

## A MULTIFAITH MILITARY: MUSLIM CAF MEMBERS

A MULTIFAITH MILITARY:  
RELIGIOSITY AND BELONGING AMONG MUSLIM CANADIAN ARMED  
FORCES MEMBERS

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A Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in Partial Fulfillment of the  
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## ABSTRACT

In studying the experiences of Muslim Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) members by way of ethnographic interviews, I investigate both religious accommodation and feelings of belonging among individuals in this minority faith group. Interviews demonstrate that the CAF and its Chaplain Branch are generally equipped and willing to accommodate the practice of Islam by personnel. I argue, however, that as a result of accommodation, which marks Muslim CAF as “different,” as well as military culture, which conflicts with certain aspects of Islamic doctrine and practice, the experience of unity that is fundamental to the Canadian Armed Forces is limitedly available to Muslim members. This research is the first ethnographic study of a specific minority religious experience in the CAF. It builds on a small, but growing discourse about religiosity and spirituality in the Canadian military that includes the development of the Chaplain Branch as a multifaith service.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

9/11	-	September 11, 2011
CAF	-	Canadian Armed Forces
CAFCEB	-	Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch
CF	-	Canadian Forces
CFB	-	Canadian Armed Forces Base
CFPARU	-	Canadian Forces Personnel Applied Research Unit
COs	-	Commanding Officers
CPSOs	-	Chief Personnel Supply Officers
DND	-	Department of National Defence
ICCMC	-	Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy
LCol	-	Lieutenant-Colonel
NATO	-	North Atlantic Treaty Organization
PTSD	-	Post Traumatic Stress Disorder
SOP	-	Standard Operating Procedure
SSRRB	-	Director General Military Personnel Research and Analysis Social Science Research Review Board
UN	-	United Nations
U.S.A	-	United States of America



## DECLARATION OF ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

I, Katelyn L.H. Cassin, have produced this thesis independently in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the M.A. Religious Studies at McMaster University. The words and thoughts of several individuals whom I interviewed have been included and are noted in this text. Dr. Celia Rothenberg and Dr. Liyakat Takim, both of McMaster University, have facilitated this project, however they have not directly contributed to the findings or production of this research.

## INTRODUCTION

While the Canadian Armed Forces are historically populated by primarily Christian personnel, efforts are increasingly being made to recruit visible minorities, so that the Forces may reflect the diversity of the population they represent (Jung 2007: 27-28). Such initiatives that facilitate diversity undoubtedly must be reflected in the policies and provisions made for accommodating religious plurality. This study aims to investigate the experiences of Muslim members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). By way of ethnographic interviews, I have compiled information on the diversification of the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch (CAFChB) to accommodate and facilitate the practice of Islam by members of the CAF. Through discussions with military personnel who self-identify as Muslim on the topics of accommodation, chaplaincy, identity, discrimination, military culture, and unity, I explore the broader experience of belonging and inclusion in the Canadian Armed Forces. This research will explore the tension between difference and unity for Muslim CAF members with regard to the practical realities of spiritual practice within daily routine, identity formation and development, camaraderie, and belonging.

I am inspired by Deborah Cowen's assertion in her book, *Military Workfare: The Soldier and Social Citizenship in Canada*: "In the pages that follow I aim to open an area of inquiry rather than exhaust it" (Cowen 2008: 20). This study emerges at a significant point in CAFChB history, marking a decade of official Muslim representation in the Branch. Ten years and three Imams later – what is the experience of Muslims in the Canadian Armed Forces? This study builds on a small body of work regarding religiosity

in the CAF in the twenty-first century. It is a first step in the targeted study of a non-Christian minority faith group in the CAF that commences what will become a growing dialogue in the future, as the CAF and the Chaplain Branch diversify further.

This chapter is concerned with grounding the research that follows. I will define and contemplate my own positionality – its benefits, limitations and realities – discussing also the perception of this study and this researcher as relevant to considering the analysis to follow. I will also link this research to related fields suggesting its contributions to areas of study broadly encompassed by the topic of North American diaspora Islam. I will also outline the research process and methods employed, concluding by mapping the chapters to follow and the conclusions I will draw.

### Positionality and Perception

Prior to conducting this study, I struggled greatly with my own positionality in relation to the subject population of this research. Identifying several points of experiential divergence, I wondered first, if I could expect openness, honesty and respect from my informants, and, second, if I could fairly represent their experiences. As a civilian accessing a military population characterized by insularity and often skeptical of misrepresentation, would personnel withhold aspects of their experience, either for fear of repercussions or to strategically “edit” the realities they face? As a woman, would this primarily male population present the entirety of their experiences or would they exclude certain reflections? As a non-Muslim in her early 20s, would this generally older, Muslim population recognize my academic familiarity with Islam, or instead take it upon

themselves to educate me at the cost of facilitating my research? These degrees of difference made me skeptical of the potential for success at the outset of this study.

Further, how am I perceived by the individuals with whom I speak? Am I perceived as gazing, nose pressed to the glass, on some “exotic” “other” that I do not understand? Am I perceived as testing their loyalty to either the Canadian Armed Forces or the Canadian nation (Patel 2012: 279)? Am I perceived as yet another white person championing the cause of a “disadvantaged,” coloured (more often than not) population? I will never know with certainty the answers to these questions. What differences I may have with this study population have advantages as well as disadvantages. As a civilian, I am not politically connected to the CAF and therefore do not pose a threat to career advancement. This may have benefitted openness and honesty. As a young academic, I was able to position myself as approachable, yet knowledgeable, producing an air of comfort and receptiveness to personnel’s reflections. Embracing my own realities perhaps mitigated the barriers extant between myself and research participants.

Alongside my concerns about perception, I also reflected extensively on my own motivations for conducting this study. For all my degrees of difference from this population, why am I interested, if not personally invested? Am I, unknowingly, committing benevolent academic imperialism, envisioning myself as “giving voice” to a population that may lack an outlet for their reflections (Mackey 2002: 84)? Or am I perhaps, just interested? As an “other” to this population, am I allowed to simply be curious?

Jasmine Zine, in her introduction to *Islam in the Hinterlands*, puts forth a troubling statement regarding the composition of its collection of essays, produced primarily by Muslim Canadian women. She writes:

It is significant that all but one of the contributors to this collection self-identify as Muslim. This was in part a conscious decision to highlight the scholarship of Canadian Muslim academics (both established as well as emergent scholars) about Muslims in Canada. This move recognizes the presence of academic forms of colonialism in which the narratives and lived experiences of Muslims have been co-opted by those who do not share in this identity or in the costs and implications of labeling and defining the experiences of others. This book allows for a space where Muslim academics can articulate their research and political concerns about issues that are not only of academic interest to them but also implicated in their lives, work, and families (Zine 2012: 27).

This statement leads me to question whether I am one of those who “co-opts” the narratives and experiences of “others” with whom I do not share in “identity” or “costs.” Further it instantly makes me defensive, feeling personally wounded by the assertion that perhaps I am among this group of accused individuals. However, in response, I ask: Is there no longer a space for the “outsider” in social science? I find myself repeating this question frequently. The evolution of scholarship appears to have progressed along a polarized plane. Anthropology in particular and social sciences in general were once consumed with exposing the experiences of the “other,” and today legitimize only the “insider” perspective as free from imperialist pollution. Stemming from this shift, budding scholars, whose interests lie across traditions and socially constructed boundaries, are left with no legitimate space for research without the disturbing fear of committing the very transgressions that would surely mortify at least most of them. Is

there no longer a space for the “outsider” perspective? Is there no longer value in cross-experiential dialogue and inquiry?

These questions recall the pivotal article by Kirin Narayan, “How Native Is a ‘Native’ Anthropologist?” in which she problematizes the binary categories of “insider” and “outsider” in scholarship. Building on the concept put forth by Rosaldo of “multiplex subjectivity” through her own hybrid, matrix identification, she illustrates the extent to which subjectivity permeates even those analyses that are upheld as most proximate to objective truth (1989: 168-195; Narayan 1993: 676). As an anthropologist often noted as “native” to her populations of study, she emphasizes that “the fact that we are often distanced – by factors as varied as education, class, or emigration – from the societies we are supposed to represent tends to be underplayed” (Narayan 1993: 677). She eloquently argues that each individual necessarily embodies a variety of identities simultaneously, and thus, in a particular circumstance certain parts of the self may override others, shifting one’s relations to the society and the people with whom one interacts. As a result, whether researching from the position of “insider” or “outsider,” “positioned knowledge and partial perspectives” are the product of earnest and careful study (Narayan 1993: 679).

In answer to Narayan’s call for “dismantling objective distance to acknowledge our shared presence in the cultural worlds that we describe” (1993: 680) I offer the following: I do not deny that my own perspectives have influenced my understandings and communications with Muslim members of the Canadian Armed Forces. I do not deny that my positionality influenced how they communicated with me and the stories they

chose to relay. I do not deny that there are inherent risks in interpreting, analyzing and packaging the experiences of others. But do these realities diminish the validity of the reflections I present? Do these realities negate the contributions that I can make to a dialogue about a particular religious minority in the Canadian Armed Forces? I hope not.

With the interpretive turn, ‘truth’ is no longer the goal of the research process and product. Instead, perspectival knowledge based on the lived experience of the participants is the goal. The expected product is no longer a truth but an acceptable rendering of what had been produced in the moments of the inquiry (O’Connor et al 2008: 30-31).

### Scholarly Context

This research engages with a wide variety of interrelated areas within the broader field of North American Islamic studies. It contributes to discussions involving, but not limited to, piety, identity, belonging, discrimination, post-9/11 realities, media representations, and diaspora ethnic relations. In addition, it contributes to the study of religion and spirituality in institutional settings, with relevance to prison and hospital chaplaincy discussions.

As Saba Mahmood wrote in her iconic analysis *Politics of Piety*, for many Muslims “belief is the product of outward practices, rituals, and acts of worship rather than simply an expression of them” (2012: xv). While speaking about the women’s mosque movement in Egypt specifically, this understanding of the importance of bodily practices is not exclusive to the piety movement (Moghissi et al 2009: 89). Numerous scholars have recently turned to examinations of nonliberal religious movements as a uniquely contemporary response to secular liberalism; they have argued that despite

Western scholarly presumptions, many religious individuals continue to attribute importance to public, outward expressions of religiosity (Mahmood 2012, Fader 2009, Griffith 1997). The role of comportment, ritual and visible expressions of faith in Islam is notable in a context that regulates physical presentation and presence in significant ways. It is at the intersection of living in a secular environment and adhering to a belief system that values and mandates certain visible aspects of faith, that this study finds its wider relevance. As such, it contributes to dialogues regarding prison and hospital chaplaincy, as well as religious expression in schools. These government-affiliated institutions regulate the behaviours of individuals within them, and thus share common features with the military regarding limiting and enabling visible expressions of faith.

Key to this analysis is the question: How does an environment designed to reduce individualism, promote unity, foster national pride, and instill a certain value system, also provide for the religious and spiritual needs of its personnel (Dallaire 2011)? How do more visible aspects of Muslim religiosity, such as prayer, dietary restrictions, head covering, and so forth, fit into CAF service and relate to feelings of inclusion and difference? Relatedly, Peter Mandaville writes “that encounters between the Muslim and his or her Muslim ‘other’ give rise to competing discourses as to what Islam is and who may speak on its behalf” (2001: 171). How then does the diversity of practices and traditions related to ethnicity, sect, and so forth, within Islam in Canada, complicate the ability of the Forces to meet the spiritual needs of Muslim members? This study thus fits into discussions of Muslim identity formation in the North American diaspora



(Mandaville 2001, Dashefsky 1972, Duderija 2008, Moghissi et al 2009, Nagra 2011a, 2011b, Takim 2009).

Susan MacDonald and Nadia Caidi, in their article “Information Practices of Canadian Muslims Post 9/11,” ask a key question: “Who will construct the identity of Canadian Muslims?” (2008: 375). As Mona Siddiqui writes, there is much global discourse surrounding “interfaith dialogue” as promoting people to “understand each others’ religions [... so] they become more open and accepting of the idea and reality of living with the other” (2005: 1143). While the merits of such efforts are clear, the result is that “intra-religious diversity is played down and religions are often seen as monolithic” (Siddiqui 2005: 1143, Brown 2010: 346). This assumption would seem to be held by the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), evident in their provisions for Muslim personnel. Currently, the CAFCB employs three Sunni Imams. While this may be proportional to the number of Muslim personnel enlisted, it likely does not account for the level of diversity related to ethnicity and sectarian affiliation present. For practical purposes, this is reasonable, yet it does point to an assumption – that there is a foundational, core reality to being “Muslim” and that providing spiritually for these core realities will satisfy all Muslims. This assumption is especially significant when considering that Canadian Muslims take part “in group activities of a religious nature more than any other faith community of a similar size” (Janhevic and Ibrahim 2004: 49-56; Marcotte 2010: 360). With this trend in mind, is it adequate to provide only for the (imagined) core realities of Muslim belief and practice?

Jasmin Zine argues that it is their religious identities that enable Muslim youth to overcome their experience of marginality in North America, particularly in secular institutions such as schools (2001: 401, 402). This may be a valuable insight when examining the experience of Muslim soldiers serving in a similarly secular, government run institution, such as the CAF. She writes that, “creating systems of positive peer support was viewed as essential to the maintenance of an Islamic identity and life-style” (Zine 2001: 406). This quotation suggests that without the institutional structures that enable the flourishing of Muslim communities, an individual’s religious identity may suffer. This study will investigate the formation of Muslim communities on CAF bases, including their significance to the experience of individual personnel, the strategies employed to form such communities, and the role of chaplains in cultivating an active faith group on base.

While studies on minority and diasporic experiences in Canada are numerous, analyses of religiosity within Canadian institutions are largely absent. Though much work remains to be done, Dr. Joanne Benham Rennick of Wilfrid Laurier University has pioneered work on this topic in her book *Religion in the Ranks: Belief and Religious Experience in the Canadian Forces* (2011). Her study provides novel analysis of the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch (CAFChB), and the significance of spirituality for soldiers grappling with operational stress and anxiety. I will expand on her analysis and focus on the experience of Muslim soldiers specifically. This study is timely, in light of the recent recruitment of Canada’s first Muslim chaplain in 2003 (DND 2003b) and initiatives to expand the recruitment of visible minorities to the CAF (Jung 2007). At this

time, the majority of dialogue on Muslims in the Forces and their representation in the CAFCB has been in the public media or internal to the CAF. No extensive academic study on the experience of Muslims in the Armed Forces has been conducted to date.

Careful treatment and regard for religion in the CAF can contribute to mental health among personnel, and thereby improve quality of life and optimize military effectiveness (Fortin 2012). It has been shown by Benham Rennick that extensive spiritual provisions and the works of the CAFCB can reduce instances of operational stress, such as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) (2005). Drawing on the analysis of Allan English, Benham Rennick argues that the chaplaincy can serve as a unique vehicle through which to cultivate mental health among soldiers (2005). Conversation with a chaplain is free from the stigma attached to engaging with a mental health professional, and thus can reach a broader audience of soldiers. The chaplain's position as part of the command team is significant, as English demonstrates that disconnect between the command team and health care professionals contributes to operational stress (Benham Rennick 2005, English 2000: 34, 37). Andre Marin (2001) reports that one of the symptoms of PTSD is a "loss of previously sustained beliefs," which illustrates the significant role of spirituality and the CAFCB in responding to such conditions (Benham Rennick 2011). The notion of psychological and psychosocial health among Canadian military personnel in connection with spirituality requires further analysis, particularly in the specific experiences of Muslims whose faith and rituals are ever-present in their daily lives. While this study does not engage specifically with Islam and its potential to combat operational stress among Muslim personnel, the spiritual wellbeing of Muslim CAF and

their experience of belonging within the institution have implications for soldier welfare. The connection, argued by Benham Rennick, between religion and mental health provides further importance to this study.

Related to belonging, Natasha Bakt points to a problematic understanding of Islam in her article “Religious Arbitration in Canada: Protecting Women by Protecting Them from Religion.” She identifies a “familiar caricature of the ‘imperiled Muslim woman’ needing to be rescued from the ‘dangerous Muslim man’” (Bakt 2007: 122). Marcotte also points to a trend of “subtle discrimination” toward Muslim women who wear a headscarf in the workplace (2010: 363). Is there discrimination along these lines in the CAF, and if so, how does this impact the Muslim experience in this institution? How does discrimination based on misunderstandings and visible markers of faith impact inclusion and belonging? The findings of Campbell White and colleagues suggest that “intergroup anxiety,” defined as “the fear that interaction with members of the out-group would be stressful and unpleasant for members of the in-group,” had the most significant effect on acceptance of Muslim practice (White et al. 2012: 3066, 3075). This trend may be particularly relevant in a context where the “in-group” is rigidly defined and highly insular, characterized by a very specific set of traditions and values that may conflict with Islamic traditions and practice, such as the Forces.

The notion of belonging is a critical concept for my study of Muslim participation in the CAF. Haideh Moghissi et al argue that the key issues related to a sense of belonging for the “majority of Muslims,” “are the removal of barriers to their full involvement and integration in the economic, social and political life of their new adopted

country” (2009: 144). Each of these factors is relevant to Muslim participation in the Canadian Armed Forces. Furthermore, “one cannot be integrated if one is always the object of suspicion” (Moghissi et al. 2009: 152). This point, particularly in the wake of the September 11, 2001 attacks, is revealing, for while the CAF values unity and camaraderie, it is also a key component of Canadian security forces, which under Bill C-36 have increased surveillance protocols in the interest of anti-terrorism measures (Caidi and MacDonald 2008: 369-372). The mindset that a particular culture is fundamentally “alien and incompatible with that of the host nation” undoubtedly affects feelings of belonging and inclusion (Saeed 2007: 446). As such, how does Canadian identity and politics influence Canadian military culture and subsequently impact feelings of belonging to the CAF?

This study contributes to and draws upon numerous areas of discussion under the broad field of North American diaspora Islam. Centrally concerned with the relation of religious accommodation and military culture to belonging and inclusion, this study proceeds by way of ethnographic interviews to arrive at a number of theories and experiential commonalities.

### Research Protocols and Methods

The primary data for this research project is fieldwork in the form of ethnographic interviews. In order to conduct this study and gain access to the subject community, I first had to attain McMaster University Research Ethics Board approval (#2013 090). Upon receipt, I was able to apply for approval from the Canadian Armed Forces Director

General Military Personnel Research and Analysis Social Science Research Review Board (SSRRB)(#1241/13F). Before approval could be attained from the SSRRB, I had to secure “DND/CF Level 1 Sponsor Engagement” (DND 2013 SSRRB Standard Operating Procedures [SOP]). A “Level 1 advisor is a senior DND/CF official [...] who has direct accountability to the Deputy Minister or the Chief of Defence Staff” (DND 2013). The purpose of sponsorship is twofold: to regulate the “gathering and disclosure” of potentially sensitive information, and to ensure the utility of the project to the relevant “functional area.” To gain approval, “the research must benefit DND/CF” (DND 2013). With the assistance of the Chief Scientist Administrative Assistant at the SSRRB, I was put in contact with Colonel Nigel Shaw, Director of Chaplain Services, who agreed to “sponsor” this study. In doing so, he communicated the interest of the Chaplain Branch in the findings of the research and in the prospect of gaining insights about a minority religious community in the CAF. In all, these stages consisted of, at times prolonged, waiting. Nonetheless, the CAF was highly supportive of this research and the process took a total of just seven months, compared to the eighteen months spent by Benham Rennick (2011: 7). This suggests that as more individuals from the academic community seek to study this institution, it will become more accessible.

Participant recruitment could be loosely characterized as “snowball, or geometric” recruitment (Benham Rennick 2011: 8). Colonel Shaw initially put me in contact with the three Muslim chaplains serving with the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF). Currently dispersed across the country, one in Alberta on an Army base, one in Ontario on a training base, and one in Nova Scotia on a Navy base, Colonel Shaw also put me in

contact with a Christian padre on an Air Force base in Manitoba. In commencing recruitment outreach with both geographic and environmental variables accounted for, we hoped to maximize the diversity of respondents. Upon enlisting the participation of the three Imams in the study, I provided them with recruitment materials to disperse to their Muslim contacts nationwide, and asked them to encourage their contacts to further pass news of this study along. From this process, I acquired 15 participants, including the 3 Imams, and additionally interviewed Lieutenant-Colonel Martine Bélanger, the Principle Chaplain of Jewish and Muslim Faith Groups, who became my primary contact representing the Director of Chaplain Services. This method of participant recruitment likely skewed my sample population. That most of the respondents were contacted through a chaplain about this study indicates that they have made themselves known to a chaplain to some degree. As a result, this sample is perhaps disproportionately open about religiosity, practicing to some degree, and likely to have sought accommodation at some point. Despite this skew, there is a notable level of diversity among participants, which provides significant material for analysis. I cannot comment on the proportion of Muslim CAF represented in this study as “the Canadian Forces do not record or compile statistics on the religious identity of their members,” as such the total number of Muslims serving is unknown (Benham Rennick 2011: 6).

The small size of this sample population is significant, as is the lack of representation from female Muslim CAF. Research participants made themselves known to me, and as a result, targeted recruitment to maximize diversity was not possible. These realities limit both the scope of the study and the ability to confidently generalize the

findings of this research. As a result, I present the narratives of a small group of Muslim CAF men, dispersed on military bases across the country, and analyze and consider their reflections to arrive at a hypothesis regarding shared features of the experiences of Muslim CAF. There is much room for further study and dialogue.

Limited by the nature of the population I accessed, interviews alone provided the ethnographic material for this study. Unable to observe the daily activities of Muslim personnel, or attempt to immerse myself into the military community, I was limited to interviews for data. I did benefit from visiting the multifaith spaces at which the three Imams are stationed at this time. This allowed me to better understand the environments in which the chaplains work, and the sort of environment provided for non-Christian faith groups to worship.

Outreach emails were articulated to encourage interested parties, who “identify” as Muslim, to contact me directly, either by telephone or email, in order to maintain the anonymity of participants. Many however, sent a copy to both me and the chaplain who had sent out the research notice. Further, I attained general approval from the Chief Personnel Supply Officers (CPSOs) of the three environments (Army, Navy, Air Force) to access participants. In the recruitment email, I attempted to convey this to interested personnel, indicating that they were not required to attain permission to participate from their chain of command. Nonetheless, several individuals attained approval, and thus negated my efforts to preserve confidentiality. Despite the choices of some personnel to make their participation known to their commanding officers, I have pledged to protect their identity in this study, either by neglecting to indicate details about individual



respondents, or by altering details that would jeopardize their anonymity. During interviews, participants were offered the choice to remain anonymous or be identified with their statements. In all cases, they were afforded the opportunity to review direct references to their reflections in this paper to ensure their confidentiality is protected and their reflections fairly represented. Interviews were arranged through email communications according to the preferences of the participant. I travelled to the relevant bases to conduct interviews in person.

These interviews took place between February and April of 2014, concurrent with data analysis and coding protocols inspired by grounded theory methods, as described below. Interviews were conducted primarily in person, with two taking place over the telephone due to scheduling issues. These were one-on-one interviews, conducted primarily in public locations, mainly coffee shops, either on or near the relevant bases. Interviewees were responsible for selecting the location of the interview. All participants were provided the option of a private room on base for our discussion, which I offered to arrange through the base chaplains, maintaining the confidentiality of the individual with whom I would be speaking. In only one case did a participant elect to meet in a private room that he volunteered to arrange. I met with each chaplain privately in either his office or the multifaith space on base. The majority of interviews were audio recorded if permitted by the interviewee. These recordings facilitated my accuracy when analyzing and representing the reflections of participants. They also allowed me to engage actively in the interview, observe body language and comfort level, as well as connect with the

individuals to a greater degree. On average, interviews lasted 52 minutes, and were loosely structured based on the following questions.

