of society, including those from faith-based communities. This has clear associations with the notion of 'voice' as the third thematic area of analysis of the field-study.

VISION: THE FREEDOM TO BE TREATED AS EQUAL

> *I wanted to be accepted but I was not because of my accent and my clothes and because of who I was...an immigrant. But then I went away and I thought about it and I told myself, remember who you are, you are a Muslim, you belong to the Ummah* (community). *When they don't accept you, remember who you are and that will help you to accept yourself.* (Saida, age 16)

> *My faith tells me who I am; it helps me to decide to make the choices that I make. When I go to the mosque and see the whole community praying I say to myself "wow". It takes my breath away that I am a part of this. . . .* (Abdul, age 15)

The significance of these quotes in identifying the youth resiliencies is to reveal the centrality that faith occupies in the identity of these youth's lives. It is significant in defining their sense of self, "who I am" as has been echoed in other studies (Dalton and Virji-Babul: 37). Moreover this faith-based sense of self directly leads to helping them navigate social issues that they experience, such as rejection by peers. The narratives of the participants also reveal that faith is a source for making meaningful choices; it helps them decide the course of action that they wish to take in life. There is also a sense of separation of "space" that emerges from the narratives, although they are not directly articulated. The sense that the particular youth in the first quote "went away," or the personal, rather private moment of inspiration of the youth in the second quote when he remarks to himself "wow [...] I am a part of this." The resiliency of a faith-based identity lies in it being a source of vision in the lives of the participants, providing a horizon by which the participants measure their lives, their sense of self and the choices that they make.

Yet religion has no public presence in secular welfare societies such as Canada. It is not represented institutionally in its relation to the activities of the welfare state, it does not have access to public resources nor is it a part of public policy. More specifically, the welfare state does not show care or concern in actively supporting faith-based identities as a source of well being and resiliency in youth. In other words, faith or religion more generally is seen to exist outside

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of the realm of social citizenship into a private space from which the state holds itself at a distance.

This separation of religion and society has a long history in liberal states and represents a principle that constitutes the backbone of liberalism (Rawls: 197; Kymlicka 1995). According to Rawls, who was one of the first theorists to articulate the moral vision of liberal societies, the state takes a neutral position in relation to supporting any particular idea of the "good" in the lives of its citizens. Instead it bolsters the rights of autonomy and equality so that citizens are equally free to choose their own good in life without interference from the state. Autonomy and equality in effect can be equated with the moral vision of secular liberal welfare states.

As Madood (2007) has pointed out there are several difficulties with this assumed neutral stance claimed by the state. Citing the work of Kymlicka, Madood (2007: 34) argues that in fronting autonomy and equality as primary values of the state it is biased in promoting particular (White Anglo-Saxon Protestant in the case of Canada) cultural values of the good life over alternate ones such as the values that may guide the choices of Indigenous peoples in Canada. Feminist theorists (Pateman 1992) have long argued about the gendered bias of the state. While Kymlicka's position is to challenge the official 'neutral' stance of the state by revealing its cultural bias and proposing an alternative multi-cultural bias in the activities of the state, Kymlicka is careful to separate culture from religion. Madood argues that in fact this separation is not always clear in the lives of citizens, particularly in the case, as the above quotes suggest where religion, like culture, in fact represents a source by which citizens make meaning and choices about the good life in the context of their own lives. He suggests that the State, as a result of its own grounding in the value of autonomy has no choice but to recognize faith-based communities on the same grounds that Kymlicka argues for recognition of the cultural membership rights of cultural communities:

> Indeed, for Kymlicka, the political importance of societal cultures or nations is precisely that they are necessary for individual autonomy, for a life based upon one's own meaningful choices. Cultural membership is essential for meaning and choice... Hence, a liberal democratic society should be willing to give some degree of self-government and special rights to preserve national minorities. (Madood 2007: 31)

In challenging the neutrality assumed of the state in relation to religion and arguing instead for active support on the part of the state to preserve faith-based communities as part of the public good, Madood is in effect challenging the dominant and secular definition of autonomy assumed by the liberal state. Autonomy here is expanded from its narrow liberal interpretation as the pursuit of self-interest to include freedoms to make meaningful choices and the ability to make those choices count, rather then to be relegated as insignificant or

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irrelevant to the life of Canadian society as a whole. By separating culture from religion, the choices that the young participants of this study make are neither recognized nor supported by the state, through access to public resources for example to build youth centers for Muslim youth, unless it is on some artificial 'cultural' grounds.