1. Just tell me a bit about yourself? What's your story? Is most of your extended family in Canada?
2. How did you get into the Forces? What exactly do you do for the CAF?
3. So, you identify as Muslim correct? What does that mean for you?
4. What type of religious activities do you engage in?
5. Where do you worship?
6. Are there any other Muslims in your unit or that you work with? Are you social with them? Do you worship with them?
7. Many scholars suggest that ethnicity is significant to how Muslims practice Islam. Do you find that this is true?
8. You mentioned earlier that you **do/do not** worship on base.
  - a. **DO:** What types of services are offered? Are you satisfied with what is offered? Do you communicate with the Chaplain at all?
  - b. **DO NOT:** Why don't you worship on base? Have you ever contacted a Chaplain or made use of Chaplaincy services?
  - c. Does your family worship with you? On base?
9. Have you ever had any interaction or communication with an Imam serving with the Chaplain Branch?
10. Do you feel as though your religious needs are being sufficiently met by the Forces?
  - a. If no, what is missing? What changes should be made?
11. Are you aware of the Duty to Accommodate? How'd you hear about it? Have you ever made use of this?
12. What is your unit/workplace like? Are you social with your colleagues?
13. The military emphasizes "unity" – the effectiveness of a united Force. Is this unity a reality in your opinion? Do you feel a sense of unity with your colleagues?
14. Have your spiritual or religious beliefs changed at all since you enlisted/began working with the Forces?
15. Many scholars suggest that 9/11 had a significant impact on the experience of Muslims in this country. Do you agree?
  - a. How has 9/11 affected you?
16. Have you served on any other bases in Canada? Have they been different with regard to this topic?
17. What are your future plans?
18. Do you intend to stay with the Forces? If no, why are you considering a new direction?

19. When I'm writing, how would you like me to refer to your location? I'm seeking to preserve your privacy, so would *Alberta* be ok, or would you prefer *Western Canada*?
20. Would you like to be named in my writing? My base assumption is that no participant will be named, but if you'd like to be named in correlation with your statements, that would be fine as well.
21. Would you like to pick your pseudonym?<sup>1</sup>

These questions were specifically designed to avoid subliminally guiding responses and imposing preconceived definitions or understandings of Islam, Muslims, religion or worship. In the interest of this line of questioning, however, it was necessary to implicitly and explicitly understand Islam as connected to “belief.”

As previously mentioned, grounded theory is the methodological inspiration for data analysis in this research. I commenced research with an open coding practice that allowed the coding and the data to develop simultaneously. Using line-by-line coding, I intended to remain engaged with the material and worked to reduce my own bias and prevent the imposition of other theories on the data. Line-by-line coding, as described by Kathy Charmaz, keeps the codes active, thereby facilitating the comparative method that is pervasive throughout grounded theory research (2000: 515). The initial line-by-line coding was then further analyzed through a loose, and evolving system of axial coding, wherein categories and subcategories were formed to reveal any causality and implication patterns. I also actively used memo writing throughout the interview process to keep a log of my reflections, facilitate analysis and allow data collection to evolve with new insight from interviews. Of the 16 interviews conducted, all but 3 were audio recorded. This facilitated my ability to engage in the discussion, experience the individual and consider

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<sup>1</sup> Please note that different sets of questions were used for interviews with Chaplains and with LCol Martine Bélanger. These can be found in Appendix A and B respectively.

body language, tone of voice, attitude, and comfort level as part of my analysis. While processing interview recordings and notes certain gaps emerged in my research, at which point I returned to data collection using theoretical sampling to refine my ideas. For this, I accessed participants with whom I had already spoken about the particular topic to flesh out concepts and ask follow-up questions. I did not increase sample size to clarify these points. In this stage, I also turned to the academic work of others for further insight, and drew upon public documents output by the Forces. Throughout this coding process, I aimed to be cautious of retaining the continuity of the experiences expressed by participants and avoiding fracturing my data into codes and categories. In short, my methodology was based on a constructivist grounded theory approach to maintain an emphasis on meaning and relayed experience without devolving into a fractured and shallow representation of data (Charmaz 2000).

Like Joanne Benham Rennick, in her study *Religion in the Ranks: Belief and Religious Experience in the Canadian Forces*, I suspect some will criticize this study for lack of breadth (2011: 11). I concur with her assessment of the validity of this methodology.

When one considers the number of personnel the CF presumes to have within its ranks from minority groups [...] and the differences of experiences faced by individuals of all backgrounds, there is clear justification for seeking out and interviewing members of specific groups as well as conducting in-depth interviews rather than superficial data collection. [...] Grounded theory, however, can direct us to the key concerns of the individuals involved so that we can begin to identify the social processes at work in this particular context. Ultimately, both the broad-spectrum statistics and the targeted research are required if military policy-makers hope to be prepared for the inevitable diversity of future military personnel (Benham Rennick 2011: 10).

### Study Overview

How a nation comes to define, construct and understand itself as a homogenous, or definitively heterogeneous, whole with a defined and differentiated identity will be reflected in the policies and maneuvers of its government bodies and institutions. These institutions may in turn play a role in constructing this identity as well. These constructions and characterizations of the nation are foundational to the current composition of these institutions and their aspirations for future development. As a government institution, the Canadian Armed Forces thus shares in Canadian identity, and as such both are subject to the same trends, characteristics and critiques. Canadian identity formation and recent history with regard to multiculturalism are thus the topic of the first chapter of this study.

The second chapter proceeds to investigate the diversification of the Canadian Armed Forces, in relation to personnel recruitment strategies and to the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch. Detailing the history of the Branch and its shift to interfaith chaplaincy, this chapter establishes the foundations of this study of a non-Christian religious group in the CAF. The third chapter builds upon this discussion by engaging in the experiences of the three Imams currently serving with the CAFCB. Their reflections on building a faith community on base, ministering to Muslim and non-Muslim personnel, integrating into the Chaplain Branch, facilitating religious accommodation of Muslim members and providing an educational resource to the CAF community are included in this section. Finally, the fourth chapter recounts and compiles the reflections of Muslim Regular Forces military personnel, and a small number of civilians employed

with the CAF, with regard to Islamic religious practice while serving with the Canadian military. This chapter builds upon arguments established in the preceding chapters regarding accommodation, military culture, unity and belonging.

In all, this paper argues that the Canadian Armed Forces has successfully accommodated the practice of Islam within its ranks, facilitating spirituality, providing resources, and making the formal shift toward multifaith chaplaincy. This is an ongoing process, one that the Chaplaincy aspires to expand and develop over time, with new projects commencing to transition more chapel infrastructure toward multifaith spaces. Currently, the Christian foundations of both the Branch and the CAF inform the structure, the culture, and the policies and protocols of both bodies. Christianity remains normative, reinforced by the need to “accommodate” religious practice and spirituality that does not adhere to Christian models. In regulating and marking difference, the normative Christian culture and structure of the CAF is reinforced. For those that seek accommodation for their religiosity, in being “accommodated” they are marked as “different,” as exceptional to the in-group, and thus “other.” This experience impacts, and in many cases limits, feelings of belonging and inclusion to the CAF. Several interviewees indicated that they feel completely integrated in the Canadian military – they are “one of the guys,” like anyone else. For the majority however, there are limits to the sense of unity and belonging achieved. These limits, I argue, arise from being “notable” – being marked as different from the “normal” soldier – for their religious identity and active practice that often does not fit into the existing culture, protocols and structures of the CAF.

THE EVOLUTION OF THE CANADIAN NATION:  
Demographics and Ideologies

This chapter will establish the broader context of this study, placing the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) and the experience of non-Christian minority groups into national trends and politics that inform the realities of both. This chapter will argue for the ability to consider Canadian Muslims as a “diaspora” population, thus enabling a discussion of this immensely diverse group as a collective with certain shared experiential realities. It will also discuss the historical presence of Muslims in Canada, arguing for their rightful claim to full national belonging and identity like that of white settlers. The reality of limited belonging experienced by Muslim Canadians will be illustrated through a discussion of Canadian identity construction and articulation, emphasizing the role of “multiculturalism” in disguising the social hierarchies extant in Canada. This discussion will necessarily engage in the role of 9/11 in the experience of both Muslims and those who “look like Muslims” in Canada with regard to belonging and citizenship.

A Canadian Muslim Diaspora

The term “diaspora” has become the catch-phrase of social science and globalization studies. Meaningful to the academic community, it is largely indistinguishable from terms such as “immigrant” or “minority” population to a general audience. This ambiguity, however, is also present in scholarship, as the term “diaspora” continues to evolve its connotation and denotation. The “deterritorialisation” of cultures and communities arising from the mass globalization of the twentieth century, has warranted further analysis and differentiation (Cesari 2006: 91; Roy 2004). Key to the

understanding of “diaspora” is its connection to “transnationalism,” indicative of the connectivity between peoples and communities across international borders, the fluidity of their movement and identities, as well as their ability to maintain personal networks through technology in spite of spatial separation. “Separate places become effectively a single community ‘through the continuous circulation of people, money, goods, and information’ (Rouse 1991:14)” (Clifford 1994: 303). James Clifford suggests that in shifting the academic discourse from “minority” studies to “diaspora” studies, the binary relation of “*minority* communities with *majority* societies” can be subverted, thus liberating analysis from the further binary of assimilation and resistance (Clifford 1994: 311). While “diaspora” is traditionally deployed as a descriptor of an ethnic community with a distinct and meaningful connection to the “homeland” (Anthias 1998: 558), I will argue for an expansion of its use to describe a religious community that transcends ethnicity and maintains the key characteristics of a “diaspora” in the traditional sense. In understanding Canadian Muslims in the rhetoric of “diaspora” studies, this analysis will be liberated from the binaries put forth by Clifford, in an effort to arrive at a more complex understanding of Canadian identity formation, hybridity and multiculturalism.

William Safran, writing in the first issue of the journal *Diaspora* outlines the traditional usage of the term as referring to the “exile of the Jews from their historic homeland and their dispersion throughout many lands, signifying as well the oppression and moral degradation implied by the dispersion” (1991: 83). Notable is the origins of the term as a descriptor of a religiously-bound community. I argue, however, that although the “Jewish” diaspora is taken as the “ideal type,” its designation is intended as an ethnic



descriptor, not a religious one. Safran notes in the same article that scholars began to apply it to any group of people living outside of their nation or land of origin; thus he articulates a detailed definition, generalizing the experience of the Jewish diaspora so that the term may be meaningful in other contexts.

I suggest [...] that the concept of diaspora be applied to expatriate minority communities whose members share several of the following characteristics: 1) they, or their ancestors, have been dispersed from a specific original 'center' to two or more 'peripheral,' or foreign, regions; 2) they retain a collective memory, vision, or myth about their original homeland – its physical location, history, and achievements; 3) they believe that they are not – and perhaps cannot be – fully accepted by their host society and therefore feel partly alienated and insulated from it; 4) they regard their ancestral homeland as their true, ideal home and as the place to which they or their descendants would (or should) eventually return – when conditions are appropriate; 5) they believe that they should, collectively, be committed to the maintenance or restoration of their original homeland and to its safety and prosperity, and 6) they continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to that homeland in one way or another, and their ethnocommunal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship (Safran 1991: 83-84).

The inherently transnational quality of this definition thus implies the establishment of an identity that transcends national boundaries and attains a global quality, anchored by a connection to the point of origin (Anthias 1998: 559-560). Critical in this definition is the notion of a “consciousness” that arises from the political and social circumstances arising from the diaspora experience (Anthias 1998: 560). This “consciousness” is the gateway to expanding the traditional understanding of the diaspora as an ethnic entity in order for the concept to be applicable to other ideologically bound communities.

So how is the term “ethnicity” understood? “The word ‘ethnicity’ comes from the Greek work ‘ethnos’ which means ‘people’ and ‘ethnicity’ means ‘sense of peoplehood,’

i.e., a sense of belonging to a people (group, community) with a certain religion, culture, language, national origin and racial background” (Husaini 1990: 10; Dashefsky 1972: 239). These shared attributes are highly symbolic and meaningful, and are integral to how such a group understands their identity and behaves socially (Husaini 1990:11; Dashefsky 1972: 242). Scholars, ubiquitously, have acknowledged a sense of alienation arising as a byproduct of globalization and the mass information society of the twentieth century. As a result, individuals seek out “some nostalgic, warm, and comfortable source of security, e.g., one’s ethnic group” (Dashefsky 1972: 240). According to Zohra Husaini, “Any attempt to disregard or abandon ethnicity leads not only to identity crisis but also has the explosive potential for disintegration of a society” (1990: 11). However, in this highly technological period, “ethnicity” can be reduced from a total culture, to one in which “identification with ‘selected’ ethnic cultural patterns takes place” (Husaini 1990: 11). Particularly relevant to this discussion is the selection of religion as an “ethnic cultural pattern” that has been taken up as a deep source of identification, superseding nationality, race, and language as a source of community, unity and self-understanding.

In arguing that the definition of “diaspora” can be expanded to refer not only to ethnic groups, but to other ideologically bound communities, it is also productive to consider expanding the notion of “ethnic group.” Zohra Husaini asks the same question that I ask: “can the Muslims in Canada be treated as an ethnic group?” (1990: 14). Husaini demonstrates that due to the variations in all other categories typically subsumed under the definition of “ethnicity” aside from religion, Canadian Muslims cannot be considered an “ethnic group.” She argues however, that “in a very important sense we can

talk of Canadian Muslims as a special cluster of ethnic groups unified in faith, in common future concerns and common endeavors” (Husaini 1990: 14). Scholars across disciplines have noted the significance of religion for cultural expression, particularly in the case of Islam, which permeates the daily lives of the faithful and their social environments (Benham Rennick 2011: 5; Hamdani 1984; Husaini 1990:14). The centrality of Islam in the cultures of numerous regions and peoples globally, and the significance of the Arabic language to its practice and traditions, provides positive justification for understanding Canadian Muslims as a collectivity of “ethnic groups.” Particularly in a diaspora context, the divisions between groups can be diminished in the interest of cultural preservation, allowing religion to act as a source of unity and identity that overcomes differences of nationality, immigrant status, racial background or language (Husaini 1990: 100).

Although perhaps unable to understand Canadian Muslims as an ethnic group proper, I argue that it is productive to consider the powerful role of Islam in identity formation. As Eva Mackey writes, “Some of the identities emerging with transnationalism – defined as fractured, fragmented, mobile, diasporic and hybrid – create a space in which identity can be enunciated outside of, or rather *in between*, modern forms of identity such as national identity” or ethnic identity (2002:73, emphasis in original). With this in mind, I consider it productive and informative to understand Canadian Muslims as a cluster of “ethnic groups,” enabling a space also for converts to share in a broader, generalized experience

of common faith and conception of the world<sup>2</sup>.

In seeking to speak of a Muslim “diaspora” in Canada, I do not wish to diminish the differences and nuances within this group. “The diaspora is constituted as much in *difference and division* as it is in *commonality and solidarity*” (Anthias 1998: 564, emphasis in original). I do, however, wish to suggest that central and basic tenets of Islam may be fruitful for this argument, drawing on the definition put forth by Safran (1991: 83-4, quoted above on page 24), to illustrate the utility of “diaspora” discourse for discussion of Muslims in Canada. 1) Like the Jews, who were driven out of Israel numerous times throughout history, Muslims were historically displaced from Medina to Mecca, and more recently have been dispersed globally, both through migration and due to conflicts arising in Asia, the traditional geographic centre of the *ummah* (community). 2) Like Israel for the Jews, Medina and Mecca, as well as Saudi Arabia at large, retain powerful symbolic and geographic importance to Muslims worldwide, referenced daily through prayer and representing an ideal time in the history of Islam. 3) As has been testified to by numerous informants, scholars and some participants in this study, Muslims in Canada and in other minority contexts globally, have expressed a sense that they cannot be fully accepted into the societies to which they have migrated (Nagra 2011b; Marcotte 2010; Caidi and MacDonald 2008; Zine 2012; Patel 2012; Jiwani 2012). 4) While the importance of permanent, future relocation to Saudi Arabia is not necessarily a predominant notion to all

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<sup>2</sup> I do not seek to diminish the intra-religious and ethnic diversity of Muslims in Canada. For the purposes of this research project, in which I seek to establish common features of the experience of Muslim CAF regardless of ethnic or sectarian identification, I am establishing that I can speak of a shared experience of a group united by several aspects connected to faith.

Muslims, the *hajj*, or traditional pilgrimage commemorating the original exile to Mecca, is symbolically significant. Further, and perhaps a more productive parallel to the ideal of return to the homeland, is the goal of building an Islamic State, inspired by the theocratic state built by Muhammad in Medina in 622 CE, in which the laws of Allah are upheld. This ideological “homeland” functions in much the same way as a physical homeland for other diaspora populations, such as the Jews. 5) This ideal of an Islamic State is upheld in the interest of preserving Islam in its original form, and thus ensuring the prosperity and safety of the *ummah* or community of believers. 6) Finally, it is this notion of a unity of all Muslims, transcending regional, cultural, national, and linguistic barriers, that plays a significant role in the “consciousness” of Muslims globally, and enables communal solidarity amongst adherents of this faith group.

Although liberally interpreted, Safran’s definition of “diaspora” undoubtedly can be applied to Islam, broadly defined. In enabling Muslims in Canada to be considered a “diaspora” population, whether an individual Muslim is an immigrant, a first or second or fifth generation Canadian, or a convert, his/her experiences can be spoken of in relation to the experiences of others with a similar faith. Living in a majority Christian, secular nation, whose institutional structure retains its Christian foundations and upholds its newer secular value systems, the Muslim diaspora is subject to “the fraught process of reinventing the narrative of ‘home’ and recapturing feelings of familiarity and belonging” (Zine 2012: 3). Whether the sense of belonging is to Canada or another “home,” “the absence of [such feelings] creates deep social and psychological tensions that can be

difficult to reconcile,” making belonging imperative to the human experience (Zine 2012: 3).

In arguing that Canadian Muslims can be considered a diaspora community, as opposed to a “minority” or an “immigrant” community, I aim to avoid the associated binary of assimilation and resistance identified by Clifford (1994: 311). Instead I seek to engage with the notions of belonging and hybridity that arise in diaspora discourse, particularly in relation to nationalism. Floya Anthias writes that “the nation-state is subverted by diasporic attachments which construct allegiances elsewhere” (1998: 566). She points to the role that diaspora plays in deconstructing the European and American hegemonic concept of nationalism as a “discrete” entity, associated with assimilation (Anthias 1998: 560; Clifford 1994: 308). The continued existence of allegiances outside of the nation-state, subverts notions of belonging and destabilises national unity (Anthias 1998: 566; Clifford 1994: 307). According to Clifford, “whether the national narrative is one of common origins or of gathered populations, it cannot assimilate groups that maintain important allegiances and practical connections to a homeland or a dispersed community located elsewhere” (1994: 307). Instead of assimilation, diaspora communities exist in a state of “selective accommodation: the desire to stay and be different” (Anthias 1998: 566). In maintaining a transnational positionality, the diaspora is a part of the nation-state while simultaneously being liberated from the “ideological chains of the ‘nation’” (Anthias 1998: 570). The communal consciousness that arises within diaspora populations provides a means of living within the nation-state, but maintaining identifications outside of it. Creating this alternate space within the nation-

state is a political project that defines “diaspora” as much as transnationality or dispersion (Clifford 1994: 308). In considering Canadian Muslims as a diaspora population, the communal consciousness of the *ummah* and the ideal of an Islamic State may be interpreted as the root of extra-national allegiance that unites this population across ethnic divisions, facilitates hybrid identity formation and resists assimilation. This ideal of the *ummah* connects Muslims with various political struggles internationally. This sense of global solidarity may complicate the experience of Canadian Muslims employed by a military institution engaged with a majority Muslim nation such as Afghanistan.

Scholars suggest that the diaspora experience is generationally unique, particularly regarding the political projects that unite the community. “The political activities of migrants may be dominated by reference to homeland struggles [...] although those of their children may be more likely to be focused around issues of exclusion in the country of settlement” (Anthias 1998: 570). Across generations, however, “authenticity” is significant in identifying one as a member of the group. In this context, “authenticity” is defined as being acknowledged by the particular community as a part of the “in-group.” Often, gender relations become significant in delineating the boundaries between insiders and outsiders (Anthias 1998: 572). Conformity to the gender expectations of the diaspora community may also serve as an indicator of inclusion for converts, whose ethnicity is not linked to cultures that uphold such gender norms. The reality of maintaining a hybrid identity however, is the desire or pressure to conform to two sets of gender expectations (Anthias 1998: 572-3). For this reason “Life for women in diasporic situations can be doubly painful – struggling with the material and spiritual insecurities of exile, with the

demands of family and work, and with the claims of old and new patriarchies” (Clifford 1994: 314). Despite the struggles of living within competing cultural value systems, the notion of “home” and belonging to a diaspora community can be empowering (Clifford 1994: 314).

In an industrialized, mass information, secular, capitalist society, “people feel the risk of losing their sense of identity and idea of what they know. The feeling of moral relativity becomes acute” (Cesari 2006: 92). While the push and pull of diaspora loyalties may leave some Canadians with an identity crisis, others turn to their communities, their ethnicities, their religions and their “homeland” customs to retain their sense of self, place and purpose (Husaini 1990: 10). In some cases, this can lead to “fundamentalism or puritanism” (Cesari 2006: 93). In maintaining alternative public spaces and hybrid identities, diaspora populations “negotiate and resist the social realities of poverty, violence, policing, racism and political and economic inequality,” realities which Muslims face in Canada today (Clifford 1994: 315).

### Canadian Nationalism

As I have argued, in considering Canadian Muslims as a diaspora population the related topics of belonging and hybrid identity formation replace those of assimilation and resistance. A necessary question arises from these subjects – belonging to what? While I have considered the definition of “diaspora,” applied it to an ethnically diverse population of Canadians and discussed the effects of competing loyalties on nationalism and sentiments of belonging, it is also imperative to discuss the identity formation of the



nation in question. What is Canadian identity? How has Canadian identity been constructed? How is it being imagined today? What role have Muslims played in Canadian history and identity construction? These questions are undoubtedly relevant when considering the participation of a diaspora population in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Identity is not static, it shifts and adapts over time. As demographics change and new value systems, traditions and viewpoints are introduced to a nation, they influence the culture of that nation and are influenced by the nation also (Zine 2012: 3). Drawing on the work of Thobani (2007), Jasmin Zine discusses the prominent Canadian identity myth – the “mosaic.” While romanticized as a pillar of equality, multiculturalism and opportunity, Zine argues that the Canadian “mosaic” is far from a representation of equality. She writes,

this plurality and cultural interpenetration occur within unequal relations of power. The incorporation of immigrant groups occurs through their insertion into hierarchal relations of racial, ethnic, and class-based privilege that relegate most of these groups to positions of subordination and marginality (Zine 2012: 3).

The Canadian “vertical mosaic” privileges the myths and histories of white settlers, despite the long history of plurality in Canada, subjugating “immigrants” and indigenous peoples to a normative white culture disguised as a bastion of equality and opportunity (Zine 2012: 4; Thobani 2007).

Writing in 1989, Cynthia Enloe describes a nation as “a collection of people who have come to believe that they have been shaped by a common past and are destined to share a common future” (45). This belief, she writes, “is usually nurtured by a common

language and a sense of otherness from groups around them” (Enloe 1989: 45). Among the key ways that Canada defines itself is in contrast to the United States of America. Envisioned as victims of various imperialist enterprises, whether from the British, the French or the Americans, Canadians come to understand themselves as a population whose distinct quality must be diligently “protected and produced” (Mackey 2002: 9). In taking up this marginalized and subordinate position, “white [Canadian] settlers take up a subject position more appropriate to Native people, in order to construct Canadians as victims of colonialism and US imperialism, and to create Canadian identity” (Mackey 2002: 49). This rhetoric of intrusion and external threat is frequently gendered, positioning Canada as a feminine entity, entwined with nature, purity, passivity, and fertility, yet vulnerable to more powerful external forces (Mackey 2002: 10).

The project of building nationalism and patriotism often relies on certain myths that position the nation and its citizens as part of a homogenous whole, both defining and distinguishing the “imagined community” (Patel 2012: 275). Original among such “myths” is the European settlement of North America myth, which holds that North America was a barren land to which courageous white settlers laid claim. This foundational myth “of the Canadian nation cannot be separated from the realm of hegemonic stories of white supremacy” (Patel 2012: 275). Relatedly, Eva Mackey points to a myth that she deems the “Benevolent Mountie Myth” (Mackey 2002: 1). Owing to the “naturally superior forms of British justice,” Canadian kindness to Aboriginal populations is touted as a key distinguishing feature of this tolerant, hardy, northern society, separating its history and identity from that of the United States (Mackey 2002: 1,

14). In this construction, Aboriginal people are “the colourful recipients of benevolence, the necessary ‘others’ who reflect back white Canada’s self-image of tolerance” (Mackey 2002: 2). While these myths have been dominant in defining and constructing Canadian identity, they paint a picture of Canada as a white nation up until the immigration boom of the twentieth century. This image however, obscures the reality of plurality in this nation, dating prior to Confederation.

Some scholars suggest that a population of Muslims, the Mandingoes of West Africa, had contact with the continent prior to Columbus in 1492, perhaps even trading with Aboriginals throughout eastern America along the Mississippi River and into Canada (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). Official records confirm the presence of a Muslim Canadian family, giving birth to a son in 1854 named James Love (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). The first of eight children born to James and Agnes Love, immigrants from Scotland who settled in Ontario, he became the first Canadian-born Muslim (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). By 1871 there was also another European couple, John and Martha Simon, who, with the Loves, “constituted almost the entire Muslim community in Canada” (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). The first Arab immigrants in Canada, mostly men, arrived from the Ottoman Empire in 1882, mainly coming from Syria, to escape conscription into the Ottoman army. While most were Christians, some were reportedly Muslims (Zine 2012: 4). Jasmin Zine writes that some of the early Arab immigrants originally settled in the United States, returned home to find a spouse, then eventually migrated to Canada, particularly Alberta, in the hopes of finding greater opportunity and prosperity (2012: 4-5). While the Muslim population of the nineteenth century, numbering thirteen individuals, was based entirely

in Ontario, by 1901 there were Muslims found in all provinces, apart from the Maritimes (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). The Muslim presence in Alberta particularly is long established and their position and contribution to the province makes them “among the pioneer Canadian Muslims” (Husaini 1990: 99).

By 1901 Canada’s Muslim community had grown to 47 members, who settled in Alberta and Saskatchewan. By 1911 there were 1,500 Canadian Muslims, most of them Syrian and Turkish migrants, many of whom worked on the construction of the western railways (Zine 2012: 5).

In participating in the construction of the Canadian Pacific Railway, pivotal to the unity of such a vast expanse of land, Muslims are in fact a part of building the Canadian nation as it is known today. They are a part of the shared history of transforming “into reality the ‘national dream’” (Hamdani 1983/4: 15).

The twentieth century brought immigration from Syria, Turkey, Albania and Yugoslavia, increasing the Muslim population in Canada (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). Growth however, was dampened by racial discrimination and economic constraints in some parts of the country, particularly British Columbia, which caused some Muslims to move south of the border. “Subsequently, the Muslim population of Canada declined from 797 in 1911 to 478 in 1921” (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). Early in the century, the growth of the Muslim population was stunted by racial policies excluding many Asian immigrants from entering Canada, informed particularly by the politics of the First World War, which led Turkish immigrants to be classified as enemies of the state. Until 1951, the Muslim community remained small, growing to approximately 3,000 individuals (Abu-Laban 1983: 76).

The “wheat boom” of the early twentieth century in Alberta and Saskatchewan, along with Canadian immigration policy at the time, resulted in the majority of immigrants from these nations, coming from largely agricultural backgrounds themselves, to settle in the Prairies (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). With the economic depression of the 1930s, many faced challenging financial pressures and sought employment in the more industrial provinces, migrating to Ontario and Quebec (Hamdani 1983/4: 9). As the industrialization process in Canada took off, the need for skilled labourers dictated immigration policy and Canadian demographics (Hamdani 1983/4: 16). The influx of immigrants from racially diverse backgrounds however, was limited by immigration policy that upheld a rhetoric of “climactic suitability,” which explicitly stipulated that only certain people, namely white people, would be suited to the cold climate of Canada (Mackey 2002: 33).

Throughout the Second World War, immigration largely ceased, but in the post-war period, the Canadian economy was in need of skilled labourers, which opened the door for immigrants once again (Zine 2012: 5-6; Cowen 2008: 168). Quebec became a significant area of settlement, in part owing to the French-language backgrounds of many entering Canada. “The inauguration of Islamic studies at McGill University in Montreal in 1952 also attracted many Muslim scholars and students to Quebec” (Hamdani 1983/4: 9). The 1960s and 70s saw changes in immigration policy, shifting away from exclusionary rhetoric and standards toward more objective measures, opening the door to immigrants from diverse backgrounds, and thus increasing the Muslim diaspora in Canada. “The 1950s were marked by the inflow of Muslims from the Arabic-speaking countries, the 1960s from South and South-East Asia and the 1970s from East Africa”

(Hamdani 1983/4: 8). At this point, births came to contribute significantly to the increasing diaspora population (Hamdani 1983/4: 8). According to census information, the Muslim population in Canada tripled during the 1970s, reaching 98 165 in 1981 (Hamdani 1983/4: 10).

By the 1980s over fifty percent of Muslims resided in Ontario, however the long history of the diaspora in Alberta is demonstrated by their participation in public life (Hamdani 1983/4: 9, 10). Writing in the early 1980s, Daood Hamdani notes that the Alberta “provincial cabinet includes a Muslim minister, Arabic is taught in some schools and the first mosque in Canada was built in Edmonton (the provincial capital) in 1938” (10; Husaini 1990: 16).

In tracing the early history of the Muslim diaspora in Canada, I seek to demonstrate that Muslim individuals have been a part of building the Canadian nation since prior to Confederation, were foundational to projects that shaped national identity and remain significant in articulating conceptions of belonging. Eva Mackey, who analyzed the construction of Canadian identity during the 125<sup>th</sup> Confederation anniversary celebrations, writes that “it is through meeting ‘the challenge of the land’ and ‘by shaping it and shaping themselves to it’ (MacDonald and Alsford 1989) that Aboriginal people, British and French colonisers, and newer immigrants, all *become* Canadian and progress together into the future” (2002: 75, emphasis in original). Despite this long, shared history, and the inclusive nature of this expression of belonging, imagining the Canadian nation has become a process of othering immigrant bodies, often

racially articulated. In recent history, Muslims specifically have become the key “threat” to Canadian identity.

### Constructing Canadian Identity

Shaista Patel eloquently writes, “a nation is not a geopolitical and geographic space but also a social and historical construct to which only certain bodies belong and where only certain bodies can ‘participate in the *idea* of the nation as represented in its national culture’ (Hall 1996: 612, emphasis added [by Patel])” (2012: 274). The binary nature of belonging necessitates a conception of otherness, in order to imagine togetherness. This is a necessary aspect of nation building – for how can borders be constructed if what lies beyond them does not exist? “In the post-9/11 political landscape, Islam in the West has become the marker of undesirable citizens and in effect represents ‘subaltern citizens’” (Zine 2012: 17). Although they are *citizens* and thus entitled to the same rights as all other Canadians, Muslims have largely been denied the right to a sense of belonging in Canada. Portrayed to be “foreign” to Canada by the media, and thus understood to be “foreign” by much of the populace, Muslims have been denied a claim to full Canadian identity and assumed to be hybrid individuals who identify more strongly elsewhere. Positioned as “accepted” and “tolerated” guests, it is “they” who must adapt and conform to Canadian cultural norms. Despite their long presence in Canada, their narratives do not contribute to imagining the Canadian nation or its most basic identity.

Since the introduction of Multiculturalism as an official policy in 1988, the rhetoric of plurality and diversity has been taken up centrally in articulating Canadian

identity. While fundamental to constructing nationalism, the notion of the “mosaic” in fact obscures the reality of embedded social hierarchies of citizenship and rights to national identity in Canada. In “any society, in any period, there is a central system of practices, meanings and values, which we can properly call dominant and effective” (Williams 1980: 38; Mackey 2002: xvii). This system becomes dominant in that it becomes “common sense in everyday life” (Mackey 2002: xvii). Notably, for a nation composed largely of immigrants, the dominant system in Canada is in fact ethnically based on British norms, however it is not understood as such. In response to demographic shifts in immigration, spawned by policy changes, such as the “points system,” instituted in the late 1960s by the Pearson government, by 1974 “‘non-whites’ for the first time constituted the majority of immigrants entering Canada” (Cowen 2008: 169). As a response to these changes, understandings of “immigrant” and “ethnicity” took on a racial character. “‘Ethnicity’ was understood to be something that other people had – people who were not of British or French heritage” (Cowen 2008: 169). Despite the “mosaic” myth, assimilationist ideology has historically been the prevalent stance toward immigrants to Canada, emphasizing integration into the existing social fabric, particularly through institutional participation (Husaini 1990: 12). Through this project, ethnicity, like religion, is “relegated to the private family realm” (Husaini 1990: 12). This arises from the “appropriation by one ethnic collectivity – the English – of as large a portion as possible of the institutional system of our society” (Breton 1978: 67). Although Canada takes up plurality as the defining feature of its identity, in fact British culture remains the



unmarked norm – the “non-ethnic” base-line culture to which all others are “ethnic” by comparison. That this dominant cultural norm is also racially connotative is significant.

Through Multiculturalism legislation, Canada’s “tolerance” was enshrined in policy as “a fundamental characteristic of Canadian heritage and identity” (Mackey 2002: 2). Spearheaded by Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau in 1971, celebrating and encouraging difference became a key aspect of Canadian nationhood (Husaini 1990: 13). Talal Asad (1993: 264) suggests that “political supremacy works specifically through the *institutionalisation* of difference” (Mackey 2002: 17, emphasis in original). Through the creation of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982, and Bill C-93 in 1988, the immensely diverse reality of Canadian society, a nation of immigrants, colonizers and oppressed Aboriginal populations, was managed, institutionalized and reconstructed as the defining feature of Canadian culture (Mackey 2002: 67; Husaini 1990: 13). According to Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada, “there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other” (1985: 15). While theoretically promising, it fails to acknowledge the unequal power relations embedded in the notions of “tolerance” and “accommodation” that accompany the rhetoric of multiculturalism.

This living with difference not only allows the ‘imagined community’ of the nation to distinguish its space from the liminal and primitive spaces within which the ‘strangers’ are trying to survive but also enables the nation to present itself to the rest of the world as benevolent and as a champion of human rights (Patel 2012: 278).

Although a bleak conception of what is generally considered a positive initiative toward legitimating distinctiveness and making space for cultural interconnectivity, it is

significant to acknowledge the embedded norms in order to comprehend their psycho-social impact on belonging and identity construction.

The advent of multiculturalism policy in Canada is historically contingent. Logical to the Canadian context, it arose from a history of tensions between the British, French and Aboriginal forces staking various claims to ownership of land and culture. As Thobani points out however, its creation in legislation is also historically informed by the international climate of the post Second World War period (2007: 150). Facing an “international crisis of whiteness” (Thobani 2007: 150) resulting from the intense racism of fascist Europe in the mid twentieth century and the rapid rejection of imperialist regimes internationally during this time, “white supremacy as the basis for scientific and social politics was discredited and therefore whiteness needed to be recuperated from its ties to racism, fascism, violence, and Aboriginal genocide” (Zine 2012: 22). Through multiculturalism, whiteness was politically redeemed and national identity was reconstructed through the rhetoric of “tolerance” and “openness” (Zine 2012: 22). Central to this argument regarding Canadian identity construction and belonging, but also instrumental to the broader subject of this study, is that in the process of “opening” Canada to becoming the beacon of multiculturalism, the byproduct became the naturalization of “white-Canadian” identity as “prior” or “native” to the land, and immigrants became envisioned as esteemed guests. “Other cultures become ‘multicultural’ in relation to that unmarked, yet dominant, Anglo-Canadian core culture” (Mackey 2002: 2; Anthias 1998: 558). “Original” Canadians charitably embracing their new compatriots, but maintaining a sense of claim to the land and the identity, became the

underlying attitudinal orientation toward multiculturalism. This built on prior national myths of discovery and white supremacy to firmly establish “the fictional construct of the nation as homogeneous” in its collective difference, while in fact “naturaliz[ing] the hegemony of one collectivity and its access to the ideological apparatuses of both state and civil society through conscription of certain ‘official’ discourses within the nation-state” (Patel 2012: 274). By celebrating “culture” through festivals and food, multiculturalism can be managed and the limits of what is “tolerable” difference can be maintained. “State recognition of diversity also limits diversity” (Mackey 2002: 65). While multiculturalism apparently results in a diverse society in which there is no dominant culture, it in fact reinforces the power hierarchy positioning Anglo-Canadian culture as “normal” (Zine 2012: 22; Mackey 2002: xx, 8, 65; Patel 2012: 275). While this discussion may seem to imply that there is something wrong with Canada formulating a dominant cultural identity, this is in fact not what I seek to convey. What I rather seek to demonstrate is that the dominant cultural identity in Canada *is* ethnically Anglo-Canadian. Failing to acknowledge this reality can obscure an analysis of the experience of non-ethnically British Canadians, working and living with/in Canadian institutions.

### Multiculturalism and Contingent Citizenship

While many Canadians feel as though they are beyond racism and exclusion, embodying tolerance and acceptance, the realities of othering and contingent citizenship, together with securitization and fear, are continuously demonstrated, perhaps with increasing poignancy in the twenty-first century. By employing the notion that Canada is

in a constant state of identity crisis, the nation legitimizes the need to preserve Canadian identity from a variety of external and internal forces. “The reproduction of ‘crisis’ allows the nation to be a site of a constantly regulated politics of identity” (Mackey 2002: 13). Propelled by sensationalism in the media, Muslims are portrayed as the antithesis to Canadian values, as “test[ing] the limits of Canadian multiculturalism” (Zine 2012: 1). This has spawned numerous debates in recent decades regarding “reasonable accommodation,” tolerance, integration and rights (Zine 2012: 6, 23). Burman (2007) argues that “internal ‘Others,’ who become hypervisible when accused of transgressions, are usefully mobilized in political and media discourses as foreign elements, so as to subtly outline the ideal citizen of a particularly geopolitical moment” (179). Despite being broadly understood as a recent immigrant population, this study demonstrates that Muslims have been a part of Canadian nation building since the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, they are framed as an internal “other” – reduced to an archetype of the “enemy within.” As of 1996, Muslims became the largest non-Christian religious group in the nation, 66 percent of which have expressed concern about discrimination in Canada (Zine 2012: 5-6, 8).

The occurrence of discriminatory “othering” is often perceived to be a rural phenomenon in Canada, absent in the multicultural havens of urban plurality. Eva Mackey, however, persuasively argues that these binaries in fact exist on a continuum, and makes use of evidence from the Canada 125<sup>th</sup> celebrations to demonstrate that government projects frequently uphold the small town, rural Canadian context as the emblem of “true” Canadian identity and values (2002: xviii). Government identity

politics, coupled with media reductionism and demonization of Muslims globally, I argue, places Muslim Canadians within a hierarchical system of citizenship. Canadians who embody and uphold the dominant culture and value systems are entitled to full citizenship rights and access to an imagined ownership of the nation and national identity. Canadians who challenge either the dominant culture or value system, are either denied their full citizenship rights, or are denied access to a true sense of belonging and participation in identity politics. They are contingent citizens – so long as they do not violate the dominant Anglo-Canadian cultural system, they may retain their rights, however at the first sign of threat, their rights may in fact be violated in the interest of national security.

Drawing on the Canadian citizenship guide *Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Canadian Citizenship* (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009), Jasmin Zine illustrates the way in which “the racist civilizational discourse of colonialism and social Darwinism that branded non-Western cultures as inherently ‘barbaric’” is employed by the Canadian government to “distinguish between desirable and undesirable citizens” (2012: 18). Quoting this citizenship guide, “Canada’s openness and generosity do not extend to barbaric cultural practices that tolerate spousal abuse, ‘honour killings,’ female genital mutilation or other gender-based violence” (Citizenship and Immigration Canada 2009). The protectionist quality of this excerpt testifies to a benevolent nation that must be preserved from “threats” to its morally superior value system (Zine 2012: 18). Such statements, coupled with the ubiquitous media tendency to attribute such cultural practices to Islam, make it clear that Muslims are undesirable Canadian citizens. “In this context, Muslims represent ‘cultural terrorists’ with premodern values that threaten the

heart of enlightened Western values, norms, and society” (Zine 2012: 21). Perceived as incapable of assimilation and able to potentially erode aspects of Canadian normative culture that are held to be fundamental, Muslims are considered to be “undesirable” citizens.

The concept of contingent citizenship becomes abundantly clear when considering the post-9/11 political context in Canada. Following the events of September 11, 2001, the Canadian government responded by enacting two bills, the Anti-terrorism Act, officially Bill C-36, and the Public Safety Act, Bill C-42 (Patel 2012: 272). Together these bills supposedly protect the Canadian nation and enable necessary protocols toward securitization, which in fact infringe upon the rights upheld by the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (Patel 2012: 279). Scholars have largely interpreted these initiatives negatively, arguing that they “perform a physical and ideological nation-building role by targeting Muslims of colour as the ‘enemy within’ the physical borders of the white ‘settler colony’” (Patel 2012: 273). By casting these Canadians as the “enemy within,” the government legitimized long established racist and exclusionary sentiments, such as those upheld by early immigration policy and those present in the aforementioned national myths (Patel 2012: 273). Rights and citizenship thus become contingent upon demonstrating loyalty to the nation and its values (Patel 2012: 279). Simultaneously, the notion that white Canadians are somehow more entitled to the imagined community of the nation was reinforced, and the limits of tolerance tightened.

The Anti-terrorism Act, Bill C-36, contained several significant departures from traditional criminal legislation, which exposed Canadian citizens to enhanced legal

scrutiny. By introducing what has been called the “motives clause,” the Bill expanded what was punishable as a crime. Bill C-36 “moved significantly from the accepted principle that criminal law is designed to prevent and punish socially unacceptable *acts* rather than *motives*” (Patel 2012: 286, emphasis in original). By making “intent” legally punishable, the Canadian government expanded their licence to consider individuals as suspected terrorists. “Preventative arrests” were also introduced in Bill C-36, as were “Investigative Hearings” (Patel 2012: 286-8). These measures enabled the government to crackdown on a racially and religiously defined community, enhance surveillance protocols, and deny rights to these Canadian citizens. Fiske (2000) and Shaista Patel (2012) argue that “surveillance is a technology of whiteness that racially zones both the physical spaces and the social spaces of the city; these spaces are demarcated by boundaries that whites cannot see and that people of colour cannot cross” (Patel 2012: 280). I argue that “belonging” is one such social space, reinforced by the securitization measures of the government following 9/11, which also served to underscore the ideal Canadian citizen and challenge all other Canadians on their right to belong.

Although Canadian legislation in the aftermath of 9/11 legitimized racialized notions of citizenship, the media had perhaps the most poignant role in framing Muslims as undesirable. Gitlin writes, “the media specialize in orchestrating everyday consciousness,” “they name the world’s parts, they certify reality as reality” (1980: 2, Jiwani 2012: 116). When the media presents a reality in which all Muslims are apt to be antagonistic to “Western” values, extremist, and largely unsuitable to the culture in North America, this becomes the perceived reality amongst the general population. In her

analysis of the *Globe and Mail* and the *National Post* coverage post-9/11, Yasmin Jiwani points out a media trend to devolve into Orientalist binaries – “modernity versus traditionalism, reason versus emotion, order versus disorder or chaos, and civilization versus barbarism” (Jiwani 2012: 120). This sort of offensive reductionism has been applied over the last decade with troubling consistency, across news sources. By framing Muslims to be in need of enlightenment or rescue from “Western” nations and values, a clear hierarchy of power is instituted and benevolence is maintained (Jiwani 2012: 115, 124). If unable to accept “Western” values, Muslims pose a threat. Mamdani notes that “good Muslims are modern, secular, and Westernized, but bad Muslims are doctrinal, antimodern, and virulent” (2004: 24; Jiwani 2012: 130). This binary of good versus bad Muslims casts suspicion on all those who do not integrate completely into the dominant Canadian culture. Visible markers of faith become potential justification for scrutiny, both socially and legally speaking.

Underpinning these shifts in public consciousness, government legislation, and media representation, is fear. “Fear provides the rationale for many repressive policies and practices that are easily legitimized by the public out of ‘rational’ concerns for safety and security” (Zine 2012: 14). This state of fear – fear specifically of the “bad” Muslim typecast by the media, but exposed by the government – paved the way for discussions about “reasonable accommodation” that continue more than a decade later in Canadian politics (Zine 2012: 23). Owing to the “Quiet Revolution” of the 1960s, which shifted Quebecois culture fervently toward secularism and gender equality, nowhere in Canada has the discussion of accommodation been more prominent than in Quebec (Zine 2012:



24). The 2008 Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences, known as the Bouchard-Taylor Commission, highlighted these fears and firmly positioned the Quebecois and the Muslim diaspora on opposite sides of a battle for French-Canadian culture. “In their report, Bouchard and Taylor (2008b, 121) conclude that Canadian multiculturalism ‘emphasizes diversity at the expense of continuity’” (Zine 2012: 24). Translated, this statement indicates that there is only so much tolerance that Canadians can be expected to give without forfeiting the cornerstones of their culture. Hage deems this “paranoid nationalism” (2003).

Increasingly targeted, visible forms of religiosity have become the focus of integration analysis and alarmist stereotyping. The gendered aspect of framing the Muslim diaspora as undesirable and potentially dangerous is revealed in the recent controversies surrounding the *niqab* and the *hijab*. Numerous studies have indicated that wearing a *hijab* can lead to workplace discrimination and limit the employment opportunities of Muslim women (Persad and Lukas 2002; Nagra 2011a, 2011b; Marcotte 2010; Caidi and MacDonald 2008; Patel 2012). Beyond employment equity, recent legislative maneuvers in the Quebec government have sought to limit the ability of Muslim women who wear the *niqab* to access government services and institutions (Zine 2012: 9). “Not only are niqabi women’s rights to make reasoned choices about their bodies curtailed as a result of these moves, [...] these are anti-democratic moves based on knee-jerk reactions to religious and cultural difference that ironically undermine the very values politicians claim to uphold” (Zine 2012: 10). Recent legislation against the *niqab* arose after Naema Ahmed, an Egyptian immigrant to Quebec, refused to remove her veil

in a French language course. Although an effort to enforce integration and “Quebecois” conceptions of gender equality, in expelling Ms. Ahmed from this class the instructors and the provincial government that upheld the decision in fact inhibited her efforts to integrate (Zine 2012: 10; Patriquin 2010). Proponents of Bill 94, the ban on the *niqab* when accessing government services and public institutions, “unwittingly undermine the very liberal values they claim to be championing under the guise of ‘rescuing’ Muslim women from their illiberal values, their faith, and ultimately their ‘illiberal’ clothing” (Zine 2012: 11). Significantly, by placing Muslim women within the scope of provincial legislation, and renewing the fervor with which Muslim Canadians are discussed as “outsiders” in the media, Muslim women’s bodies have become indicators of national belonging (Zine 2012: 12). “Under Bill 94, the niqab is a sartorial signifier of national exclusion that is seen as betraying dominant liberal values and thereby positioning Muslim women as outsiders to the nation and deviants within the law” (Zine 2012: 12). This legislation, which first arose in 2009, appeals to a familiar Orientalist trope that has become the pillar of popular “Western” attitudes toward Muslims globally – in Spivak’s words, “save brown women from brown men” (1988: 305). Ironically, this initiative was spearheaded by the Muslim Canadian Congress, an organization that has been deeply criticized (Zine 2012: 13). Bill 94 had received significant support both in Quebec and Canada at large, but has since been abandoned (Zine 2012: 15; Scott 2010).