The importance of such recognition is not only because it in fact supports faith-based communities' ability to exercise autonomy, it also addresses their right to be treated as equals in society. Public support of faith-based communities in a context which is hostile to Islam post 9/11, through active intervention by the State to protect its Muslim citizens from hostility and hatred as well as to promote social inclusion by recognition of Muslims *qua* Muslims redefines liberal notions of equality from connoting sameness to an acknowledgement of Muslim citizens as being differently equal (Yuval-Davies 1999; Moosa-Mitha 2005). It addresses precisely the exclusions that Muslim citizens face today in the context of their lives as members of western liberal societies by exercising a difference-centered form of equality which insists on a multi-faith, multicultural reality that imposes on mainstream (largely secular Canadian society) to respect the value of Islam as it does on Muslims to recognize the value of other faiths and cultures that form the fabric of Canadian society. As it is, the Canadian-Muslim youth participating in this study, have no recourse to the State to pre-empt such hostility simply because the state maintains, at least officially, a neutral stance in relation to the needs of faith-based communities.

VISIBILITY AS CANADIAN-MUSLIMS AND BELONGING

> *I find it really hard to explain to others who I am as a Muslim[...] this is true when I am talking to my other Muslim friends as well as non-Muslim friends...its because I am trying to figure out who I am as a Muslim. I don't want to say "I am a Muslim because my parents say so" [...]its different here (*Canada*) its not the same as it was with my parents when they were growing up.* (Hamid, age 22)

> *I have faced racism many times. I remember sitting on the subway then some guy comes and sits next to me and then he looked at me and moved away to the other side and he said in a loud voice "oh this guy is a Muslim...he is from Afghanistan and a terrorist." I just try to ignore it, what can you do?* (Ismail, age 18)

Both of the above quotations point to something that is of intrinsic importance to defining Muslim identity, which is that it is not a static identity and is often forged through processes of history and tradition as well as in response to contemporary social context and lived experiences. All social identities are complex, multifarious as well as multiple. This explains why the

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young man in the first quote narrates his difficulties with articulating a sense of his Muslim identity simply on the basis of a given identity. The fact that "it's different here" has a bearing on how he conceives of himself as a Muslim. Other studies conducted with Muslim youth in the U.K. (Samad 1998; Jacobson 1998) found that there was an increase in the use of *Muslim* as an identity marker amongst young Muslims living in Britain as a way to de-emphasize other, more traditional ways of identifying themselves. Hence regional identities based on the villages that they had arrived from in Pakistan were more likely to be a distinguishing marker for the parents of the young people interviewed than they were for themselves. These young people de-emphasized regional differences by marking the commonality of experiences that they encountered as young Muslim men and women living in Britain.

The question of how one wants to be recognized by others is central to the experience of feeling included in a particular society because it allows one to make one's presence visible in society in a way that is most meaningful to one's sense of self. Recognition by others is therefore recognition on one's own terms. This is why insisting on particular identity labels by which marginalized groups wish to be identified by others forms an integral part of liberation struggles against various forms of discrimination. Yet, as the second quote above clearly reveals where being Muslim is equated with being a terrorist, marginalized populations are not always at liberty to choose how or what particular identity marker they would like to bring to the fore. Sometimes, and always as acts of exclusion, they are visualized in particular ways by mainstream groups. This is certainly the case for Muslims living in Western countries and is experienced as one of the repercussions of events after 9/11. Younge puts this point succinctly:

> We have a choice about which identities to give the floor to; but at specific moments they may also choose us. Where Muslim identity in the west is concerned, that moment is now...singled out for particular interrogation in the west, Muslims have been asked to commit to patriotism, peace at home, war abroad, modernity, secularism, integration, anti-sexism, anti-homophobia, tolerance and monogamy...But Muslims are not being asked to sign up to them because they are good or bad in themselves, but as a pre-condition for belonging in the west at all. (As cited in Meer 2008: 66)