In the post-9/11 world, “Our Muslimness was perceived as tainting our allegiance to the nation and positioned us as irreconcilable subjects” (Zine 2012:18). The most

prominent example of this reality in Canada is most likely Maher Arar. A Canadian citizen detained by U.S.A. officials in September 2002 for suspicion of having links to al-Qaeda, Arar was imprisoned in Syria for ten months where he faced torture and was coerced into making a false confession. Eventually acquitted, Arar's case testifies to the effects of fear, manifest in legislation, on the rights of Canadian citizens.

Innocence, however, provides no guarantees in a world governed by the politics of risk and 'racial securitization.' A new era of 'border racism' enacts contemporary regimes of surveillance where race, ethnicity, and religion are markers of risk that demand proof of innocence, loyalty, and citizenship (Zine 2012: 16).

Guilty until proven innocent is the guiding principle when it comes to responding to the threat of terrorism in North America. Following the arrests of eighteen men in 2006 accused of developing a plot to behead the Prime Minister, information presented about these suspects demonstrates the same reality – that these men were “irreconcilable citizens.” Shaista Patel points out that information about when they or their families immigrated to Canada was disclosed in order to demonstrate that “these men were not seen as Canadians but as belonging ‘somewhere else’” (2012: 290). Their educational background was also among the details released, “in order to argue that no matter what, these barbaric Muslim men were just not *capable* of learning the Western values” (Patel 2012: 290, emphasis in original). These examples are undoubtedly damaging to the idealism that casts Canada as the beacon of multiculturalism and inclusivity. They reveal that embedded within various nation-building projects, legislative maneuvers, and media

trends<sup>3</sup> is an ideological system that reinforces Canada as a white, secular, liberal nation, and excludes those that challenge traditional conceptions of Anglo-nationalism. It must be noted that many groups have experienced such treatment in the aftermath of 9/11, often for sharing ethnic or racial similarities to Muslims and thus being misrepresented alongside this homogenized and demonized group.

### Conclusions – Moving Forward

In part as a result of immigration, but also due to births and conversions, Islam is currently experiencing the greatest rate of growth of religions in Canada, comprised of numerous sects across diverse ethnic and racial lines (Zine 2012: 6). Although to this point, this discussion has emphasized certain trends in Canadian socio-politics, discrimination is in fact not the most significant concern for the Muslim Canadian diaspora. Employment, particularly employment appropriate to educational level, is difficult to come by for Muslims in Canada. Reporting from a number of surveys conducted in the mid-2000s Jasmine Zine writes “that whereas the doors to professional fields may be closed for newcomers with foreign degrees, the doors to the unskilled, low-paid labour force are wide open” (Zine 2012: 8). Whether this in itself reflects discrimination, or a gap to be addressed in Canadian immigration policy, is unclear.

Education is also of primary concern to the Muslim diaspora in Canada today, particularly with regard to public funding for religious schools. Frustration arises for

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<sup>3</sup> It must be noted that there are exceptions to such media trends. The CBC in particular, has often problematized these cases and demonstrated a conscious reflexivity in their news casting.

many Muslims from the allotment of public funding to Catholic schools, but not to any other religiously affiliated school system. While Muslims, Jews or Buddhists can and do open schools of their own, they do not receive government funding from tax dollars, and still have to contribute to the public school system in addition to paying for a private education for their children (Ali and Whitehouse 1992: 165). “Socialization agencies such as schools, media, and peer groups” may pose a risk to the preservation of Islamic cultural norms and heritage (Husaini 1990: 16, 17). Although somewhat sensationalist perhaps, Ali and Whitehouse write that this reality subjects minority groups to “a curriculum of subjugation to a preconceived master plan of assimilation” (1992: 166). Undoubtedly, schooling is the primary way in which Canadians are socialized, exposed to the foundational “myths” of Canadian nationalism, and ingrained from an early age with the values that are “dominant” in this society.

What has been presented in this chapter demonstrates that the Canadian lived reality with regard to the ideals of multiculturalism and equality is not perfect. While Canadians pride themselves on their “mosaic,” they neglect to acknowledge that hierarchies with regard to citizenship and belonging to the nation do in fact exist. Although a nation of immigrants, built on a foundation of colonialism and persecution, there remains a sense of white entitlement that is pervasive in the rhetoric of nationalism, values, rights and integration.

In this moment, uncontrollable and unmanageable forms of diversity and difference (differences not based on origins but on contemporary politics) threaten the unity and progress of the nation-state. Finally, order is regained through different cultures working together for *the future of the nation* (Mackey 2002: 82).

Inherent in this common purpose, is also a pressure to “make it work” – to adapt and accommodate so that peace may be maintained, and all can have a space in this society. This brings forth a key question to consider: how does a diaspora population adapt to the context in which they live yet also retain the unique history and traditions that define their worldview? There is no simple answer to this question, and it remains a contentious topic that is constantly evolving.

In this chapter, I have traced the effects of the deterritorialization of culture and the subsequent formation of diasporas on sentiments of nationalism and belonging. I have argued that by understanding the Muslim community in Canada as a diaspora, this discussion can be liberated from the binary rhetoric of assimilation and resistance, to instead consider belonging and hybridity. By expanding the definition of “diaspora” to apply to Muslims across ethnic divisions, I have created a space to discuss Canadian Muslims collectively, justified by the foundational role of religion in the daily lives of Muslims and their conception of the world. By illustrating the true nature of Canadian multiculturalism as a “vertical mosaic” and the role of Anglo-Canadian culture as normative, I have established the position of Muslims post-9/11 as contingent citizens and demonstrated a key inhibitor to a sense of belonging. I argue that understanding the way that Canadian identity is constructed, and the position of various actors within the social hierarchy, informs feelings of belonging to the nation and to the national institutions that uphold the same cultural norms.

As Canadians, we are in a situation of “collective hybridity engaged in a shared and progress-oriented project” (Mackey 2002: 82). As Irish-Canadians, Muslim-

Canadians, Native-Canadians, or what have you, we are united in our hybridity, in the multiple ways in which we define ourselves and identify with one another. Eva Mackey puts forth an intriguing suggestion: “Northern wilderness and Canada’s cold climate remain constant images in public representation and myth in Canada, ‘the only sure token... of collective identity’ (Berland 1994: 99)” (2002: 40).

THE JOURNEY TO A REPRESENTATIVE FORCE:  
Military Diversification and the Shift to Multifaith Chaplaincy

The Canadian Armed Forces is a representative body of the Canadian nation, both nationally and internationally. As the demographic makeup of Canada changes over time with increasing rates of immigration from diverse regions, the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) also evolves and diversifies. This chapter will trace the development of military recruitment strategy in the post-Second World War era and the ideological shift away from the ideal white, male soldier to a diverse force representative of Canadian society. It will also trace the development of the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch (CAFChB) from a voluntary, civilian collective during the war era, to an official military branch of Christian chaplains, and finally to a diverse, multifaith service. Making use of first hand accounts from the first non-Christian CAF chaplain officially incorporated into the Branch, this chapter will introduce themes that are pervasive in the reflections of many Muslim military personnel.

Military Recruitment and Diversification

In the years following the Second World War, massive shifts occurred globally with regard to economics, politics, social policy and migrations. In Canada, these changes manifest in rapid and pervasive industrialization, social and political emphases on capitalist gain tempered by social welfare initiatives and wage expansion, and the valuing of education as instrumental to social and economic prosperity. By the mid-1960s, “the military’s leverage in the labour market gradually gave way” (Cowen 2008: 125). These



changes resulted in a recruitment crisis that has continued into the twenty-first century and has informed Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) recruitment strategy and demographic composition.

With the industrialization driven by the Second World War, came urbanization, redistributing the Canadian population into city centres where gainful employment could be found. What was once a 90 percent rural population in the early part of the twentieth century, became a 75 percent urban population by the early 1960s (Katz 1969: 15; Cowen 2008: 148). This mass urbanization was a result of two forces at work in the nation – migration within Canada as well as immigration to Canada (Cowen 2008: 149). In 1966, immigration policy in Canada was revised as the government of Lester B. Pearson issued a “White Paper on immigration policy with the goal of encouraging as many immigrants to Canada as possible in order to boost the national population and economy” (Cowen 2008: 168). With the introduction of the “points system” for immigrant evaluation, previous racial preferences for European immigrants were replaced by preferences for language abilities, employment skills and education, opening the nation to immigrants from historically excluded regions (Cowen 2008: 168). These new immigrants largely settled in urban city centres, contributing to a growing cultural disparity between urban and rural Canada (Cowen 2008: 150).

As Canada urbanized, the historical pool of CAF recruits diminished and recruitment strategy developed to widen the understanding of the ideal candidate for military service. In the years immediately following the Second World War, “the military citizen, was not only male; he was English speaking, white, heterosexual” and frequently

from a rural area (Cowen 2008: 108). Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, policies excluding immigrants and racial minorities were replaced by efforts to recruit from these “untapped” resources (Cowen 2008: 23, 107). Government legislation at this time however, favoured “individualism, diversity, and even anti-militarism” (Cowen 2008: 23). Coupled with the capitalist ambitions of Canadian society and the subsequent emphasis on education as imperative to economic success, the Canadian Armed Forces needed to recast themselves as a competitive employer in a booming labour market (Cowen 2008: 150).

The mid-1960s and early 1970s saw increasing levels of high school retention, diminishing a key source of “unskilled” recruits. Such “unskilled” individuals, lacking education or training in trades, had previously made up 85 percent of CAF personnel (Cowen 2008: 136, 137). With the technological developments of the Second World War, increasingly the CAF sought to recruit more educated individuals, however this economically advantaged population was less likely to find the military an appealing career choice (Cowen 2008: 139; CFPARU 1974: 6-7). Although eager to recruit from minority groups, the common emphasis on education as the key to socio-economic ambitions among many of these populations further inhibited the CAF efforts to diversify (Jung 2007: 31). In addition, the “negative image” of military service in countries of origin may also factor into military service being cast as an unappealing career choice (Jung 2007: 34).

Beyond the economically informed challenges to military recruitment, the 1970s were also characterized by an unprecedented wave of anti-militarism globally, largely in

response to the Vietnam War, but broadly framed in anti-colonialist rhetoric. Fears over nuclear proliferation and environmental destruction, together with the rise in civil rights movements, generated a powerful “new liberalism” in Canada (Cowen 2008: 155, 156). During this period “new defence policy was transforming soldiers from war-wagers to peacekeepers. Trudeau furthermore reduced the number of troops serving under the NATO banner and froze the defence budget” (Cowen 2008: 157). Despite these challenges, the Forces have continued to actively recruit from the full diversity of the Canadian nation, in part by leveraging soldier welfare and employment stability. As numerous global conflicts arose during the 1990s, and Canada became increasingly involved in North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and United Nations (UN) missions overseas, the Forces invested further in soldier welfare (Cowen 2008: 3). By casting enhanced benefits and social welfare as a form of “payment” for the high-stakes nature of military employment, the Canadian Armed Forces presents themselves as “an employer of choice” (Cowen 2008: 6, 53).

Not without significant challenges, the Canadian Armed Forces has gradually diversified to better represent the Canadian population. In line with national demographics, Muslims are now estimated to be the second largest faith group in the CAF (Benham Rennick 2011: 140). While the Forces does not keep statistics on religious identification, the Chaplain General’s Office in a 2003 report approximated there to be 200 Muslim members, while a CAF spokesperson in a 2006 article estimated 648 (Benham Rennick 2011: 140). Today those numbers may be significantly greater, as the

CAF began target-recruiting Muslims after 2006, and has since increased its representation of Muslims in the chaplain service (Benham Rennick 2011: 140).

As Canadian society embraced multiculturalism as the defining feature of its identity, the Canadian Armed Forces has also undergone diversification. Similarly, the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch has undergone significant development to accommodate the needs of this pluralistic population. “While some scholars have argued that pluralism and relativism encourage secularization [...] military chaplains have actually secured a place for their traditional role by being able to meet the needs of personnel” (Benham Rennick 2011: 70). Overall, as the CAF seeks to “modernize” and proportionally represent the Canadian nation, it also fundamentally changes with regard to institutional structure and military culture (Cowen 2008: 159-160).

#### The Development of the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch

The early history of Canadian military chaplaincy is characterized by convenience. In both the First and Second World War, volunteer civilian chaplains were collected under various temporary organizational headings to minister to Canadian troops. On August 19, 1915, Canadian chaplains were organized into the Canadian Chaplain Service for the duration of the First World War (Benham Rennick 2011: 21; Crerar 1995: 45; 2006b: 26). Again, they were organized in 1939 when the Second World War commenced. During this time, Naval chaplains joined the effort, covering all three military environments (Army, Navy, Air Force) (Benham Rennick 2011:21). It was during the Second World War that the critical role of chaplains in the maintenance of

soldier welfare was solidified. “On 9 August 1945, the chaplaincy found a permanent place in Canadian military history with the formation of the Canadian Chaplain Services Protestant and Roman Catholic” (Benham Rennick 2011: 21). Composed of 137 Protestant chaplains and 162 Roman Catholic chaplains, as the war ended, personnel returned to bases nationwide and chaplains were present to both ease their transition and care for their new families (DND 2003a:1.3-1.4; Benham Rennick 2011: 22). This period saw a burgeoning base infrastructure, transforming what were formerly training grounds and barracks into communities (DND 2003a: 1.3; Benham Rennick 2011: 22). As a result of these developments, including the creation of temporary structures of worship, the role of chaplains evolved to meet the needs, incorporating family counseling into their duties (Benham Rennick 2011: 22).

In 1949, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) was formed by Canada, the United States of America, and 10 European nations based “on the common belief of the North Atlantic union in the values and virtues of Christian civilization” (Morton 1990: 233; Benham Rennick 2011: 22). This alliance has since informed Canadian foreign policy and military engagement. In 1956, Lester B. Pearson, then Canadian Prime Minister, established the United Nations Emergency Force in response to the Suez Canal Crisis, which created “modern-day peacekeeping” (Benham Rennick 2011: 23; Morton 1990: 241-2). Throughout the period following the World Wars, Canadian sentiments toward military spending shifted, budgets were reduced, and subsequently auxiliary staff was minimized (Benham Rennick 2011: 23). With fewer chaplains in the service, the Canadian Chaplaincy continued to provide spiritual guidance and relief to Canadians at

home, on naval ships, and on peacekeeping missions internationally, including the Korean War and the Cuban Missile Crisis (Benham Rennick 2011: 23). Formerly divided between the Army, Navy and Air Force, each independently coordinated, the chaplaincy officially integrated on September 22, 1958 (Benham Rennick 2011: 24, Fowler 1996: 124). Nearly a decade later, the Canadian military itself underwent unification, bringing together the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy under the umbrella of the Canadian Forces in Bill C-243 (Benham Rennick 2011: 24-5; Cowen 2008: 127). With the goal of increasing efficiency in the face of funding challenges, chaplains began to feel undervalued by command, believing they were “considered [...] a drain on economic resources” (Benham Rennick 2011: 25). The integration of the Chaplain Branch, although fraught with challenges and changes unwelcomed by some, eventually resulted in the creation of the chaplain training school on Base Borden in the 1990s (Benham Rennick 2011: 26; Fowler 1996: 122, 129, 256).

The foundational shifts of the post war period until the 1970s were met with changes of a different nature in the final decades of the twentieth century. Public religiosity evolved during this period, shifting away from institutionalized religion toward spirituality, new religious movements and “personal freedom” (Benham Rennick 2011: 28). As immigration increased, the demographics of the Forces also diversified (Benham Rennick 2011: 28). As a result, “traditionally trained chaplains could no longer count on religious ‘common knowledge’ among personnel to whom they ministered and people were becoming less interested in ‘old-fashioned’ religious perspectives” (Benham Rennick 2011: 29). As a response, the chaplaincy initiated a shift to ecumenism, opening

chaplain recruitment to a more diverse pool of denominations. This resulted in the need to create a training facility to ensure credentials and continuity within the Branch. Together the integration of the chaplaincies affiliated with the three environments and the shift toward a more interfaith, Christian model, led to the formation of the Canadian Forces Chaplain School and Centre at Borden, Ontario on April 12, 1994 (Benham Rennick 2011: 30; Fowler 1996: 257). In the late 1990s the Branch integrated further, uniting the Protestant and the Roman Catholic Chaplain Branches in 1995, and forming the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy (ICCMC) in 1997 (Benham Rennick 2011: 31). The result of these commitments to interfaith chaplaincy was an occupational shift wherein “all chaplains were to operate as if they were religiously ‘generic,’ so they might serve all personnel regardless of their denomination in all aspects of their duties except ecclesial requirements” (Benham Rennick 2011: 31). This policy paved the way for the introduction of non-Christian chaplains six years later.

Throughout this shift to ecumenism, the Canadian Forces was engaged in over 30 peacekeeping and non-combat missions globally during the 1990s, some of which were exceptionally traumatic (Benham Rennick 2011: 40). Facing heightened operational stress, “many people turned to chaplains for counsel and consolation” (Benham Rennick 2011: 40; 2005; English 2000: 35). It also became apparent during this period that while the importance of institutionalized religion in Canada may have waned in the latter decades of the twentieth century, it continued to play a fundamental and informative role in the lives of people globally. Operations in Somalia particularly “demonstrated a strong need for cultural sensitivity and religious literacy about both the civilian populations and

the international troops with whom Canadian soldiers work” (Benham Rennick 2011: 42). Remaining relevant, the Chaplain Branch adjusted their training programs to include courses on peacekeeping and humanitarian operations (Benham Rennick 2011: 42).

Although foundationally a Christian institution, the Chaplaincy has taken steps to respond to and to facilitate the increasing plurality of the Canadian nation and the Canadian Armed Forces. As Canadian institutions officially secularized with the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, the inherently religious Chaplaincy took steps toward providing multifaith services (Benham Rennick 2011: 44). First among these was hiring a Muslim chaplain, Imam Suleyman Demiray in 2003.

#### The Shift to Multifaith Chaplaincy

Despite instances of diversity in the Chaplain Branch during the Second World War, in what he calls “modern” times, one man pioneered the shift to multifaith chaplaincy in the Canadian Armed Forces. Imam Suleyman Demiray officially joined the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch (CAFBCB) on June 26, 2003 (Fortin 2012; DND 2003b). Recruited by the Chaplain General at the time, Imam Demiray thought that bringing a Muslim into the chaplaincy might be too progressive of a step for the CAFBCB (06 March 2014). Nonetheless, he was excited to be a trailblazer and to hold such an important place in the history of the CAF. Around the same time, the Chaplaincy also sought to hire a Jewish padre, however due to scheduling conflicts, it was Imam Demiray who became the first non-Christian chaplain with the united CAFBCB.



“I can see the good intention. Typical Canadian multicultural society – welcoming. Everyone seemed excited, kind of without knowing how to handle me. That part I felt all the way” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). First posted, prior to basic training, to Edmonton, Demiray expressed his concerns about the diversity of the area to which he was headed. Living in Ottawa prior to enlisting, Demiray jokes that you “hear all sorts of stories” about living out West. Despite this apprehension, he praises the support he received from his Chaplaincy supervisor in Edmonton and pride at his accomplishments in the face of certain challenges. As a padre at the Edmonton garrison, a fully operational base, chaplains are assigned to units in which they integrate completely, training alongside personnel of all ranks, embodying the “Ministry of Presence.”<sup>4</sup> Through this process, Demiray was fully exposed to military culture – the greens, the saluting, the hierarchy, “It was quite an experience [...] Everything was shocking” (06 March 2014). It was in Edmonton that he realized “I have a huge responsibility being the icebreaker, because everyone is looking at you for whether it is going to work or not” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). At the time there were only a small number of Muslim members in Edmonton serving, and thus, he was facing an entirely different audience than he had in his previous work as a hospital chaplain – different not only in terms of religious affiliation, but also in terms of openness, acceptance, exposure, and culture. “You can’t control the people’s perception,” he says, describing the need to accept the realities of this new audience and move forward in his position (Demiray, 06 March 2014). With his

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<sup>4</sup> The “Ministry of Presence” is described by the 2005 Chaplain’s Manual as: “Strives to achieve ‘active’ presence by participating, to the extent possible, in the life and work of the unit” (DND 2005: 35), which “establishes a pastoral relationship of mutual trust and respect with the members of the unit” (DND 2005: 33).

family remaining in Ottawa, Demiray experienced this transition to military life alone in Edmonton, prior to his basic training, which would take place in Ontario. His experience in Edmonton left him “questioning so many things... how to be fit in that military culture” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). My sense from our interview is that he sought to manage two identities that at first did not seem to reconcile – his identity as a Muslim chaplain and his identity as a member of the Canadian Armed Forces. “Military culture is not [an] easy one. It’s quite demanding, physically, emotionally. [...] The beginning transition and transformation [...] and historical responsibility. Those days were quite challenging” (Demiray, 06 March 2014).

Imam Demiray faced further challenges during basic training at Base Borden in Barrie, Ontario. Chaplain training involves two phases – the “green phase” is the military training that all recruits undertake, the “purple phase” is the chaplain training. During “green phase” training Demiray describes being belittled and harassed, feeling targeted by command.

Not only me, a couple others were feeling [it]. Specifically I felt that someone was targeting me, ok? At that time I didn’t know the military culture, how to handle it, right? So you don’t know what to do and you don’t want to jeopardize your career, but a couple of times I felt that level – that [it’s] not for me, that [it’s] not meant for me, I’m not going to be able to carry on (Demiray, 06 March 2014).

Eventually, Demiray approached the chain of command with his experience, which they acknowledged as harassment. His complaint was processed and an apology was issued. “My intention was not to punish someone or [have them] kicked out of the CF, just to correct, and give me a space also, because that’s unacceptable, that’s unprofessional also” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Despite such challenges, as well as the demanding nature of

basic training, Demiray says “still I was ok” during the “green phase,” but “It was [a] learning curve for me. Painfully, very painfully” (06 March 2014).

Further, he faced the challenge of the military’s unpreparedness to accommodate a practicing Muslim. As a chaplain, naturally Imam Demiray maintains his five daily prayers and participates in congregational Friday prayers weekly. His perception was that there had been no preparation to accommodate these realities on the part of the Canadian Armed Forces. From his exposure prior to basic training in Edmonton, he had prepared himself emotionally to “fit in the system” by planning ahead. To do so, he would “find a corner, and do [his] prayer” during scheduled breaks (Demiray, 06 March 2014).

Nonetheless, some of his “Christian colleagues” saw this as “special privileges” although he was not getting extra time to do so. His own willingness to be flexible and “fit in the system” however, could not alone accommodate Friday congregational prayers, which due to the location of the base and the limited Muslim community in Barrie at the time, meant he missed several weeks of Friday prayers. “It hurt a lot to skip that many. But at that time, I didn’t have any options. [...] Luckily, when other Imams had their basic, we had a multifaith centre here [on base]” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Flexibility was also required regarding food. While pre-packaged dried foods were available in Kosher and Halal, there were no such options for fresh food. As such, he, again, like many other Muslim members, found a way to “fit in” choosing vegetarian and fish options. To Demiray, these realities were part of being the first non-Christian member of the Branch; they were part of the learning curve. “If you are a pioneer, you face these challenges. You don’t have option[s]. Either you create, or face the realities” (Demiray, 06 March 2014).

The diversification process of the Chaplain Branch required patience on Demiray's part, as well as flexibility. Particularly during basic training "team harmony" is essential, for the trials endured are designed to require cohesion and friendship to help individual members survive the rigorous nature of the exercise. "If you don't act as a team, you can't survive, you can't go through the basic. [...] You have to be part of the team, you have to show some flexibility" (Demiray, 06 March 2014). This concept permeates much of Imam Demiray's narrative describing his experience with the Canadian Armed Forces, and is a prominent aspect of the experience of many Muslim CAF personnel.

This flexibility was not exclusive to the "green phase" of training, it was also necessary to fit into the chaplaincy system, which was and continues to be, largely structured on a Christian system. Expected to participate in Christian worship services and offer prayers, Demiray established ways to participate without compromising his authenticity to Islam. Although he was a chaplaincy student at the time, training at Borden, he expresses some frustration that he was not consulted about how to diversify and accommodate the shift to multifaith chaplaincy that he was pioneering, and thus his subject matter expertise was not utilized (Demiray, 06 March 2014).

Returning to Edmonton after basic training, Demiray began to establish precedent for multifaith chaplaincy at a functional, active level on base, engaging with fellow chaplaincy team members and with personnel. He recalls the first few weekly chaplains' meetings he attended being very welcoming, his colleagues aspiring to make him feel included and adapt their Christian traditions and format.

I said to them, “I want you to be as you were, I mean, this is not public setting, you know? In public setting, if it is a memorial service, yea, we have to be inclusive. [...] I want you to be as you are. Whatever way you are praying in my presence, this is you. As long as you accept me as a Muslim chaplain, you know, that’s ok with me” (Demiray, 06 March 2014).

This common thread permeates much of Demiray’s reflections. He emphasizes throughout our discussion that change should not entail loss, since loss is emotional and can foster frustration and animosity (Demiray, 06 March 2014). These issues however are not yet resolved. The structures and the traditions of the Chaplain Branch are Christian, how to adapt these to be interfaith and inclusive is an ongoing discussion and process. Part of that process has been to distinguish between “prayer” and “worship.” As Demiray describes, each tradition has its own worship rituals, but prayer can be more inclusive in that the traditions officially recognized by the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy (ICCMC) share the same God. In an interfaith setting, many can pray together and participate without compromising their individual religious identities. With worship, participation is limited because it is more ritually informed (Demiray, 06 March 2014). This has been one of the ways that the chaplaincy has shifted to multifaith inclusivity, particularly in ceremonial settings, by offering or performing a general prayer, limiting the ritualized components exclusive to a particular tradition.

In response to the diversification of the Forces and the Chaplain Branch, certain traditions rooted in Christianity faced adjustment as well. In 2005, the Chaplain Branch motto was revised. Formerly *In Hog Signo Vincet*, translated to “In this Sign you Shall Conquer,” the original motto refers to the Christianization of the Roman Empire under Constantine (Benham Rennick 2011: 44). Adjusted for inclusivity, the Branch motto

became “Called to Serve,” *Vocatio Ad Servitium*. New chaplain’s badges were also introduced to better symbolize the faiths of their wearers – a crescent moon for the Muslim chaplains, and a Star of David with a depiction of the Torah for Jewish chaplains (Benham Rennick 2011: 44-5). Further, “the official hymn of the chaplaincy, *Onward Christian Soldiers*, affirmed a culture of Christian superiority and was changed to the more inclusive *Joyful We Adore Thee*” (Benham Rennick 2011: 45).

Imam Demiray jokes that he is right in the middle of the happy, but forced marriage between the Protestants and Catholics that united the Chaplain Branch in 1995. A consequence of including another partner in this marriage was the loss of certain traditions, such as the Chaplain march and the chaplain badge. Further, prior to Imam Demiray, there was no multifaith infrastructure available. To develop a multifaith space in Edmonton, initially some proposed that the already existing chapel, which suffered from low attendance, be converted to multifaith space. Demiray resisted this however, saying “When you touch something, it’s kind of emotional. Plus I didn’t need that much space. I get that. That way maybe you are not welcomed. Because of you, it [loss] happened” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Although some loss was unavoidable in transitioning to multifaith chaplaincy, other feelings of loss could be prevented.

Despite apprehensions and challenges, the shift to multifaith chaplaincy has been successful. “I’m very proud that way. I managed to open this door at least. And they hired two more [Muslim] chaplains after me” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Beyond the impact that such a transition had on the Canadian Armed Forces community, diversifying the Chaplain Branch had an impact on an international level as well. Following the example

of the United States, Canada has been among the first to officially diversify their military chaplaincy, generating significant interest from the international community, Europe specifically, about the success of this process (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Additionally, the CAF deployed Imam Demiray to Afghanistan in 2005, after only two years of experience. In his words, at the time of his deployment, he was still a “new baby chaplain” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). On this stage the potential advantages of an interfaith chaplaincy were manifest.

With great pride, Imam Demiray recounts his experiences in Afghanistan. One particular story illustrates his achievements. He found himself one day in a municipal mayor’s office in Afghanistan. As the meeting was about to begin and tensions and apprehensions were high, he asked the translator to communicate that there was a Canadian Imam present who wished to offer a prayer to commence the meeting. He describes the room falling quiet, the bickering and shouting coming to a halt (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Although they were shocked at the appearance of this Canadian Imam, an unbearded man in military greens with a Canadian flag on his shoulder, Demiray’s gesture brought warmth to the interaction and established a sense of common ground in faith. After that meeting, the mayor requested that they always send an Imam along. “That experience gave me an idea [of] how efficiently [...] I can use my knowledge for the deployment” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). This concept is now called “religious leader engagement.”

Pioneering this strategic initiative, Demiray utilized his knowledge of Islam to broker relationships and facilitate the operations of the CAF. “During the Taliban time,

that sectarian relationship was broken, ok? And I managed to meet differently first both Shia and Sunni mullahs, even the Shia mullahs, and brought them together” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Managing to temporarily bridge a divide that has been destructive in numerous contexts, Demiray showed himself to be an asset in operations and demonstrated the potential benefits of incorporating diverse subject matter expertise into the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch. Principle Chaplain of Jewish and Muslim Faith Groups, Lieutenant-Colonel Martine Bélanger comments on his contributions to CAF operations in Afghanistan:

What he had accomplished went beyond the Canadian bases, he was in theatre, and [even] if we are finished with all these tours, we’ve just started to gather all the outcomes of this, and what we can do to help him to better serve and to utilize this certainly good ministry, the ministry that he did (Bélanger, 04 April 2014).

While abroad, he also realized his abilities to effectively minister to and engage with all CAF personnel, regardless of religious background, in heightened stress situations. To cope with his own stress and fatigue while deployed, Demiray also initiated a “tea time” with a group Commonwealth chaplains. Not having a community of Muslim chaplains to rely on in faith, Demiray describes the need to foster a “nurturing working environment” by developing and relying on the support of Christian colleagues and friends (06 March 2014). In Afghanistan, Imam Demiray ended up using his subject matter expertise and his insights into the host culture to advise commanders on mistakes being made, and continue to engage with religious leaders in the region (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Since that experience in Afghanistan, Saint Paul University in Ottawa has conducted studies and



conferences on “religious leader engagement” (Demiray, 06 March 2014; Saint Paul University).

Reflecting on his journey pioneering the shift to multifaith chaplaincy in the CAF, Imam Demiray says, “I see everything in a positive way. That’s one of the coping mechanisms I developed and accepted” to face the challenges and have patience throughout (06 March 2014). “If there is flexibility that needs to be done, I do it, I am flexible” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). From his 10 years of experience now with the CAF, he pragmatically advocates for “meeting somewhere in the middle.” He argues, “You can’t take advantage of the system. You have to be understanding” when it comes to the process of diversifying and accommodating non-Christian faiths (Demiray, 06 March 2014). “To me, dialogue, tolerance and accepting each other is so important to function in a multifaith, pluralistic setting” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Summarizing his journey he says “Overall I feel welcomed, and very proud. I feel accomplished” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Recently, Chaplain General John Fletcher appointed Padre Demiray to participate in the first Military Muslim International Conference in the Netherlands, June 2014, to officially represent the Branch, and highlight his exceptional accomplishments on deployment to the international community (Bélanger, 04 April 2014).

### A Multifaith Chaplaincy

In the past decade, the Chaplaincy has initiated moves toward pluralism on bases nationwide. While not yet present on all Canadian bases, numerous multifaith worship spaces have been created, and space is made available upon request, regardless of

infrastructure, for interfaith practice (Bélanger, 04 April 2014; Benham Rennick 2011: 46). Among the bases that have either converted part of an existing chapel structure or expanded their structures to accommodate a multifaith room are Canadian Armed Forces Base (CFB) Edmonton, Borden, Halifax – Stadacona, Royal Military College, and Trenton. At CFB Shilo, the first stand-alone, multifaith centre was built in May 2007 (Benham Rennick 2011: 46). Currently, a project is underway to design new multifaith centres on bases in Canada that will replace existing chapel spaces (Bélanger, 04 April 2014).

In her study, *Religion in the Ranks*, Benham Rennick reports the resistance of some chaplains to this shift to interfaith and pluralism. Some express concern over the loss of culture and tradition that has come about, while others fear they do not possess the skills to effectively accommodate this transition (Benham Rennick 2011: 47). In addition to skepticism within the Chaplain Branch, the ICCMC is also faced with challenges related to hiring and recruiting chaplains from non-Christian faiths – recruitment requirements dictate that chaplains be ordained, or recognized by their denominational religious authority (Benham Rennick 2011: 31). They must also possess an Master of Divinity, or an equivalent degree, as required by that religious authority (Benham Rennick 2011: 31). Recounting comments from one of her informants, Benham Rennick writes “that for the branch to require religious leaders from non-Christian groups to have similar credentials to Christian clergy is an unfair imposition of Western standards” (2011: 55). To integrate a religion such as Islam, that does not have a standardized training system for Imams, the chaplaincy sought out equivalent university education and

experience in pastoral care when hiring Imam Demiray (Benham Rennick 2011: 54). Such challenges, in addition to the immense diversity within certain traditions and the absence of centralized authority, to this point have inhibited the integration of faiths to which numerous personnel adhere (Benham Rennick 2011: 56). Key among these is the inability to accommodate an Aboriginal elder, as a result of the variety of beliefs held amongst each community and the lack of formal structure or documentation of authority (Bélanger, 04 April 2014). “It’s important for the Canadian Forces and the Branch to... it’s our mission, to be able to facilitate worship, and we want to be able to do it for all faith groups in the Forces. So we really feel that we have the obligation and the mission to answer that” (Bélanger, 04 April 2014).

Despite the difficulties that arise from not knowing with certainty how many personnel adhere to non-Christian faith groups, the CAFCB is “very proud to provide this opportunity [for representation in the Chaplain Branch] and this service” to Muslim and Jewish faith groups (Bélanger, 04 April 2014). When asked if keeping statistics on religious identification would facilitate the activities of the Branch, LCol Bélanger explained that while numbers would help the Branch and its chaplains to “position” themselves, the responsibility of the chaplain to minister to all personnel regardless of faith would not change, nor would their responsibility to make themselves known to personnel through “Ministry of Presence” (04 April 2014).

Faith groups in the Canadian Armed Forces are represented by the Interfaith Committee on Canadian Military Chaplaincy (ICCMC), which currently comprises Protestant, Roman Catholic, Muslim and Jewish Faith Groups (Bélanger, 04 April 2014).

At this time, recruiting for the Chaplain Branch presents a challenge. “We are working on developing a recruitment strategy that will answer the new reality that we are facing” (Bélanger, 04 April 2014). Where resources are limited, “we are hiring civilian clergy in the absence of military chaplains for Sunday services. In doing so, we continue to provide spiritual and religious support for the military community” (Bélanger, 04 April 2014). The CAFCB has also recently welcomed a new Jewish chaplain who is stationed in Trenton currently and will do his basic training in the fall to officially join the chaplaincy (Bélanger, 04 April 2014).

### Conclusions

As a result of industrialization, urbanization changed the geographic distribution and the socio-economic aspirations of Canada in the years following the Second World War. Diminishing a major pool of CAF recruits, the capitalist ambitions of young Canadians and the emphasis they put on education as the ticket to success, resulted in a recruitment crisis by the 1960s. As Canadian immigration policy enabled a wider diversity of people to join the nation, urbanization further increased as immigrants settled in city centres and sought social gain. Simultaneously, the dwindling Armed Forces, for the first time, “set their sights” on ethnic and racial minorities as an “untapped” source of recruits. Faced with the challenge of appealing to an urban population focused on economic prosperity, the CAF leveraged social welfare and benefits to become a competitive and attractive employer to all Canadians.

The Second World War made it clear that chaplains were a key aspect of soldier welfare, and thus an officially recognized military Chaplain Branch was formed. Responding to the increasing diversity of the CAF and the societal shift toward secularism in the latter decades of the twentieth century, the CAFCB adopted an ecumenical model, which “paved the way” for the shift to multifaith chaplaincy in 2003. Imam Suleyman Demiray, a Muslim chaplain and the first non-Christian chaplain to officially join the Branch, was welcomed to the Forces in 2003. As the trailblazer for the shift to multifaith chaplaincy, Demiray faced numerous challenges finding his place within military culture and the Branch. Coping with discrimination at times, and some lack of preparedness and resources to accommodate Muslim practice, his flexibility and perseverance pioneered pivotal changes in accommodation policies and base infrastructure. While the foundationally Christian Branch undoubtedly had to undergo change, Demiray advocated to minimize loss and instead foster adaptation and compromise.

As a member of NATO and the United Nations, Canada became involved in a multitude of operations in the 1990s. These conflicts made it apparent that while religion is waning in Canada, it continues to be a powerful force globally. Padre Demiray exemplified the potential role of the Chaplain Branch in equipping Canada for operational engagement during his tour in Afghanistan in 2005, pioneering the strategic concept of “religious leader engagement.” Although significant advancements have been made in both the CAF and the Chaplain Branch toward diversification and plurality, the process is still ongoing. Current projects to institute multifaith centres on numerous bases across

Canada are underway, while traditionally Christian organizational and institutional structures are being adapted.

RARELY AN IMAM, BUT ALWAYS A CHAPLAIN:  
Muslim Chaplains in the Canadian Armed Forces

During our interview, I asked LCol Martine Bélanger, the Principle Chaplain of Jewish and Muslim faith groups, if she thought that having an Imam on base significantly impacted the experience of Muslims on that base. Her reply was “No, [...] what’s the most important is to have chaplains that will be able to provide spiritual care, and pastoral care to the troops at all times... and good quality services. It doesn’t matter if they are Jewish, Christian or Muslim” (Bélanger, 04 April 2014). Whichever religious tradition a chaplain represents, first and foremost they serve personnel – chaplains are among personnel and are accessible to them.

The Canadian nation has significantly shifted from public and institutionalized religiosity to a greater focus on spirituality in the private realm. Despite this significant shift in cultural values and practices, the Canadian Armed Forces “retains a very public religious presence through its chaplaincy branch” (Benham Rennick 2011: 5). Bound by confidentiality and a primary responsibility to other personnel, chaplains are a “safe” resource for individuals to seek advice about their problems, whether they are religious, spiritual, existential, or related to their personal lives. Whereas consulting a mental health professional carries a powerful stigma in the military, chatting with a chaplain is an aspect of daily life through their “Ministry of Presence” (Benham Rennick 2011: 83). The “Ministry of Presence” entails making oneself “present” among regular personnel, chatting in cafeterias, joining in training, participating in sporting events and so forth. The ethos is to make oneself visible and accessible, providing opportunities for casual

conversations and questions. Further, military chaplains prioritize individual care and wellbeing over efficiency and bureaucracy, thus they “circumvent the constricting and depersonalized nature” of the military (Benham Rennick 2011: 83). In prioritizing the wellbeing of personnel, chaplains simultaneously facilitate operational effectiveness, positively contributing to the quality of life of military members and their families, in part by combatting the “moral relativity” that can arise from working within a secular results-oriented institution (Cesari 2006: 92; Benham Rennick 2011: 5, 92). These aspects of their ministry place them in a position to aid individuals coping with operational stress and trauma.

As part of this study, I had the opportunity to interview each of the three Imams currently serving with the Canadian Armed Forces. Each began his ministry as a hospital chaplain and each was drawn to the military at different points in his life. Captain Suleyman Demiray, the first of the hires, and Captain Ishak Yorganci, the second, both emigrated from Turkey to Canada, while Captain Ryan Carter was born and raised in Canada. Although drawn to the military in different ways, each express a sense of being “called to serve.” Primarily motivated to serve their faith communities, each has come to understand their role and their religious leadership as extending beyond the boundaries of Islamic doctrine and practice.

As Muslim military chaplains, these men wear “many different hats” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014; Demiray, 06 March 2014). As chaplains they act as counselors and allies to personnel, advisors to command, educators to all, and Imams to Muslims. While they are responsible to the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF), they also represent and are supported



by their civilian faith communities, which testifies to their authority in their own religious traditions (Fortin 2012). Chaplaincy is “an active job” in which many leadership roles are assumed (Demiray, 06 March 2014 ). As leaders of a minority faith group in the CAF, these men are trailblazers, challenging the status quo, pioneering the shift to multifaith chaplaincy, and championing the inclusion of Muslims into the Canadian military. Their identities are characterized by the duties, responsibilities, challenges, and accomplishments that accompany such a significant role.

This chapter will begin by discussing the unique role of chaplains in humanizing the military bureaucracy and transcending the military hierarchy to minister to personnel regardless of faith or rank. It will demonstrate the centrality of the roles associated with general chaplaincy, rather than Islamic chaplaincy, for these Muslim padres. This chapter will also discuss the exclusion and frustration the Imams experience stemming from the challenges they face cultivating a faith community and ministering to their own on base. This chapter will also explore “accommodation,” and theorize its implications in reinforcing Christianity as the normative system, and regulating acceptable forms of religious difference in the Canadian Armed Forces.

### The Bridge

Chaplains are intentionally hybrid entities that traverse military hierarchy and bureaucracy. Their lateral movement in a vertical world affords them opportunities to infuse themselves into the daily lives of personnel, positioning them as benignly removed from the otherwise structured and formulaic nature of the Forces. Whether Catholic,

Protestant, Jewish or Muslim, they are chaplains first, counseling, supporting, advising, and listening to personnel to the best of their capabilities. “Padres are easy access” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Through the “Ministry of Presence,” which can include going to the gym, participating in sporting and training activities, and visiting unit lines, chatting with personnel while they work, padres maintain visibility and availability to individuals who may be in need.

Benham Rennick articulates the importance of chaplains in the treatment and prevention of operational stress: “Chaplains, owing to their close interactions with members, are often the first people to identify personnel who are showing symptoms of operational stress injuries” (Benham Rennick 2011: 63). In their role as counselors, they can facilitate spiritual wellbeing and assist individuals as they recover from work related trauma and stress (Benham Rennick 2011: 64). Through the “Ministry of Presence,” chaplains are

in the same environments and conditions as personnel, [which] makes them credible sources of compassion and consolation who, unlike the mental health worker stationed in a base hospital or office, know exactly what a soldier, sailor, or air force member is experiencing (Benham Rennick 2011: 77).

Responsible to both the chain of command and the personnel whom they serve, chaplains bridge the gap between the bureaucracy and the individual (Benham Rennick 2011: 70). In their advisory role, a chaplain can make “recommendations to a soldier’s commanding officer without having to disclose private information about the individual” (Benham Rennick 2005). In contrast, “military health professionals and social workers are obligated to inform the chain of command about personnel issues that might limit a

member's deployability" (Benham Rennick 2011: 83). Chaplains serve as intermediaries, working for the benefit of both the personnel and the commanding officers. As part of their religious purpose, padres are motivated to bring about benefit to their military community and their religious community. To do so, they must be a part of those communities and regularly present. "If my actions isolate me from the broader society, that can't bring about any good. If I feel isolated, that's a problem. That's not *maslaha* [public interest]" (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

Through their status as "dual professionals," simultaneously experts in faith and spirituality as well as military employment, they can humanize the military institution and chain of command, mitigating the alienation that some experience in military service (Benham Rennick 2011: 89, 70, 77). As caring, compassionate counselors, whose job it is to "to talk to them [personnel] individually" (Demiray, 06 March 2014) and provide personal support, chaplains uproot the "efficiency-based, hierarchical, and bureaucratic system" of the military from within the command structure (Benham Rennick 2011: 70). In a sense, they are an ally with power, a person to whom any individual can turn to simply seek advice, but also a person that can advocate on their behalf to help improve their situation.

### The "Ministry of Presence" First Hand

Although this study is an ethnographic pursuit, the nature of the population in question limited my ability to engage in all aspects of the anthropological tradition. The highly regulated and insular nature of the military makes the casual observation of day-to-

day interactions and routines inaccessible, and certainly inhibits living amongst and integrating into the population I sought to study. As such, I was restricted to ethnographic interviews in nearby coffee shops, which proved exceptionally fruitful and informative. I was however, afforded one rare opportunity to observe a chaplain at work.

The first of my interviews was with Imam Ryan Carter, stationed at CFB Edmonton. We sat down in the kitchen area next to the multifaith space, attached to the Catholic chapel on base. Aside from being kind, approachable, relatable and articulate, Padre Carter, a well-educated man, could provide a sort of academic “bird’s eye view” of being a Muslim and a chaplain in the Canadian Armed Forces. After our interview, he emailed me later that evening offering a tour of the base. Naturally I accepted, and the next day he granted me a glimpse into a world that civilians rarely witness or understand.

As unit chaplains, padres are “fully a part of the unit” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Captain Carter serves currently as unit chaplain to the Combat Engineers in Edmonton. Parking outside of the complex in which they operate, and in which his office is located, I looked out onto a parking lot full of large armoured vehicles and equipment, all painted military green. Overwhelmed by feeling conspicuously out of place, but simultaneously awed by the opportunity to see a normal day on garrison, Padre Carter walked me through his unit. While showing me around, my presence was inarguably conspicuous, nonetheless, I gained a better understanding of what the “Ministry of Presence” entails. While walking the halls, Padre Carter would wander into the café, say hello to a few of the guys, or stroll into a shared office space and introduce me around. It was clear that they all knew him and had a rapport with him. Although not organic interactions that I

witnessed, I could experience his system of being “present,” visible and accessible – letting the unit know that he was in his office today and there to talk if they wanted. Walking through the halls, we stopped momentarily to observe a displayed book detailing the fatalities in the unit. As Combat Engineers, these men and women are responsible for vehicle maintenance and equipment during missions and also handle explosives. As a result, many lives are lost and the operational stress is significant.

Up at the unit library, Padre Carter introduced me to three other members, responsible at the time for curating the unit’s book collection, which includes some fiction, textbooks, and training materials, apparently covering a variety of topics related and unrelated to military work. One serviceman joked that “up here” they are all “defective,” variously injured in the line of duty, each undoubtedly with their own story. Garrison bases are unique, as they are ready to deploy at any time, continuously training to maintain, update and perfect their skills. As operational bases, personnel stationed here are finished their schooling and “doing their job as soldiers” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). The 2005 Chaplain’s Manual notes that “it is in the garrison context that the full complexity of military chaplaincy is most evident” (DND 2005: 67). When asked to explain, Padre Carter agreed that the garrison context makes chaplaincy

more complex, in that these are the individuals who have been deployed or will be deployed. You deal not just with them, but also with their families, and all the anxieties related to that, and the various occupational and health injuries that they get related to that – stress injuries related to military life (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

These men and women cope with their own experiences while deployed, the experiences of their colleagues, the fears of their families and their own apprehension about future

deployments. “You really feel like a warrior here, because you are trained to be one” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

### Rarely an Imam, but Always a Chaplain

While wandering in the Combat Engineering unit in CFB Edmonton, I witnessed a central aspect of Padre Carter’s ministry – “presence.” Integrating into the unit, talking sports, making jokes, and building a rapport with all members, regardless of religious adherence, is a key aspect of his routine. On a daily basis, rarely are these three men acting as Imams; they are chaplains answering the same questions that other chaplains receive.

A lot of the questions that people ask me are related to this perennial concern of human beings, you know, theodicy – the problem with evil. [...] And guilt as a lot to do with the ... they believe, generally speaking in God, they believe in some idea of the divine, and they feel guilty in some way that they haven’t lived up to the expectations. Of course, coming to a padre, they feel guilty, right? And the last thing is just, you know, existential. [...] “What’s my purpose? Why am I here? What am I doing in the army, wearing a uniform?” You know? Those are the most common questions (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

In the high-stakes employment atmosphere of the Canadian Armed Forces, these men and women are not only struggling with hypothetical spiritual questions; they are struggling, often, with things they have seen and experienced. Although many of these individuals may identify as “not religious,” these concerns remain relevant to them. “I think spirituality is more significant than religiosity. [...] But if you start talking with them about values: ‘What do you believe in? How do you cope when you face challenges?’ Then you are going to start to see that they have a spirituality” (Bélanger, 04 April 2014).