For Muslims living in Canada, the state does not participate in any significant way to support Muslims in their efforts as they seek to challenge pejorative definitions of their identity. This most clearly manifests itself by the absence of legislation that disallows discrimination on grounds of "religion;" all western welfare states do not include religion in their anti-discriminatory laws. The state's passivity is rationalized on the grounds that it has no role to play in the religious aspects of citizens' lives. Meer's (2008) explanation for this absence while grounded in the British context is equally apt in relation to Canada, is that a normative view of race as something involuntary, and not

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something that one chooses and therefore requires protection from harassment. Mocking someone on the grounds of religion may not be nice but is not illegal. There is certainly a caveat in the legislation which suggests that inciting hatred against people of a particular faith is illegal and an act of discrimination, but in practice it is difficult to prove incitement to hatred and distinguish it from critiquing or even mocking someone's faith.

The involuntary/voluntary dichotomy within which debates on anti-discriminatory legislation debates take place is simply incapable of taking on the complex nature of faith-based identities. In relation to Muslim populations in the west, as discussed earlier, people who are simply assumed to look like Muslims are targets of people's hatred as evidenced in the field study. There is not much choice that the recipients of this treatment are able to exercise in terms of facial features or costume changes as people targeted may in fact not be Muslims. In some important ways religion acts like a racial category in the lived experiences of Canadian-Muslims as expressed by the youth in this field study. Recognizing this through enactment of anti-discriminatory legislation is important to boost their sense of belonging as equally valued citizens of Canada.

Moreover faith-based identities are not always of a religious nature, they may be cultural or ethnic in nature. The Jewish community is a good example where faith-based identities form a spectrum at one end of which are practicing Orthodox Jews and at the other, Jews that identify themselves in cultural terms as secular Jews. Similarly Hinduism is not necessarily expressed in organized terms through the presence of temples, or a set formally prescribed rituals (Bhargava 2008: 85). Therefore being born in a Hindu family results in the ownership of a Hindu identity for life even if that person is not a believer or observes religious rituals. Being raised in a Muslim family can, and often does, have a strong impact on one's identity even if one ceases to be a practicing Muslim later in life. Islam, like other world religions is as much a civilization as it is a faith, and identifying with the cultural mores of the faith does result in the ownership of a Muslim identity that can be cultural and secular. Under the official multicultural policy, Canada recognizes the interests of all cultural and ethnic groups. Yet it denies this right of recognition to faith-based communities by making a distinction between ethnicity and faith, which is often not the case.

The participants of this study clearly equated ownership of their identity as Canadian-Muslims to be a resiliency that helped them to negotiate everyday issues in life. They also, as I have argued in this discussion, complicated how they understood Muslim identity and made a case of objecting to the manner in which they are visualized in society as security risks and potential terrorists. Ultimately the young participants of the study were making the case that recognition of their Muslim identity as equally valuable and celebrated as any other source of identity in Canada would increase their sense of belonging in society. To be viewed as an equal to other members of society, to feel oneself as equal was an important resiliency. However it was also important that this aspiration for equality has its basis on the recognition of their Muslim identity and not by overlooking it in search for a more palatable one such as geo-ethnic origin.

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The participants of the field study were clear that they also felt that they were not treated as equal members of society due to the fact of their age. They felt that both within their own communities as well as in society more generally, they were likely to be treated as *less-than* due to their age. To the same extent as their Muslim identity, here too they demanded recognition of their worth as youth, on the basis of their difference from the dominant adult-centric society. In effect they were challenging and broadening liberal notions of equality in terms of sameness (we all have ethnicity, or we are all human beings, or you are valuable because you will be an adult someday) to a notion of equality that was different-centered (Moosa-Mitha 2005). It was only this difference-centered notion of equality that resulted in a greater sense of belonging and was clearly related to their sense of resiliency.