Both the existential concerns and feelings of guilt to which Imam Carter testifies, and the shift toward a more subjective spirituality among personnel, echo the findings of Joanne Benham Rennick in her conversations with chaplains from Christian faith backgrounds (2011: 136, 168).

The ethos that a chaplain's primary role is as a spiritual counselor rather than a religious leader arose in the late twentieth century in response to plurality and secularism within the Forces. The shift to multifaith chaplaincy has not changed this reality. "If you ask me, 'what do you do as an Imam?' I would say normally, 'I don't do anything as an Imam, just regular chaplaincy'" (Yorganci, 20 March 2014). Quoting one of her chaplain informants, Benham Rennick writes "people don't come to us to talk about religion; they come to talk about life," (2011: 76) often seeking advice on personal relationships (Yorganci, 20 March 2014). On occasion, however, they are consulted by Muslim members on practice and accommodation, and at certain times, depending on the Muslim presence on base, they are able to offer Friday services at their respective multifaith spaces.

Imam Demiray, beyond doubt, has had the most success with offering regular Friday prayers at the multifaith centre on CFB Borden. Throughout my interviews, several personnel currently stationed across the country had at one time or another participated in his Friday services, whether at CFB Edmonton, where he was first stationed, or at CFB Borden during their schooling. For Padre Carter, gathering a community of sufficient size each week has been the key inhibitor to regular Friday services, which are congregational according to the Qur'an (Sura 62). To be a part of a

larger community, Muslims at CFB Edmonton often drive “down the road” to a mosque nearby. Padre Yorganci expressed a similar experience. “You have to go to wherever the community goes,” which at this point in Halifax is the mosque near base (Yorganci, 20 March 2014). While both Carter and Yorganci would like to offer Friday services, they both feel as though there is not sufficient demand at this point.

Although each Imam experiences some difficulty offering this central aspect of their religious leadership, they contribute uniquely to the military community based on their expertise in Islam. In addition to counseling personnel, each chaplain “counsels” the chain of command, but in a different sense. Advising commanding officers on religious matters, occupying an educational role, chaplains are an information resource to personnel in general. Often, individuals have questions about Islamic beliefs and practice, or about sectarian divisions within Islam. Both Imam Carter and Demiray have been recently asked to provide information on the differences between Sunni and Shia Muslims by the chain of command. This educational role is understood simultaneously as a central aspect of their purpose and their motivation, but also as a duty. In conceptualizing education as a duty, they reveal their understanding of their importance in the broader scope of military and chaplaincy diversification. As openly Muslim individuals in a primarily white, Christian institution, it is their “duty” to educate, to help “open the door” for Muslims entering the Forces in the future. This relates to Imam Demiray’s experience as the first multifaith chaplain – “either you create, or face the realities” (Demiray, 06 March 2014). From our interviews, I sensed this notion of responsibility from each Imam – that if they did not work and strive to improve the situation of Muslims in the military,



then they would fail in some sense to benefit their faith community. Despite the challenges of generating a strong, regular Muslim community on base, a hypothetical, future community of Muslims remains a part of their concerns. In their advocacy with regard to accommodation, multifaith space, and education, they do in fact act as Imams, but for a community that has, largely, yet to materialize with any consistency. This educational role is also framed in terms of legacy.

As an Imam, I think I have a really unique role, that I think has been coming out more in the sense that I have an educational role. And I really capitalize on that, because if I am posted out... if there's no other new [Muslim] chaplain... that's it. This place was vacant for many years when Suleyman left (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

The desire to protect the progress that he has made, through the education of command, of other chaplains, and also of personnel, was similarly expressed by Padre Demiray.

Encouraged by the Branch to take on this educational role, each chaplain has embraced it as a key avenue through which to affect positive change. “The biggest reward is that I’m able... I’m in a position now to educate people, and use my faith [...] to bring about change in people’s lives” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). Through education they can help people to understand and see different perspectives. It is also “an opportunity to represent the true Islam,” free from the misrepresentations and stereotypes of Muslims in the media (Yorganci, 20 March 2014). As CAF chaplains, they provide spiritual care to all regardless of rank or religious affiliation. Although at times they are not able to perform some of the traditional activities of an Imam, they each have located their religious leadership in other roles and responsibilities.

“A Part,” but “Apart”

Inherently removed from the secular military institution by their religious devotion and leadership role, chaplains are unique, for they fuse an aspect of civilian identity with military identity. Dressed in military greens and alongside personnel daily, they are a part of the military culture, however, they are also accountable to a greater authority and thus removed from certain aspects of that culture by their devotion. As a chaplain, “you have to be a part, but somewhat apart at the same time. [...] They want you to be unique” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). This applies to all chaplains, regardless of religious identification, however for Muslim chaplains, they are a further degree “apart” than their Christian counterparts.

As a chaplain, one must remain partially outside of military culture to retain the confidence and respect of personnel. As a Muslim chaplain, one is additionally unique in openly practicing a minority religious tradition in an institutional system that promotes secularism, yet retains its Christian foundations and traditions. “I know that I am working in a very Christian environment, [the] majority are Christian, even though they are not practicing Christianity. This is a Christian culture” (Yorganci, 20 March 2014). Each Imam expressed the same sentiment with regard to their base chaplain community – that they are “a part,” but “apart.” This applies both to public chapel activities and to a sense of inclusion in the community of chaplains.

As members of the chaplain team on their respective bases, these Imams share in the services provided by the Branch. While showing me around the multifaith space at CFB Halifax – Stadacona, Padre Yorganci explained the way he shares in the offering of

Friday Remembrance Services for naval casualties. Although structured as a “typical Christian service” and attended by mostly Christian personnel, when it is his turn to deliver a sermon, he offers a passage from the Qur’an or the *hadith* and a general prayer (Yorganci, 20 March 2014). “There’s always a way that we can work together,” and appeal to the common roots of both Islam and Christianity in offering interfaith services (Yorganci, 20 March 2014). The question that one must ask oneself in these settings is, “am I being authentic to myself?” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). As a member of the chaplaincy team, participation is crucial to inclusion, however in the effort to adapt one’s own religiosity for an interfaith setting, one must not compromise one’s own faith.

Although included in the chaplain community, with so few multifaith chaplains in the Forces, the Imams are not afforded a Muslim faith community within the Branch. While the Catholic chaplains on a base form a committee and share in providing services and programming to their adherents, and the Protestant chaplains form a similar sort of committee, each Imam is alone in ministering to the Muslim adherents on their bases. “They have a community – me not so much” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). The Imams independently are responsible for establishing a faith community and coordinating programming and activities. The associated challenges of this process are compounded by the difficulty they each experience in finding Muslim personnel and connecting with them. With the constant movement of CAF personnel around Canada, the number of Muslims on any one base at any one time is unknown. While each chaplain is aware of a few on their bases at this time, the level of practice these personnel maintain also shifts

depending on training exercises and job demands. The size of the Muslim community on these bases cannot be indicated as a result.

To cope with the challenges of their chaplaincy, Padre Demiray notes that creating a “nurturing working environment” with Christian colleagues to “get some sort of support” is necessary (Demiray, 06 March 2014). To mitigate what the CAFCB calls “compassion fatigue,” chaplains must practice “self-care” to sustain the care they provide to their units (DND 2005: 77). “There is a tremendous need for chaplains to be able to care for their own mental and spiritual needs if they are to remain effective with the troops” (Benham Rennick 2011: 68). Relying on their supportive families, physical activity, and chaplain retreats, each Imam develops his own system of coping with the stress of his occupation. For each of them, nurturing their own spirituality is integral to stress management. For Padre Carter, after approximately seven months in his current position, he “realized that between balancing family life, being a chaplain and maintaining your spiritual identity, it’s actually quite hard” (12 Feb 2014). Padre Demiray emphasizes the importance of his “disciplined prayer system” to coping with “compassion fatigue” (06 March 2014). Faced with numerous challenges in building a faith community on their bases, it seems natural to these chaplains to prioritize their ministry over other aspects of their lives. To avoid “burning out,” the key is to “maintain the balance” (Yorganci, 20 March 2014).

In part owing to their minority status in the Forces, building a strong community of Muslims on any particular base poses a great challenge to the Imams. Padre Yorganci expressed some frustration at the lack of accessible information on the religious

adherence of personnel. As unit chaplains, a padre's main contact is with the members of his or her unit. However, Muslim personnel are spread across the base in all units dependent on their trade. Finding these members poses great challenges to the Imams, as does making their presence known to personnel outside of their units.

In addition, there is some apprehension amongst Muslim personnel about making their religious identification public knowledge. Laughing, Padre Carter admits to looking at unit lists, scanning the personnel for Muslim names. Similarly, Padre Yorganci will keep a watchful eye while around base for people who “look” like they might be Muslim. Sometimes when Padre Carter approaches individuals and discovers that they are in fact Muslim, “I’m excited, but they’re like ‘Ssht! Quiet’” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). In the “very consuming subculture” of the military, many “don’t want to be singled out,” perhaps fearful of discrimination, or perhaps not desirous of being designated as “different” from the rest of their peers (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). Even with regard to religious practice, Padre Carter suggests that many Muslims may not seek accommodation to avoid being “singled out.” Unable to “push” Muslim personnel to participate in base multifaith services, each chaplain employs certain outreach strategies. Both Padre Carter and Yorganci attend mosque on Friday in their military greens, in the hopes that some military members may be in attendance and see that they are not alone in their faith on base. Padre Demiray hosts monthly potlucks to bring together the entire community, regardless of sectarian affiliation or level of practice, to include everyone at least socially. “People are pretty private about their religion. Not only is this a very Canadian phenomenon, but it’s very indicative of the sort of ‘new’ Canadians in the military” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

The above statement from Padre Carter indicates his suspicion that a majority of Muslims that are joining the Canadian Armed Forces are not practicing, or restrict their practice to certain activities exclusively in the private sphere. Whether or not this suspicion is accurate cannot be known while religion remains a matter of confidentiality in the Forces. My research points to a variety of levels of practice among Muslims. The following chapter will indicate my own findings on this subject.

The concerns of some Muslim personnel regarding exposure make building a community challenging for the Imams. In addition, some Muslim members are not interested in having services or a faith community on base. As a result, each of the Imams expressed a personal “lack of spiritual fulfillment” to some degree, leading them to seek out a religious community off base and find spiritual fulfillment in alternative aspects of their work.

I think I share the sentiments of most of my colleagues in that you really have to find spiritual fulfillment in ways which are not conventional. So, counseling somebody, helping somebody, doing service, I mean that *is* religious, because you’re motivated by it. You find fulfillment in those sorts of things, and of course, you know, if you really have a craving to do things in your own community, then find those opportunities elsewhere (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

By recasting their religious mission from the cultivation of Muslim devotion to God to the spiritual wellbeing of an individual, the Imams find their fulfillment in helping people.

“Even though I never ever, very rarely ministered to Muslim patients, I was always still doing religious stuff, which I felt like: ok, my purpose is there” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

The doubt expressed in this statement betrays a central compromise made by Muslim chaplains, and perhaps to some extent by all chaplains, serving with the Forces. In

participating in a secular institution characterized by a “macho” culture, with a population that increasingly gravitates away from institutional religion and public devotion, and fears stigma related to “weakness” and operational stress, their “religious” leadership will be necessarily of a different character than it would be in a civilian setting – they will need to locate their religious purpose in “spiritual,” interfaith, and mundane support.

From my discussions with these Imams, I note that there is an acute sense that belonging and inclusion to both the Branch and the military at large is limited. That in being “different” in faith, there is an element of exclusion, largely resulting from the way that Christianity and its traditions are embedded into the structures, policies, protocols, and culture of the Canadian Armed Forces. Although their belonging is in fact limited, the sense of welcoming and inclusion that they do experience is powerful. They do feel “a part” of the chaplain community and the military, and rely on their Christian friends and colleagues for community and support in their roles. Nonetheless, there is a sense of being “apart,” of lacking a community of individuals who share their faith, their practice, their traditions and their worldview. Needing to consistently find a space, compromise and adapt to a set of standards and traditions that are in part dissonant with their religious beliefs, results in some feelings of exclusion.

### Accommodation

This need for adaptation extends to the wider Muslim community in the military with regard to accommodation. The Canadian Armed Forces, like all Canadian institutions, is required by law to protect the right to religious freedom. However, when

“personnel agree to subjugate their personal rights to the security needs of the nation, religious rights and freedoms may not be as easy to ensure in all situations at all times” (Benham Rennick 2011: 4). Each Muslim chaplain has assisted personnel with accommodation, either by providing information or by advocating for their request to the chain of command. Imam Yorganci explains that in his experience, personnel primarily come to a chaplain when they are met with an obstacle in their request for accommodation. If they have difficulty expressing themselves or convincing their commanders of the legitimacy of their request, they seek the assistance of a padre. All three Imams indicated that commanding officers on their bases are very receptive to such requests if given proper justification.

Branch policy appearing in the 2005 Chaplain’s Manual stipulates that accommodation will be granted for “fundamental religious requirement[s], not merely a religious custom or tradition” (DND 2005: 97). Since revised, this policy arose from the multiplicity of interpretations and cultural practices that are associated with religious traditions. Padre Carter testifies to the potentially inhibiting legalistic aspect of Islam, as producing inconsistencies that can complicate accommodation requests if unaccompanied by information and interpretation from a knowledgeable source. Such complexities led the Branch to place boundaries on accommodation. This policy has since been revised, according to a 2004 Supreme Court ruling, to afford accommodation for “sincerely held belief” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). By broadening this policy, the Branch refocused accommodation on the individual, rather than a set of minimum shared beliefs and practices of a majority of adherents to any particular religion. The vague quality of this



policy also enables space for cultural traditions associated with religious practice to be accommodated. In broadening the accommodation policy, however, the Forces subjected itself to the possibility of individuals capitalizing on this open policy for personal gain. As such, a certain distrust has resulted, wherein irregular requests may be challenged by command for their sincerity, and thus padres serve to mediate these negotiations (Demiray, 06 March 2014; Benham Rennick 2011: 148). Addressing this issue, Padre Demiray explains that accommodation must be approached with flexibility from both sides. As a Muslim, “You can’t take advantage of the system. You have to be understanding” and open to compromise (Demiray, 06 March 2014).

The most common accommodation requests that arise for these chaplains relate to dietary restrictions, the desire to grow a beard, and time off on Friday afternoons for congregational prayer. Requests particularly come about prior to Ramadan as fasting requires additional meal considerations and introduces health concerns depending on the activities of the personnel during this time. Liberty for Eid celebrations is also a common request, as personnel join their families for this religious holiday. Noteworthy, none of the chaplains indicated receiving requests for accommodation for practices specific to the Shia tradition, nor for holidays observed only by Shia Muslims. This applies also to other minority Muslim groups, such as Ahmadis and Sufis. While these requests would undoubtedly be accommodated when possible as “sincerely held belief[s],” the absence of such requests is potentially revealing with regard to demographics and the nature of Islamic observance in the Forces. The low rate at which Muslim chaplains receive requests for accommodation related to minority Islamic practices may suggest an absence

of representation from these groups in the CAF. In my interviews, I spoke with just one individual who identified as Shia.

In our discussions, each Imam indicated the suspicion that some Muslim members did not seek accommodation for religious practice for fear of being “singled out” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). By attaining accommodation for prayer, fasting, food, a beard or a hijab, Muslim members make their difference publicly known. They are subsequently marked as “other” by their peers, as well as the institution, which reinforces its normative, unmarked Anglo-Christian culture by designating difference as exceptional and warranting special “accommodation” outside of the “norm.” “Those who are different become located in a distinct conceptual space, as ‘other’ to that unmarked norm” (Mackey 2002: 93). The exclusion that arises from this process of designating certain people as “foreign” to the military system and warranting special consideration, undoubtedly influences sentiments of belonging. While granting accommodation and accepting difference is admirable and inspires feelings of inclusion among many Muslim personnel, the social and psychological impact of this process is in fact misleading. What appears to be diversification actually rests on a system of reinforcing traditional military culture and norms. Acceptance free from “othering” would require that difference not be marked by the need to seek “accommodation.” The feasibility of this in the Canadian military is perhaps impractical.

Eva Mackey argues that “the power of whiteness is embodied precisely in the way that it becomes normative, in how it ‘colonises the definition of normal’” (2002: 2; Dyer 1988: 45). I suggest that Christianity functions in a similar way in the Canadian Armed

Forces. Building on its foundational presence in the institution, it retains its prominence in the secular, pluralistic world of the twenty-first century by “colonizing” what is understood as “normal” religiosity in the military. As the arbiters of accommodation in their role as advisors to the chain of command, the Chaplain Branch, which remains structured on a Christian model, helps define acceptable religious difference and thus limits diversity of religious expression. This argument recalls Mackey’s analysis of Canadian identity construction, and applies it to a Canadian institutional context in a religious framework. Like the Canadian government instituting multiculturalism policy, the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch instituted multifaith policy. “State recognition of diversity also limits diversity” (Mackey 2002: 65).

### Conclusions

Military chaplains perform a unique role in the Canadian Armed Forces. Existing as hybrid entities outside of the military bureaucracy, transcending the hierarchy of command, they access and minister to personnel of all ranks. Through their “Ministry of Presence” they are accessible and pervasive in the lives of personnel, thus occupying an important role in identifying and treating operational stress injuries. Their emphasis on individual care humanizes the bureaucracy and mitigates the sense of alienation that many personnel experience.

Each Imam serving with the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch testifies to their roles as chaplains first, and Imams second, primarily aiding personnel through their spiritual, existential and personal struggles in an interfaith manner. Inhibited by a lack of

community and demand for Islamic services, these chaplains have come to locate their religious mission in alternate sources, such as education and counseling. They conceptualize their educational role as a duty to effect positive change for future Muslim CAF members and preserve the progress they have made at their bases.

As part of the base chaplain team, they compromise and adapt to share in the ministry of all troops, regardless of their religious identification. Although included in the chaplain community, they lack fellow Muslim chaplains to share in the efforts required to build their own faith communities, and thus rely on their Christian colleagues for support. Facing challenges with identifying Muslim personnel, and the apprehensions of some to publicly identify their faith, each Imam has struggled to provide regular services to Muslims. The need to consistently compromise and adapt to find a space in a traditionally Christian institution, leads to feelings of exclusion, despite the welcoming and community they experience with their Christian colleagues.

As advocates for religious accommodation, the Imams strive to ensure the freedom of military Muslims to practice as they wish. They note the hesitancy of some personnel, however, to seek accommodation and thus be marked as “other” in the military community. These realities regarding accommodation reveal military protocols that systematically limit acceptable difference and reinforce a normative military culture that is traditionally Christian. The result is a limiting of the sense of belonging that can be experienced by individuals who seek to openly practice Islam while serving in the Canadian Armed Forces.

MUSLIM CAF:  
Belonging and Inclusion

This chapter will explore the experiences of Regular Forces Muslim personnel and a small number of civilian Muslims employed with the CAF. Their reflections on accommodation for religious practice, interacting with the Canadian Armed Forces Chaplain Branch (CAFChB), and the use of multifaith space on bases will be presented. This chapter will also establish the relevance of military culture and discrimination to the cultivation of belonging and inclusion among Muslim personnel. To preserve the anonymity of participants in this research, I have neglected to include any identifying features, in most cases. To enable the reader to note reflections from different respondents, I have included the Study Identification Code assigned to the relevant participant following quotations.

As part of this study, I asked personnel who self-identify as Muslim to articulate how they understand their religious identity. The variety of their responses mirrors the diversity within Islam and the Canadian Muslim community. For several personnel, Islam is a way of life, something that permeates their existence, governs their conduct, and defines them. “It’s how I live my life. I wake up Muslim, I go to bed Muslim and I die Muslim. It’s part of my life. It’s my way of life” (1314-08). To others, Islam is a faith, a religion that they follow and a belief that they hold. Each respondent that identified Islam as a lifestyle also articulated its role in his relationships with others. Among the majority of Muslim CAF that I spoke with, Islam was not relegated exclusively to a spiritual, otherworldly realm. Rather it was articulated in a broader sense, framed as a means of being a good person, of valuing tolerance, forgiveness, peace and love, treating others

fairly, and offering help to those in need. Some respondents generalized it further, understanding Islam rather as a “philosophy” that they embrace. “Sometimes, I think I blur the line between religion and having a sort of philosophy” (1314-09). Such a vision of Islam indicates its role in framing how this individual sees and understands the world, yet also suggests its passive, rather than active, role in daily life. Elaborating, this respondent envisions Islam less as a faith and more as a “set of conservative values” – a tradition he was born into, and a culture he inherited. To this individual, the Islam of his parents and their community meant that “they didn’t eat pork, and they celebrated Eid, and they didn’t let their kids date” (1314-09). For each informant, in varying degrees, Islam is a significant part of their identity.

Of the 15 Muslim members to which I spoke, two were born in Canada, one in the United States, four in North Africa, three in the Arabian Peninsula, two in South Asia, two in Turkey, and one unidentified. Importantly, two of the respondents born outside of Canada indicated that their identity as Muslims became significant only after they emigrated from their home countries. Back home, “for us, it was like second hand smoking. ‘Second hand Muslims.’ Is it religion or culture?” (1314-08). Migrating to a non-Muslim country, the cultivation and preservation of their religious identity required conscious effort. “Back home, it was easy. Every corner has a mosque. [...] Religion wasn’t identity,” it was culture (1314-08). When an aspect of one’s identity is challenged, the choice and the effort to maintain that aspect make it a more significant part of oneself. Noteworthy, both individuals who testified to this experience were immigrants from the Arabian Peninsula. Like the respondents who explicitly identified Islam as the religion

they were born into, these individuals suggest that Islam initially was their religion by default, having been raised in a Muslim culture. For others, although not converts, they explicitly communicated their informed choice to follow Islam after having reflected on their religious identity and traditions.

Like the diversity present in how Muslim CAF understand and articulate their religious identity, Muslim individuals' level of practice reflects similar variability. While many upkeep regular and diligent practice, all informants referred to the permitted flexibility within the Islamic tradition – “Allah intends for you ease and does not intend for you hardship” (The Holy Qur'an, Chapter 2, Verse 185). Aside from the three Imams, every respondent mentioned the inability to uphold the entirety of their religious practice at all times. “I'm not doing everything at 100%, but I...uh... do what I can do and that's it. [...] it depends on what you can do, and we have the entire life [...] to progress in our faith and to discover our faith” (1314-01). Several respondents indicated that while regular worship is important, they restrict it to their private lives and do not engage in prayer while at work, sighting a variety of factors influencing this decision. For some, taking time away from their jobs is impractical and undesirable; others feel that they cannot attain the proper focus to pray while thinking about emails or the next task in their day; while others simply choose not to maintain all five of the daily prayers. I had the sense from two respondents that they did not maintain their prayers during their workdays so as to avoid drawing attention to themselves as Muslims. For those who do engage in worship during their workdays, some pray in their offices, if they have one, others will find a quiet spot to conduct their prayers, while a minority will make use of a multifaith

space on base. Of the respondents, excluding the three chaplains, half have never inquired if a multifaith room or space of some sort is available on their base. Of the remaining half, only three regularly make use of a multifaith space affiliated with their bases.

In presenting these characteristics of the sample of Muslim Canadian Armed Forces members with whom I spoke, I seek to establish the diversity of the entire community, not only with regard to ethnicity or sectarian affiliation, but also with regard to broadly conceptualizing Islam and its role in daily life. Despite my original concerns regarding sample skew as a result of recruiting participants through chaplains, the information presented above indicates that a variety of opinions and lifestyles have contributed to this study. Despite the minimal use of base multifaith spaces from this sample population, all but three participants have at one time or another initiated requests for accommodation regarding their religious practices. This significant engagement with military protocols, resources and command structures regarding religious matters provides key material for analysis.

#### Accommodation: “Give and Take”

From my discussions with personnel, two key themes arise with regard to accommodation for Muslim religious practice in the Canadian Armed Forces. An institution that has faced funding cuts in recent years (Schwartz 2012; Cudmore 2014), the military *responds* to need more often than it can *anticipate* need. As such, with regard to accommodation, “you don’t get anything unless you ask for it.” Those who seek accommodation are granted accommodation, typically with minimal, if any, hassle or



resistance. In fact one member characterized it as “trivial” to attain support for his religious practice (1314-09). However, in seeking accommodation, flexibility is often required and considered reasonable on the part of both the institution and the individual. Compromise is essential to achieving satisfaction as a Muslim in the Canadian Armed Forces.

Today, accommodation requests are increasingly processed with ease, and are infrequently challenged. One respondent who has been a member of the Canadian Armed Forces for 28 years indicated the progress that has been made by the CAF with regard to accommodation. “The longer I’ve been in the military, the older, the more people know about it [...] 30 years ago it was a different story altogether, it was an uphill [battle], you know” (1314-02). As people are increasingly educated about and aware of Islam, requests for accommodation become increasingly simple. Putting in a request for alternative meal options 30 years ago was unheard of, as was requesting reimbursement for food that could not be consumed for religious reasons during a training course. These individuals who have been CAF members for 30, even 15 years, identify as trailblazers who pioneered religious accommodation and struggled for fair treatment. In the past, if a Muslim member requested time off for Eid, invariably, they would have had to explain the religious holiday and its importance to their tradition, likely having to explain Islam in the process. Although today many personnel cite the need to explain their accommodation requests prior to having them granted, commanders and peers are more familiar with the tradition, and more accepting of diversity.

Similarly, Padre Carter recalls receiving some resistance on an accommodation request he made 12 years ago, as a reservist. Although only a chaplain for two years, Padre Carter initially enlisted as a reservist in 2002 in Toronto. Disenchanted by his experiences with accommodation and discrimination, he left the Forces to seek higher education. He describes putting in a request to grow a beard, in accord with his religious tradition.

One thing I really remember being told when I came to the regiment one day requesting to grow a beard, the guy looked at me and said, ‘you know, this may be ok with you here, but go anywhere else, that’s not accepted. If you want to go anywhere else in the regiment, you better watch yourself.’ And that was really disheartening (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).

This notion of linear, temporal progression in the understanding of Islam and Muslim practices in the military was pervasive in a number of interviews. Interestingly, it was not only those personnel who joined over 10 years ago who have experienced a sense of struggle to attain accommodation. Several members, some of whom joined as recently as four years ago, identify as trailblazers, believing that their requests for Ramadan accommodation during training were the first that base had received. Those who have served for longer than 10 years indicate that the protocols around accommodation, and their reception by commanders and peers, have improved significantly. Further, among the majority of personnel interviewed, there is the notion that both accommodation and its acceptance by military members will only get better in the future.

This progress has not negated the need for flexibility when seeking accommodation. Of the 15 individuals interviewed, 10 expressed the reality that often, as a Muslim, one must fit into the existing system, rather than expecting the system to adapt

to fit them. “I don’t want them to change for me, and I don’t want to change for them” (1314-05). As such, the institution and the individual must both “give and take” when it comes to accommodation (1314-15). As old notions of “you eat what you get” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014) become increasingly rare, “you can’t take advantage of the system” either (Demiray, 06 Mar 2014). The reality that neither Canada nor the Forces are Muslim cultures means that compromise and flexibility are necessary. This willingness to compromise however, results for some in avoiding accommodation requests altogether so as to not inconvenience or “burden” anyone (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). As a result, some personnel either forgo their religious practice while at work, or simply accommodate themselves as best as they can. Several informants expressed the notion that as a Muslim, they do not need anyone’s permission to pray, nor do they need special accommodation. “I’ve prayed on the back decks of tanks, in tents, in my office” (1314-03); “I usually pray in the [airplane] hanger at work. That’s no issue for me” (1314-15).

This rejection of accommodation as a necessity for religious upkeep at work appeared in a number of interviews. From their somewhat flippant responses to accommodation, I got the sense that some personnel do not feel inclined to have their spirituality specially facilitated by the institution. Referring back to an argument made in the previous chapter about accommodation as a system of marking difference and reinforcing the normative culture of the institution, perhaps these individuals in rejecting official accommodation are rejecting their status as “other” and worthy of special notice. Identifying as a Canadian Armed Forces member like any other, they refuse to be cast as “other” and instead make use of the flexibility within their religion to avoid formal

accommodation requests and work to fit into the system, rather than seeking exception from the system. Choosing the vegetarian or fish option at dinners or in ration boxes, choosing to defer prayers into the evening, choosing to pray in an office or an airplane hanger, choosing to miss a fast due to a training exercise, or choosing not to attend Friday prayers on occasion, are all examples of Muslim personnel bypassing accommodation for religious practice in the name of flexibility.

As suggested in the previous chapter, true acceptance would not require special accommodation from the normative system, but would rather assume plurality from the outset. By designating what is “acceptable” through accommodation protocols, the institution limits difference and diversity. Mackey makes a similar argument regarding tolerance: “As an increasing body of work critical of the notion of tolerance points out, tolerance actually reproduces dominance (of those with the power to tolerate), because asking for ‘tolerance’ always implies the possibility of intolerance” (Mackey 2002: 16). In asking for official accommodation, Muslims are subjecting themselves to the possibility of being denied, and thus limited in the form that their religious practice can take. This is particularly significant considering the role of outward religious expression and practice in the cultivation of Muslim piety, as argued by Mahmood (2012: xv). In submitting a request, they submit to needing permission to exercise their right to freedom of religion. Interestingly, one informant pointed to this system in our interview. He expressed a desire to have the dietary restrictions associated with Islam understood as “normal” in the way that an allergy, or vegetarianism is considered “normal” (1314-01). Although not articulated to the extent that I have presented here, this desire for his

“difference” to be considered “normal,” indicates a desire to no longer be marked as “other.” Although some personnel do not feel it necessary to seek accommodation through official channels, they also emphasize that they could easily receive accommodation if they asked for it. This reaffirms the willingness of the institution to facilitate religiosity within the ranks.

Additionally, one respondent expressed concerns over the way in which accommodation precedent is structured. Among the resources utilized to deliberate on religious accommodation is *Religions in Canada*, a key document produced in 2003 by the Department of National Defence Directorate of Military Gender Integration and Employment Equity (Benham Rennick 2011:45; DND 2003c). This publication details the core aspects of faith groups present in Canada, and represented in the CAF. Though not referring explicitly to the document, its use in arbitrating religious accommodation is pervasive, and as such, the aforementioned respondent’s comments regarding protocols problematize this document’s use in establishing standards. While this individual expressed appreciation at the steps being taken by the Chaplain Branch and the Forces in general, such as hiring Imams, he indicates that the majority of personnel, regardless of faith, have moved away from institutional religion.

So, you know, I appreciate all these things that are happening, but I think just like most of my friends, who the only time we’re in church is on Remembrance Day, is that, you know, spirituality figures a lot into some of our lives, but not some of these... not some of the dogmatic stuff. There is a generation of Muslims who came up, and we’re just as Muslim as most people in Canada are Christian (1314-09).

Despite the current popularity of more “conservative” varieties of Islam among many Muslims in Canada (Zine 2012; Roy 2004), in this individual’s opinion most Muslims in the Forces are secular, and were perhaps raised with a more liberal conception of Islam, or have moved away from its formal practice. To them, Islam is just one aspect of their identity – it does not define them. It is the “conservative” version of Islam, however, that is informing precedent with regard to accommodation, in this participant’s understanding. In formulating their list of the minimum requirements of Islam, he believes that the CAFCB has modelled their resources and protocols on the Islam of the Arabian Peninsula, which represents only a minority of Muslims globally. The majority of Muslims in Canada, like him, come from the Indian subcontinent, and practice a more “moderate,” “cultural” sort of Islam. “If they wanted to accommodate the majority of Muslims, they would actually have to do very little” (1314-09) according to this respondent, age 35, who was born in Canada.

Further, in the above individual’s experience, it is largely immigrants to Canada that file complaints regarding religious accommodation. Often they are older, have not served in the Forces for long, and have not “fully appreciated the breadth and complexity of the society we live in” (1314-09). In making demands without understanding the culture of the nation, nor the culture of the military, they usurp the voices of those who have been living and working with the military for a large part of their lives. “I didn’t feel like we had, you know, ‘drank the Koolaid’ but we were born here. ... I totally sound like... I mean, we were born here, we consider ourselves Muslims, we’ve fasted” (1314-09). These comments convey his strong sense of belonging to both Canada and the

military, as well as his sense of ownership over the cultures of both. These individuals who seek further accommodation, forcibly differentiate all Muslims in the CAF from the wider military community, regardless of the degree to which they identify with Islam and whether or not they are practicing.

I feel that just like my friends who don't like to eat liver, for example, I'm only that different. Like some of my friends, [... who] have become more religious within their Christian sects, really into Lent, I'm that different. I have my religious quirks, just like my friends have their religious quirks. Those are the degrees of difference (1314-09).

Although he supports some changes, such as making prayer rooms available, and appreciates that the Chaplaincy has hired Imams, he expresses concerns over “complete fabric of society changes,” that he feels do not represent the wishes of the majority of Muslims serving in the CAF.

Unique among participants in this study as one of two born and raised in Canada and espousing a highly secularized understanding of Islam, his voice represents a portion of the population most likely under-represented in this study. The nature of my recruitment for this sample population, likely generated an over-representation of practicing Muslims, as it was primarily through the three Muslim chaplains that participants learned of this study. Although a diverse sample of Muslims in the CAF, the reflections of this individual may in fact align with a large portion of that population, despite being unsupported by other respondents in this study.

For those who do seek accommodation, several respondents reported facing challenges regarding meal alternatives. Sometimes of poorer quality and occasionally encountering mislabeled ration boxes, again flexibility characterizes the majority

experience. When mistakes are made and proper alternatives are not provided, Muslims often trade with their colleagues, or restrict their observance of *halal* to avoiding pork. For an equal number of participants in this study, food has not been an issue for them. Most respondents reported the need for flexibility, particularly during training, often to the point of sacrificing their religious practices. If in training during Ramadan, several respondents have either neglected their fast altogether, or broken it if their health and safety become a concern. Similarly, ablutions become challenging in the field, and as a requirement prior to worship, often prayer is also missed. However, Padre Carter notes that many members embrace the flexibility in Islam with regard to ritual ablutions and hygiene requirements. If in the field, some may use clean snow or earth to perform an ablution prior to prayer. The additional difficulties and need for flexibility during training arise from an atmosphere designed in part to inculcate military culture, and foster teamwork and harmony, “difference” can thus be seen as detrimental to conditioning. “Team harmony is important during the basic, every time, because that is the whole purpose. [...] You have to be part of the team, you have to show some flexibility” (1314-12).

Accommodation is improving as the Forces becomes a more diverse institution. Although several personnel identify as pioneers in attaining accommodation, through both education and exposure to Islam, requests are increasingly accepted without hassle. The governing principle today, is “if you ask for it, you will get it.” Whether training, dining at the mess, or simply going to work, flexibility from both the institution and the individual characterizes accommodation in the Canadian Armed Forces. Although many



personnel do not seek out official accommodation, nor do they make use of the multifaith spaces provided, for those who do, the space is significant, and for all, the institutional facilitation of their tradition is appreciated.

### Multifaith Services and the Chaplain Branch

In providing a multifaith prayer space, the Chaplain Branch seeks to offer a location of “comfortable dignity” in which non-Christian faith groups can gather. Characterized by Imam Ryan Carter as “a dedicated space,” multifaith rooms should allow “the group, even if they are two, three or four, they will feel that there’s a space that was planned, prepared, designated for them” (Bélanger, 04 April 2014). Of the participants in this study, just one expressed some discontent with the multifaith space available on his base, finding its location to be inconveniently distant from the building in which he works. Several respondents indicated their willingness to participate in communal prayer activities when an Imam is present on base, particularly as they are often instrumental to bringing a community of military Muslims together for worship. Two individuals whom I spoke with helped initiate the prayer facilities at CFB Edmonton with Imam Suleyman Demiray. While one continues to worship with colleagues at the multifaith facilities at Royal Military College, the other no longer worships on base for lack of community at his current posting. The ability of the Imams to bring together the Muslims on a base is positively correlated with the use of multifaith centres. With just three Imams in the Branch, providing an accessible space and accommodation for those who wish to use it, as well as accommodation for those who would rather travel to a

nearby mosque for their communal prayers, satisfies the majority of respondents. “We have to be careful not to send the message that: [...] ‘we can pull the chairs there and put the curtains there, and hide, so that you can go and pray’” (Bélanger, 04 April 2014). A space of “comfortable dignity” is what the Forces aims to provide.

Of the participants in this study, all but two have had contact with one of the three Imams in the Forces at one time or another. As mentioned previously, most participants likely learned of this study through one of the Imams. The majority of these individuals have also had contact with Christian chaplains at one time or another, whether through “Ministry of Presence” or for assistance with an accommodation request. Interestingly, however, very few participants had required advocacy from an Imam for accommodation. A common reality is that many Muslims seek accommodation directly from the source, speaking to kitchen staff about their dietary requirements and to their commanding officers about stepping away for prayer. This echoes Padre Yorganci’s observation that personnel only seek accommodation through the chaplaincy when they face an “obstacle” in attaining it through other channels. Some members that have served with the CAF for over 10 years, before the Chaplain Branch had officially incorporated an Islamic religious expert, also had contact with Christian chaplains in an educational capacity, discussing Islam and sharing perspectives. Their experiences also demonstrate the willingness of Christian chaplains, even then, to learn and improve their ministry.

Although Imams can play an important role in establishing a community of Muslims on base, they also struggle to connect with Muslim personnel and regularly provide services due to low participation rates. One respondent shared some relevant

reflections that may inform this reality. The relatability of a padre may be a significant aspect of cultivating a faith community, whether Muslim, Jewish or Christian. To Canadian-born Muslims, or to those who settled in Canada decades ago, a more recent immigrant serving as an Imam may not be relatable. “I just have a hard time [believing] that I’m going to be able to relate to him on that level [...] in terms of spiritual guidance” (1314-09). Believing, perhaps without experiential justification, that an Imam who has recently immigrated to Canada will not understand his way of being Muslim, nor will they share a culture, the Imam fails to be relevant and accessible for individuals who share these sentiments. As a result of this preconception, rather than seeking out spiritual guidance from a religious leader of his own faith community, he would only communicate with an Imam for a “calming of the soul,” as he could with any other padre (1314-09).

Despite a variety of opinions about multifaith spaces, worshipping on base, and the presence of Muslim chaplains, each participant in this study expressed appreciation for these initiatives. “[Worshipping] on base was awesome [...] because you were all like military, and you were Muslims, so you’re like more connected. [...] No one has any judgments” (1314-04). Although participating in Friday prayers at a mosque off base is preferable for many Muslims, worshipping on base can be more inclusive, in that all are united in a multi-level shared experience. While an Imam is not a requirement for communal prayers, their presence draws Muslims together and helps foster a faith community, which positively correlates with the consistent and frequent use of multifaith space.

### Unity and Military Culture

Central to this analysis is the notion of belonging and the factors that influence feelings of inclusion. In discussing the shift to a diverse, representative Armed Forces and a pluralistic Chaplain Branch, I seek to investigate the experience of Muslim individuals and their perception of this process. Beyond inquiring if Muslim personnel feel accepted and accommodated, I am investigating whether they feel “different,” and whether they feel a sense of belonging to the CAF as Canadian citizens, united in defence of the nation. The military has always been a “bastion of white middle-class respectability,” and to a powerful extent, it remains as such, particularly with regard to culture (1314-10).

You are still going to walk into a white man’s world – mostly Christian and mostly very little exposure to Muslims. I think it’s only a matter of time. As time goes by and more ethnicities come in and push the limits and kinda effect the culture, and eventually, you know, maybe in a couple of decades, it’ll be a good mix – a good representation of the Canadian culture. That’s what it comes down to (1314-05).

In the meantime, while diversity and plurality have been officially embraced and policies have been implemented to facilitate alternate traditions and lifestyles, the military culture continues to reflect the historical roots of the CAF.

Irving Janis introduced the notion of “group think” in 1972. “Those who participate in ‘group think’ tend to value unity within the group above quality alternatives that may result in a more positive outcome” (Benham Rennick 2011: 130). Designed to inculcate the “cohesion and camaraderie” that define the Canadian Armed Forces, basic training conveys unity as the route to success (Dallaire 2011: xi). Describing military culture as “all consuming” and “a world apart,” Muslim personnel convey its role in encouraging conformity among CAF members (1314-10, 1314-09)(Benham Rennick

2011: 149). “One unfortunate effect of the homogenizing nature of the Canadian military is that it can be both abusive towards and exclusive of the very people the CF are seeking to incorporate, such as women, Aboriginals, and visible minorities” (Benham Rennick 2011: 149).

During my earlier interviews, the term “mess culture” arose. Denoting a particular aspect of military culture, it refers to both the formal and casual social outlet officially promoted by CAF commanders. Described by one informant as “obligatory fun,” (1314-09) mess culture revolves around alcohol consumption, and includes formal mess dinners, which all personnel must attend, as well as after-hours frivolity, which is encouraged but not mandatory. The centrality of alcohol at these events results in an incongruence between military culture, which is maintained and cultivated through mess culture when not in training, and Islamic religious practice. All with whom I spoke, regardless of their level of practice, refrain from consuming alcohol. “As a result, a religious restriction (coupled with the visible differences of skin colour or dress code) quickly identifies non-drinkers as outsiders in an environment where conformity and inclusion are paramount for success” (Benham Rennick 2011: 150).

The feeling of exclusion arising from the realities of mess culture varied from individual to individual. For some, it “hasn’t been a big deal” (1314-10), for others it is a challenge they have to confront. “The easiest way is to just go with the culture and leave the belief” – to decide: “I’ll just look like the other 60 guys in the platoon” (1314-05). Several informants expressed the need for a “thick skin” in the military (1314-09). Though people may joke sometimes about their alcohol or dietary restrictions, joking and

mockery are a part of the camaraderie – “it’s all in good fun,” “I seem to be just another guy” (1314-09). For others, these realities become a deterrent to participation, cultivate feelings of exclusion and inhibit unity. “Sooner or later, right... it’s always going to clash. [You have to ask yourself,] like how devoted do I want to be to Islam?” (1314-05). The fact that mess culture, which is codependent with military culture at large, causes some Muslim personnel to question the degree to which they can and want to adhere to their religious tradition demonstrates the exclusion they experience. Further, it suggests an implicit message of military culture – being “different” is not beneficial.

Not one individual whom I interviewed expressed a desire for military culture to change. “That stuff is engrained very deeply,” and it is not going anywhere as of yet (1314-05). ”You really can’t change culture. You can’t change history” (1314-05). It is clear from all respondents that it is their responsibility to be flexible and fit the system. Noting that this aspect of the military was known prior to enlistment, the majority of personnel consider it something they have to live with, however some remarked that they did not realize the extent to which it permeates all social aspects of military life. Some did, however, express hope that as the Forces diversifies further and more ethnic minorities join the ranks, gradually military culture will change in so far as “difference” will not be as notable as it is today – that it will be expected and “normal” that not everyone engages in military culture in the same way.

Despite these challenges, every participant in this study indicated that they experience unity to some extent. The majority identified a “limited unity” present in the Forces, bringing together a heterogeneous group of individuals under some common

“umbrella.” For three participants, unity comes in purpose and in work. As an institution focused primarily on results, the military ethos is “it takes all kinds” (1314-03).

Encouraged to maximize their personal strengths, unity in purpose and work enables individuality. United in striving for a common cause, the protection of Canada, all CAF members are united in their passion and their motivations. This form of unity, however, requires teamwork and harmony. Dissent, particularly against the operations of the CAF, is not acceptable and distinctly cultivates feelings of exclusion.<sup>5</sup> For another respondent, the sense of unity exists only within the military culture. In as much as any one individual can integrate and find a place for him/herself within the subculture, they can experience unity and cohesion. For those who cannot find that place, or cannot locate the flexibility to adapt and participate, that experience of belonging is restricted.

If made to feel like an “other” in any capacity, unity will be limited. As religious, and often visible minorities as well, the conformity promoted by the CAF positions diversity outside of the normative order. The inability to conform to military culture is not “normal.” Until the reality that unity is limited becomes normative, those who cannot conform will remain “different.” At this time, unity is “a bell curve, right? You can only

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<sup>5</sup> While chatting at the end of our interview, one individual noted his opposition to the CAF mission in Afghanistan. Significantly, he described his difficulty with questioning the morality and utility of this operation, but being unable to voice this to his peers. While common in Canada to contemplate the ethics of the “War on Terror” and Canada’s role in related peacekeeping missions, in the CAF, this conflict was personal, and remains personal. Several interviewees alluded to experiencing “dual loyalty” as Muslims in combat against other Muslims (1314-10). This sense of “dual loyalty,” would have implications for experiencing unity in striving for a common cause, and thus would negatively impact the experience of unity in work. In addition, the criticism Muslim CAF may have received at times from civilian Muslim Canadians, undoubtedly would contribute to operational stress.

get so many people in” (1314-05). While unity and cohesion remain absolute concepts in the CAF, the Forces will limit the integration and inclusion of minorities. “If I were to find a long term solution, it should be normalized. Kind of like, it’s perfectly normal that unity involves *a part* of everyone. [...] ‘Unity under Uniform’ maybe” (1314-05).

Four participants in this study indicated that they experience a complete sense of unity with their peers. “Yea, big time, 100%. Never even came to my mind that they look at me like I’m different. [...] In this country, never whatsoever, it might be somewhere there, but I’ve never witnessed it” (1314-08). To these individuals, the fact that they do not consume alcohol while at mess dinners or eat bacon in their ration boxes, the fact that they attend prayer on Fridays instead of Sundays, or that they attend prayer at all, does not negatively contribute to their sense of unity with the Forces. Interestingly, both respondents who attest to a limited sense of unity, and those that experience a complete sense of unity, refer to the same aspects of their religious tradition in explanation. For the former group, these aspects mark them as “other” and in some way inhibit their sense of belonging. For the latter group, these elements that may make them different from the majority of their peers are inconsequential to their peers, and as such they do not feel as though they mark them as “other.” This perhaps points to an ongoing shift in military culture, wherein difference becomes the “norm” and unity is found in diversity rather than homogeneity. “That’s what Canada is built on... the multicultural. If you don’t have that in the military, what’s it gonna be? We’re connected together” in our difference (1314-15). I argue that minority personnel will only experience complete unity when military



identity is no longer understood as a totalizing force – when open hybrid identity becomes the “norm.”

Related to the topics of both accommodation and military culture, personnel are open about their religious identity to varying degrees. This sample of Muslim CAF are most likely disproportionately open about their religiosity, by the very fact that they volunteered to participate in this study and were invariably known to be Muslim by the chaplain who informed them of this research. Although most participants indicated their complete openness with their commanders and peers, the majority also suspected that there are many Muslims in the Forces, who are hiding their religious identity. Padre Demiray attributes this probability to what he calls “typical immigrant psychology” – the notion that it is not advantageous to be an immigrant in the CAF, nor is it advantageous to be a Muslim in the CAF (Demiray, 06 March 2014). As such, to many, it may be best to blend in, in the interest of inclusion and for fear of discrimination, particularly since 9/11. This relates to the media representation of Muslims characterized by Mamdani: “good Muslims are modern, secular, and Westernized” (2004: 24). In this understanding, Muslims who seek accommodation or make their religious identity visible may be aligned with “bad Muslims” who are “doctrinal, antimodern, and virulent” (Mamdani 2004: 24).