VOICE: CIVIC PARTICIPATION OF FAITH-BASED COMMUNITIES

> *One thing that is important to me is volunteering. When you volunteer you feel respected, people ask you for things and want to know your opinions. They trust you to do things and you feel really good about yourself after you have volunteered, you feel like you can give too.* (Sarah, age 15)

> *I volunteer in my community. It's great, I feel like I am participating in the life of the community. Youth are not usually allowed to participate, they are usually asked questions about what they need or want and then adults go away and decide for the youth what they need and then we have to accept what adults think we need. But as a volunteer I get to make decisions. . . .* (Talib, age 23)

Civic participation amongst faith-based communities is greater than in their secular counterparts, according to Dinham & Lowndes (2008: 823) in a study they conducted in the U.K. Similar studies have not been conducted in Canada. However, faith-based communities have formed an important part of the landscape of social service programs offered to Canadian citizens since its inception as a country. Participation, viewed in very different ways by citizen participants rather than public policy makers and the Government, is acknowledged by all sides as an important aspect of citizenship that is socially inclusionary. In Europe more than in Canada, faith involvement in governance is linked more directly to policies of social inclusion; however citizenry participation is understood in very different ways by faith communities themselves than it is through public policy discourse (Dinham & Lowndes 2008: 818).

The narratives of the youth participating in this study linked volunteering in community organizations with capacity building, loyalty to their own community, a chance to experience themselves as participants rather than simply recipients of services and adult attention. It was very clear from the

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narratives that participating in civic activities led to feelings of inclusion through recognition of the agency of young people. In a study undertaken by Lowndes & Chapman, (2006), the narratives of faith-communities, including Muslim communities that were engaged in civic participation was different and even dissonant from the narratives of government stake holders as to the meaning of this participation. For faith communities, depending on the actual people participating, often differentiated between and within communities, some common elements of the narratives mirrored what was found in my field study; namely that civic participation was important for community members because they trusted their own organizations to provide services that were more cognizant with their own traditions and culture. Moreover some members suggested that it was part of their religious conviction to contribute to the country and communities that they were living in by providing services and resources for other people's well-being. Yet others participating in this study spoke of the importance of self-fulfillment that they got from volunteering. Civic engagement generally represented the enactment of their own beliefs of service to humanity (Dinham & Lowden 2008: 832).

In government policy circles, participation has increasingly been given more prominence as an outcome of social policy. Within a neo-liberal discourse, characterized as part of "the mixed economy" approach to governance in Canada and the "third way" in the U.K., participation is understood in instrumentalist and managerial terms. It implies citizens taking responsibility for their own well-being by participating in the work force. Participation is linked to social inclusion through a narrow definition of inclusion into the market system with the state increasingly taking on the task of playing a directly complementary role to the market place (Gingerich 2008). In Europe and particularly in the U.K. this managerial notion of participation is even more forcefully employed in relation to Muslims communities as a way to build social cohesion between members of Muslim faith and the rest of society, a coded way of saying that the community could police itself so as to ensure that their community members feel that they are a part of the general society thus reducing the risk of terrorism (Dinham & Lowndes 2008). The narratives of faith-based communities is to center the role of faith as an incentive for civic participation, a duty that is called upon the faithful whether it be the Hindu community through the notion of *seva*, the Christian community through the notion of service to humanity or the Muslim notion of *zakat*.

The dissonance between the narratives of policy makers and faith based community members is significant particularly in the manner that each defines the role of faith itself in relation to civic participation. As Dinham and Lowden state:

> The policy narrative is instrumentalist in its regard for faith communities as "useful" because of what they can "produce" in terms of social "goods". The policy narrative understands faith communities as a general resource for adding value in a secular context. The aim of faith engagement

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> is to improve the quality of urban governance; the "faithfulness" of faith communities is of secondary and limited (or even no) significance. A Church of England activist argued forcefully that "the government doesn't want to hear about what makes us faithful people. They'll fund us if we don't do anything religious with the money. (2008: 830)

The provision of welfare services to its citizens, a pragmatic way by which the state shows care and concern for its citizens, therefore cannot be articulated in a way that allows for a faith-centered notion of civic participation. In Canada, this results in a particular kind of tap dance that faith-based communities engage in with state authorities particularly when they want to offer services to members of their own communities. In order to benefit from state funding for their programs and services, faith-based communities have to ensure that they make their services available to all citizens of Canada and not just their own members. Faith-based communities in turn respond to this imperative by organizing their programs in a way that centers the culture of their own communities while leaving it open for all to participate if they choose to do so. In many cases this results in a minority of people attending programs who are outside of the community. Civic participation in such cases results in re-defining participation in ways that center the 'difference' derived from faith-based practices of these communities, thus reasserting the right of these communities to participate in ways that exercise their own agency rather than fulfill the aims of those outside of it.

Normative views of participation utilized by state stakeholders are particularly problematic for youth that are members of faith groups such as those participating in this study. The result of such narratives marginalizes youth participation on the basis of their faith as well as their age or their 'youthfulness'. The discussion so far has concentrated on the marginalization that results from instrumentalist notion of participation can result in. There is however a very real form of marginalization that occurs as a result of adult-centric bias within state welfare services that emphasize youth protection over youth participation as a goal of social service intervention. Most social services aim to protect youth from various harms as a form of welfare intervention, whilst overlooking the agency or participation needs of youth as also forming an important aspect of their welfare.

By constructing the protection rights of youth in opposition to their participation rights, youth are largely viewed in passive terms as citizens-in-making (Moosa-Mitha 2005, 2006). This is very much the result of normative liberal thinking which assumes that there is only one type of participation, which is deliberative, rational and allied to pursuing one's self-interest in the market place. Such normative views reduce the concept of citizenship by limiting it to mean participation in war or work as the only legitimate forms of citizenry participation. As youth do not generally participate in either of these two domains, they are understood as lacking, and described moreover in light of normative psychological development theories that impute disability on the part

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of youth to engage in rational decision-making. Thus youth are largely viewed as recipients of welfare services that cast them as dependents as opposed to the independent adult citizen that participates in looking after him/her self. Defining welfare rights within a protection/participation dichotomy denies them protections when they are participating- which is when they need it most. In previous work I have undertaken on this subject I have analyzed the punitive attitude of the state that such dichotomous thinking results in as in the case of sexually exploited children who find themselves at the criminal rather than welfare end of state services due to the fact that they are seen to be 'participants' in the sex trade (Moosa-Mitha 2005). Yet it is when participating in the sex trade that they are most in need of state protection due to the overwhelming likelihood of encountering physical and sexual abuse at the hands of adults.

Normative views of participation can also result in a similarly punitive stance in the Canadian welfare state's relationship with Muslim youth. In the post 9/11 world that already views Muslims with suspicion, as attested by the narratives of youth in the field study, young people are regarded with even greater suspicion due to their supposedly natural inclination to irrationality expressed through emotive attachments to their faith. Thus participation in faith-based communities that is regarded by the youth themselves as a particularly important source of resiliency is considered as problematic by the state (Noble, 2007). Resiliency, re-defined in terms of security risk and protection, which may well be what these young Canadian-Muslim citizens may be most in need of in the present context, can easily turn to punishment on the basis of participation within faith based communities.

CONCLUSION: THE BEGINNINGS OF A WAY FORWARD

Given the discussion so far that point to the very serious limitations of the Canadian secular welfare state to recognize social citizenship rights of Canadian-Muslims in socially inclusionary ways, alternative ways of defining secular welfare state's relationship with its faith-based communities need to be conceived. Rajeev Bhargava (2008), an eminent Indian political theorist has undertaken compelling theoretical work in this direction, by grounding his analysis from lessons learnt through expressions of secularism found in India. Starting with the admission that the Indian state has its own failings, Bhargava analyzes the constitutional claims that the Indian State offers an ideal for a re-articulation of secularism that takes the rights, interests and values of the multiple faith-based communities within which social citizenship rights are negotiated.

There are seven features of Indian secularism that Bhargava (2008: 101-103) feels can provide western welfare states with alternative definitions of secularism and which correspond to the earlier critique of the Canadian welfare state as an example of western secularism discussed in this paper. The first is its multi-value character. Bhargava argues that the Indian state takes seriously values that have been forgotten in western secular states, such as peace between communities as well as defining values of autonomy and equality in both

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individualistic as well as non-individualistic ways. This recalls the earlier discussion in this paper which was concerned with the limitations that were placed on faith-based communities through individualistic definitions of autonomy that overlooked the resiliencies that Muslim youth spoke of when they envisioned themselves as being part of something greater than their self. Thus Indian state supports the rights of faith-based communities to establish and maintain educational institutions that are crucial to the survival of these communities. This is very unlike Canada where the state feels it has no role to play in relation to such educational institutions unless it is a policing role.

Second, India is concerned with issues of domination in inter-religious as well as intra-religious relations. Thus it recognizes community-specific socio-cultural rights of faith based communities. Within Canada recognition of the socio-cultural rights of faith-based communities is withheld and rationalized in terms of the harm that can occur to citizens' individual rights of autonomy and equality within faith-based communities. In particular the state invokes Muslim women's rights of equality within their faith-based communities to make the case (Kymlicka 1995). Hence, as discussed earlier, faith is relegated to a private space. In the example of the Indian state, these thorny issues of community and individual rights of autonomy are viewed as maters of state concern and the effort is to set up institutions that can help negotiate and balance these sometimes conflicting claims to autonomy, rather than turning a blind eye to the lives of citizens for whom their communities of faith are central to their lived experiences of being citizens.

Third, building on the first two features discussed above, is that the Indian state is committed to the idea of principled distance rather than the mutual exclusion model of secularism that is characteristic of the Canadian welfare state. The mutual exclusion model, as has been previously discussed sees the state as having no connection to religion and vice versa. India recognizes some level of inclusion at the level of law and public policy, so long as the principles of autonomy and equality (defined in more communal terms) are not trammeled. India recognizes the falsity of a separation that is mutually exclusive because it recognizes that for some of her citizens such a separation would be meaningless in terms of their lived experiences. In the following quote Bhargava defines what he means by principled separation in an eloquent and nuanced fashion that resonates with many of the arguments made in this paper:

> ...for mainstream western secularism, separation means mutual exclusion. The idea of principled distance unpacks the metaphor of separation differently. It accepts a disconnection between state and religion at the level of ends and institutions but does not make a fetish of it at the third level of policy and law....How else can it be in a society where religion frames some of its deepest interests?....a secularism based on principled distance s not committed to the mainstream Enlightenment idea of religion. It accepts that humans have an interest in relating to something beyond

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> themselves including God, and this manifests itself as individual belief and feeling as well as social practice in the public domain. (2008: 103)

A fourth characteristic of Indian secularism is the distinction that it makes between unpublicized and depoliticization. It does not depublicize religion, as mentioned earlier; it provides public space for faith-based groups through its laws and public policy; however it depoliticizes religion in one form, by insisting on a disconnection between the ends of its own activities and those of religious organizations. In other words the state does not exist to serve the ends of religious organizations; it exists to serve its own political ends. Similarly at an institutional level it remains disconnected from religious organizations whose own institutions and personnel are different from the personnel that run and maintain state organizations. This is in contrast to theocratic states like Iran who's political and religious institutions are run more explicitly by the same people and on the basis of their attachment to faith.

Fifth, the Indian definition of state secularism is defined by active hostility to some aspects of religion that are incommensurate with secular liberal notions of social justice whilst maintaining active respect for its other dimensions. This allows for faith-based communities to have a voice and visibility in society but disallows it from using that voice to discriminate against its own or others. Faith communities are open to critique but not to active hostility or "respectful indifference," which could work as a wonderful alternative to address the concerns of Canadian citizens who fear limitations on their freedom of speech to critiques religious organizations, while addressing the needs of faith-based communities for respect.

A sixth feature is the malleability of the Indian state to allow for various and multiple definitions of secularism. The rather rigid definition of Canadian state secularism does not allow for such fluidity leaving secular Muslims at a loss of accounting for and articulating the complex characteristics of their identity.

Finally Indian secularism challenges normative notions modern welfare secular states by providing an alternative that is both modern but departs significantly from mainstream conceptions of western secularism (Bhargava 2008: 103). It speaks to the importance of young Canadian-Muslims to be both a part of modern Canadian society as well as deeply attached to the world vies offered by their faith, without having them choose between the two as incompatible.

In summary the Indian example of secularism treats faith-based communities as participating citizens whose voice is made visible in their own terms and as members of faith-based groups through a vision of social justice that is inclusionary of liberal conceptions of autonomy and equality--- and much more.

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