Invariably, participants in this study identified the significance of September 11, 2001 to the experience of being Muslim in Canada, and also to their experience as Muslims in the CAF. Respondents identified both positive and negative outcomes with regard to unity and inclusion in this institution that relate to 9/11. As a result of “heavy rural military recruitment” (Cowen 2008: 15), some Muslim personnel perceive a lack of

exposure as characteristic of a significant population of CAF members. In part related to 9/11, several participants indicated the lack of exposure to Islam as an inhibiting factor to integration and unity. Without first-hand exposure to “normal” Muslims, these individuals know only “what they see or hear in the media” (1314-05). “To them it was a very alien thing” to have a Muslim in their unit, or by their side during training (1314-05). To manage this reality, Muslims have to be “easy going,” and understanding of these prejudices to maintain a social relationship with their colleagues (1314-04). Although some individuals tend to stereotype Muslims according to media representations, the main result of 9/11 has been awareness. Bringing Islam to the forefront of people’s minds in North America, 9/11 led people to seek more information, become educated, ask questions and as a result, Muslims too became more open about their faith. Although 9/11 has resulted in the misrepresentation of Islam, at times leading to discrimination, overall, respondents emphasized its positive role in fostering unity through openness, sharing perspectives and learning from one another.

As a minority within a subculture that emphasizes unity, sectarianism does not divide Muslim CAF. “I don’t think given our status as a minority that it would be in any way ever polarized between Shia and Sunni. There’s not enough of us. We kind of pool together” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). This notion of “strength in numbers” also applies to other minorities in the Forces. “As a visible minority, a racial minority, all the other minorities kind of cling to you. It’s kind of cool right?” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). The minimal size of Muslim communities on bases means that sectarian or ethnic divisions are not made prominent. Padre Demiray demonstrates his pride at this reality – that in the

civilian world, it is often difficult to bring Shia and Sunni together for worship, but in the military, the faith community is diverse yet united by their common discourse. Padre Demiray also aims to include non-practicing Muslims into the community by hosting monthly potlucks at the multifaith centre. As an unrepresented population in this study, those Muslims who have no communication with the Chaplain Branch could perhaps express different opinions on this subject. Some may not participate in their faith communities on base because of their sectarian affiliation. Based on the reflections of Muslims in this study, however, this population would be minimal if it exists in the CAF. Articulated another way, one respondent joked that Islam is a “club card” in the CAF – a shared identity that socially unites people, regardless of sectarian affiliation or level of practice (1314-09).

The Muslim experience of unity and military culture is complex and varied. While all personnel acknowledge points of incongruence between Islam and military culture, the significance of these points to a sense of unity and belonging is inconsistent.

#### It Is Better Now – Discrimination in the CAF

As with accommodation, things have improved significantly in the CAF with regard to discrimination. Padre Ryan Carter recounts an experience when he enlisted as a reservist in 2002. At that time, as previously mentioned, he met some opposition to his accommodation request for a beard. The opposition he faced from command was met also by discrimination from his peers. He recalls one evening at the mess being approached by two of his colleagues, one of whom he knew to be Muslim, both drinking beers and

slightly intoxicated. This Muslim man challenged him on the religious validity of his beard, saying “Don’t let the beer bottle fool you, I know my religion” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). As a recent convert, and thus unprepared to defend his understanding of a beard as an Islamic requirement, he felt ostracized and belittled. At this time, he suggests discrimination, even from fellow Muslims, was a byproduct of 9/11. Many Muslims at this time experienced “self loathing” and fear, and thus “pretended to not be Muslim, to fit in... and I didn’t want that” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). This incident, Padre Carter cites as being the decisive moment when he chose to leave the Forces. I suspect also that Muslim women serving in the CAF may face similar discrimination if they choose to uphold certain visible markers of faith. The lack of female participants in this study cannot confirm or deny such a hypothesis. However, the oft-reported occurrence of workplace discrimination related to *hijab* suggests the same may occur to some degree in the CAF (Zine 2012; Patel 2012; Caidi and MacDonald 2008; Persad and Lukas 2002; Nagra 2011a, 2011b; Marcotte 2010).

Several other interviewees agree that what were issues 10 or 30 years ago, would not be issues of the same magnitude today. Referring to his experience enlisting in the 1980s, one individual indicated that the majority of discrimination he experienced came from senior staff of an “older generation.” In the 1980s, military personnel and most Master Corporals would have joined the Forces in the 1960s. Their mentality was “older and different” and their exposure to diversity, of any sort, was limited. “The racism was there, the ignorance was there... it was bad... really bad. [...] It was how they [COs] grew up” (1314-02). Considering himself one of the first Muslims to enlist in the CAF, he

implied that it was his responsibility to defend his rights and file complaints and accommodation requests, in order to improve the experience for Muslims to follow.

Today, most Muslim personnel agree that discrimination is less of an issue than it was prior to 2001 and in the years immediately following Canada's initial engagement in Afghanistan. Padre Carter provides an insightful proposal regarding the nature of discrimination in the CAF today. He identifies two varieties of discrimination, both of which are experienced to some degree in the Forces – subjective and objective. “There's an objective reality to discrimination that exists, and that is true, but there's also a perception, a subjective experience of discrimination. And I've seen that more than the objective” (Carter, 12 Feb 2014). “Subjective” discrimination, in this understanding, is perceived discrimination, and is of a more passive variety than “objective” discrimination. “Objective” discrimination would be overt, blatant, targeted and indisputably present. I argue that this insight connects to a sense of belonging and inclusion that is lacking among Muslim military personnel. Although many of my informants attest to an experience of complete inclusion and welcome in the Forces, there are also many who experience a sense of exclusion. Whether they are actively excluded or not, entering into a subculture that is historically and traditionally Anglo-Christian results in a feeling or a sense of exclusion – a sense that they do not belong.

This subjective experience of discrimination leads some, as previously mentioned, to conceal their religious identity. Fearful of being “singled out” and discriminated against, some refrain from seeking accommodation and from accessing or contributing to a faith community. This is particularly common during training, when Muslim personnel

are least likely to seek any accommodation for religious practice beyond requesting “no pork” in their food. In addition to “subjective” discrimination, “objective” discrimination is also most common on training bases, according to Padre Suleyman Demiray. Speaking from his personal experience during basic training, as a new recruit, unfamiliar with military culture and protocols, and unaware of his right to submit a complaint, he explains that the ridicule some endure can be debilitating to their future employment in the Forces. Very few file formal complaints, fearful of the potential impact on their careers; instead many “quit” the Forces all together. “I hear some bad things” (Demiray, 06 Mar 2014). In part a result of the conditioning and homogenizing purpose of basic training, discrimination is heightened in these settings of extreme structure and discipline. Further, training bases are largely located in rural areas, which lack the civilian resources for Muslim members.

Several personnel indicated geography as a factor in both discrimination and inclusion. Demographically, rural areas and small towns in Canada tend to be less diverse than the cities that interviewees are accustomed to. The lack of exposure to Muslims in these areas causes personnel concern about how they will be perceived, how well they will “fit in” and whether any faith services will be available. When stationed in a remote area, on a base with no active Muslim community, and a town with no mosque, they either must travel to the nearest town with an active community, or must forgo their communal prayers. These realities contribute to feelings of isolation and exclusion, and can also factor into discrimination. Several respondents have experienced more discrimination in rural areas, which they attribute largely to ignorance, not malice.

In areas largely unexposed to Muslims, the misrepresentations of Islam in the media govern public opinion to a greater extent, particularly post-9/11. The pervasiveness of these misunderstandings, however, permeates the entirety of the nation, and the entirety of the CAF, regardless of base location. Operational psychology naturally leads to a process of demonizing the “enemy.” In sharing a faith with those positioned against the Canadian Armed Forces in a conflict, several personnel attested to occasional feelings of hostility. Particularly on garrison, where units deployed in waves throughout the duration of the conflict in Afghanistan, which officially concluded on March 12, 2014 (CBC News: March 12, 2014), that anger and hatred is personal. Benham Rennick likens military simultaneously to a family and a business.

There is much literature attesting to the camaraderie and fellowship present within the military profession that make it feel more like a family environment than a faceless institution (Benham Rennick 2006a; English 2004; Pedersen and Sorensen 1989; Schein 1992). In fact, the military has aspects of what Ferdinand Toennies has described both as *Gemeinschaft* (a community that is a natural and spontaneous outgrowth of family life within an interdependent and bonded group of people) and as *Gesellschaft* (a contract-based society formed from the free association of individuals dedicated to personal success) (Benham Rennick 2011: 88; Toennies 1963 [1887]: 65).

The familial aspect of this dual reality deeply influences the psyche of personnel on garrison, who deployed with their “families” and may have lost members of their “families” while in Afghanistan. When members of your unit are killed, “you feel it, and you are angry. You’re kind of hateful toward people, and who’s the enemy? [...] The Taliban and Muslims” (Demiray, 06 Mar 2014).

Several respondents experience feelings of hatred or revenge toward Muslims in the post-9/11 period, some understanding these feelings as “natural” (1314-05) As

Canadians, many people identified with their neighbours under attack, and in turn demonized the perceived enemy, putting “all the Muslims in the same basket” (1314-01). Political and media agendas cultivated this perception, and failed to communicate the injustice of homogenizing the entire religious tradition based on this particular event. “As a reality... I feel it” (Demiray, 06 Mar 2014). These sentiments were pervasive nationwide, but heightened by the direct influence of this conflict on the lives of military personnel. In perceiving Islam as homogeneous, all Muslims became the “enemy,” and “perception is reality” (1314-03).

One interviewee who was in training in September 2001 recalls his experience. Praying that it was not a Muslim who orchestrated the attacks, he remembers feeling exposed and fearful of backlash. Instead, he felt very supported by his peers, and had no issues as a result. None of the participants in this study attributed an experience of discrimination directly to September 11, 2001. Instead, they attribute discrimination, particularly “subjective” discrimination, to the impact that 9/11 had on public sentiment toward Muslims in Canada. The ever-insightful Imam Carter described the significance of 9/11 as follows:

It challenged what it meant to be Canadian and Muslim, because these attacks, they amplified this notion of ‘foreignness,’ and they amplified this notion that we [Muslims] are somehow at war with the West. [...] But I think at the very most, what it did, at least for [Muslim] Canadians, is ... they now began to accentuate their identity more, in various ways, in more well-defined ways. So in order to separate yourself from what is identified as Salafism or Wahhabism, I’m going to amplify my identity as a traditional Muslim, as a Sufi Muslim [and so forth ...] So what you have now are these various discourses around Canada, revolved around what is normative (Carter, 12 Feb 2014).



As discussed in the previous chapter entitled “The Evolution of the Canadian Nation,” in casting Muslims as “foreign” and “other,” normative Canadian identity is produced and reinforced in the process. As a Canadian institution, this occurred in the Canadian Armed Forces also, but likely to a heightened degree. The direct relevance of the supposed conflict between Islam and “the West” launched into military life in 2001, not only casts Muslims as “foreign” and “other,” but also as “enemies.” This process solidified white, male, Christian military culture as normative, despite the goal of diversification that had been instituted in late twentieth century recruitment strategies. While the Forces welcomes people from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, this event reinforced the exclusive rights of one collectivity to belonging in and ownership of the Canadian Armed Forces. The “subjective,” and to a lesser degree “objective,” discrimination that arose as a result has been experienced by all participants in this study.

As part of his responsibility to Muslim personnel, Padre Demiray considers it a chaplain’s duty to combat discrimination related to religious difference whenever they become aware of its occurrence. “As chaplains, yes we are responsible, but we are not always one on one, on the ground and in the field [...] we are not there always to observe” (Demiray, 06 Mar 2014). In conjunction with the commanding officer, whose responsibility it is to ensure troop morale, discrimination must be addressed by chaplains. “We are responsible to prevent [it]. [...] If] even one person is being traumatized or facing disadvantages because of whatever nonsense, [it] is unacceptable” (Demiray, 06 Mar 2014).

It is important to keep in mind that this exploration condenses the reflections of 15 individuals, over a cumulative 136 years in the Canadian Armed Forces. Despite the occurrence of discrimination, by all testimonies and indicators regarding feelings of unity and satisfaction with employment, discrimination is in fact quite rare in the CAF.

### Conclusions

If asked to generalize the experience of Muslims serving in the Canadian Armed Forces, I would say, overall, it is positive. Invariably, those I interviewed expressed a great amount of pride in their contributions to the Forces, considering themselves valued members of the military with much to offer. Understanding employment with the CAF as a way of helping others, and having an impact, every interviewee has enjoyed their experience. Those who identify as trailblazers for other Muslims serving, take great pride in their efforts to benefit their faith community, and improve resources and accommodation for future Muslims enlisting. That many Muslim personnel identify as trailblazers, with regard to both their presence in the Forces and their efforts to attain accommodation, denotes the feelings of isolation that they experience and the challenges they face in carving a path for themselves. Although this identity is embraced as a point of pride, it is also indicative of their awareness of being “different,” and reveals the sense of exclusion and otherness that they experience.

Since enlisting in the CAF, very few have experienced any change in their spirituality. For some, due to various life changes, such as having a family and ageing, their religiosity has strengthened. One participant explained that like those for whom

Islam became a part of their identity only after they immigrated to a non-Muslim country, his identity as a Muslim became more significant when he entered into the CAF. The challenges he faced in maintaining his religious practice made his religion a more significant aspect of his identity. For others, since enlisting they have adapted their practices, making them more flexible to accommodate the military system.

With regard to accommodation for religious practice, the governing principle is “you don’t get anything, unless you ask for it.” While attaining accommodation has become easier over time, flexibility and compromise remain a requirement, from both the institution and the individual, for satisfaction to be achieved. For some, the willingness to be flexible leads them to bypass accommodation altogether, electing to practice only after business hours. For others, they reject the notion that they require special accommodation at all. In doing so, I argue that they reject being marked as “other” by a system that reinforces the institution’s own normative order and culture. Through official accommodation, the institution designates what is “acceptable” difference, thus limiting diversity and simultaneously demonstrating what the “norm” is not. Further, one respondent put forth an argument that accommodation protocols are modelled on a minority population of Muslims that are more conservative than the majority of Muslims in Canada and in the CAF. In doing so, the Forces forcibly differentiates all Muslims, regardless of the extent to which Islam defines their identity, and the extent to which they practice their religion.

The diversity of experience regarding accommodation is mirrored by the variety experiences with the Chaplain Branch and with multifaith prayer spaces. While multifaith

centres are rarely used, the presence of an Imam positively contributes to the cultivation of a faith community on base. If a faith community of adequate size is absent, the majority of respondents will travel to a mosque in town for Friday prayers. Low participation results from a variety of factors, including the preference of some to worship with a larger community, the choice of some to forgo Friday prayers altogether, the opinion of some that the Imam is not relatable and thus is not relevant to them, as well as the unwillingness of some to publicly reveal their religious identity to the military community.

As a “white man’s world,” many personnel experience difficulties integrating into military culture. Several express the sentiment that it is easier to blend in, than to uphold belief and be cast as “different.” In a culture designed to encourage conformity, for those who cannot conform without sacrificing a central aspect of their religious identity, unity will always be limited. As long as unity in the CAF is considered a totalizing force, minorities will only experience a limited sense of inclusion. I argue that possessing hybrid identities openly and visibly must become normative for the full integration of minorities and the cultivation of an unlimited sense of belonging. In addition, discrimination, whether perceived or experienced, indicates and perpetuates exclusion. The systematic demonization and othering of Muslims post-9/11 has contributed to the “subjective” and “objective” experience of discrimination, simultaneously reinforcing the normative conception of those who “rightfully” belong in the CAF, and thus inhibiting the inclusion and sense of belonging experienced by Muslims in the Forces.

Many respondents expressed the hope that with further diversification, many of the issues presented in this chapter will disappear and the positive aspects of the experience will become more consistent. As the Canadian Armed Forces becomes more representative of Canadian society, the openness, acceptance and diversity of civilian Canada will become a reality in the military as well. I argue, however, that the military does in fact represent Canadian society accurately today, not with regard to diversity, but with regard to the normative, unmarked Anglo-Christian culture that defines its understandings of belonging and ownership over identity.

## CONCLUSION

The experience of being Muslim in the Canadian Armed Forces (CAF) is overall positive. Each participant expressed a great amount of honour and pride in their contributions to Canada and to the military, and emphasized their satisfaction with their experience serving with the CAF. Discrimination is rare, issues with accommodation are infrequent, and generally, Muslim personnel feel supported in the practice of their faith by their military commanders. The experience of being Muslim in the Canadian Armed Forces is favourable, and there is the widespread perception that it will only get better as time goes on.

This study, however, focuses on belonging and inclusion, and thus, I have looked “beneath the surface” of responses to analyze and theorize them. I have arrived at a caveat to this generally positive experience. This caveat stipulates that while the experience of being Muslim in the CAF is generally propitious and many personnel feel welcomed and free to practice their religion, they are nonetheless partially excluded from the broader Forces culture. Their inability or unwillingness to submit fully to the totalizing military, de facto Christian, culture, forfeit the religious practices that lead them to require special accommodation, and release or conceal the hybridity of their identity, places them outside of the group, at least partially “othered” and unable to integrate fully. This reality inhibits feelings of belonging and inclusion. Until open identity hybridity becomes normative, allowing for people to be military and retain their non-Christian identities without being marked as different for doing so, belonging and inclusion will be limited – and therefore, unity will be limited.

### Common Experiential Realities of Muslims in the CAF

To describe the general experience of Muslims in the Canadian Armed Forces, three key concepts are pervasive: 1) trailblazer, 2) flexibility, and 3) contingent unity. Certainly interrelated, these concepts are significant and reoccurring in the interviews I conducted. Several of the individuals with whom I spoke identified themselves in some way or another as “trailblazers,” some believing themselves to be the first to request a specific sort of accommodation, or some feeling as though in fighting for their rights or standing up to discrimination they were facilitating the experience of Muslims who would come after them. The notion of forging a new path was pervasive among interviewees. The prominence of this concept, betrays their sense of being an “other,” or being unique. In acknowledging their feelings of being “different,” they indicate that challenges and responsibilities are associated with that position. One such responsibility that was mentioned frequently in discussions is the ethos underlying accommodation in the CAF: you do not get anything unless you ask for it. Many Muslims who I spoke with expressed the need for flexibility with regard to both accommodation and integration. Often needing to inform their commanders of the nature of their religious practice or their request for accommodation, there was the distinct perception that the institution often does not know how to “handle them.” As a result, they feel as though they have to adapt to fit the system, rather than having the system adapt to fit them. Together, both concepts point to a central exploration of this thesis – contingent, or limited, unity.

Fundamentally, all respondents indicated that there are certain aspects of their Muslim identity that are incongruent with their military identity. Chief among these is the prohibition of alcohol. Although seemingly trivial, the centrality of alcohol consumption in military culture leads to an element of exclusion for those who cannot partake fully in an aspect of the institution designed to foster unity and cohesion. As such, while Muslim personnel may experience powerful unity in their workplace and during training exercises, feeling supported and appreciated by their peers and commanders, they remain limited in achieving a total sense of unity due to their difference, which is often marked by official accommodation. While overt discrimination is rare, the perception that their difference may expose them to discrimination leads some Muslim personnel to avoid requesting accommodation and maintaining the entirety of their religious practice to the degree they desire. These realities are indicative of a limited sense of belonging and inclusion.

#### The Importance of Religion in the CAF

It has been argued by many scholars that in today's secular, functionalist, capitalist society many experience a sense of alienation and isolation, and fear their morality may be eroded as a result. Particularly for individuals living in a diaspora context, the experience of identity crisis is common. To preserve their sense of self, often individuals cling to their ethnicity and religiosity to find meaning and community. Further, when an aspect of one's life is challenged by the surrounding culture, one must



put effort into maintaining that aspect, and thus embrace it as a significant part of one's identity, rather than a given aspect of one's reality.

The significance of religion can be great to individuals working in a highly bureaucratic, functionalist institution, such as the Canadian Armed Forces. This is especially so considering the nature of military work and the heightened exposure to morally complex situations that personnel face. Several scholars have indicated the importance of chaplains to the maintenance of soldier welfare, mitigating the alienation individuals experience from this depersonalized institution, and facilitating the maintenance of a significant aspect of a soldier's morality and sense of self. Instrumental to the care of soldiers suffering from operational stress, chaplains, no matter their religious denomination, offer a stigma-free, confidential outlet that is easy to access due to their "Ministry of Presence."

In the Canadian Armed Forces, Muslims are met with a culture that does not uphold their practices or values as standard. While this leads some to abandon their religious practice in favour of integrating into the existing system, others seek to preserve their religiosity in the face of these challenges. For the latter, Muslim chaplains play a significant role in cultivating a faith community that shares not only in religion, but also in occupation and purpose. This allows Muslim CAF to worship with likeminded individuals, free from judgment. In cultivating a faith community on base, chaplains can combat the feelings of exclusion and isolation personnel experience, and also the exclusion they experience from working in a Christian institution with primarily Christian colleagues. Chaplains also have a significant educational role, both to command and to

personnel in general, advocating for Muslims with regard to accommodation, integration, services, and discrimination. This educational role has further strategic value to the CAF as well, both on base and on deployment.

### Next Steps for Chaplaincy and the Forces

Today, the military is looking to rebuild the infrastructure of base chaplaincy, replacing Protestant and Catholic chapels with new interfaith buildings, where every faith will have a space to call its own (1314-12). Changes like these suggest an ongoing shift toward normalizing plurality and uprooting the Christian foundations of the institution. They suggest that the shift to multifaith chaplaincy is earnest, beyond simply “ticking off a box” to satisfy the demand for diversification. The potential impact of converting physically to multifaith chaplaincy may extend beyond institutional inclusion to social inclusion as well, setting all faiths on the same level of entitlement to resources and community. In addition, however, several respondents indicated the need for more education, particularly of commanding officers, to facilitate cooperation and accommodation. While the introduction of three Muslim chaplains is significant, the understanding of Islam cannot remain with just these individuals, it must permeate the command structure and the chaplaincy, so that “incorporation” is replaced by “inclusion,” and “difference” becomes less noteworthy.

With increased education, accommodation would also become more standardized. As commanding officers become more knowledgeable of Islam, so will personnel, and the processes of informing personnel of their right to accommodation would be further

clarified. Several individuals I spoke with either could not recall when they first learned of their right to religious accommodation, or they recalled learning of it from a friend during basic training, or from a chaplain, up to seven years after they enlisted. The variability in communicating a member's right to receive accommodation for religious practice would be positively affected by education within the chain of command.

In time, more Muslims will climb the ranks, permeating the strategic level, and thus accessing power that can effect significant change for personnel at lower levels. Several individuals expressed this progression as something that could benefit the future of Muslims enlisting in the CAF. Relaying an idea put forth from a chaplaincy perspective, it may be advantageous to have a “travelling subject matter expert” representing each of the non-Christian faiths currently being recognized by the CAFCB (Demiray, 06 March 2014). Such an individual could travel from base to base facilitating the formation of multifaith spaces, educating command about accommodation, and contending with questions and instances of discrimination. Having such a representative would unburden the non-Christian chaplains from fielding questions and concerns, allowing them more time to focus on their own base and cultivate an active faith community. The existence of a “national” Muslim chaplain would mitigate the challenges associated with facilitating Islamic religious practices on bases without Muslim chaplains specifically assigned to them, and thus standardize the experience of Muslim CAF to a greater degree. Beyond positive effects on accommodation and integration, having religious diversity at the strategic level has potential benefits at the operational level for the CAF.

### Next Steps for Research

As mentioned at the outset of this paper, this research is not intended to be exhaustive, but rather to open a field of inquiry into the experience of minority religious communities in the highly structured, regulated, and homogenizing environment of the Canadian Armed Forces. How does one contend with difference in an institution that seeks conformity? How does one experience belonging if unable or unwilling to participate in all aspects of military culture? How does accommodation relate to inclusion and unity? These questions are at the centre of this inquiry, and are theorized based on the experiences of 15 Muslim individuals. This study is not intended to be exhaustive.

As civilian academics increasingly seek access to military communities, gaining such access will be less of an obstacle. As more individuals in the academic community, and in the general civilian Canadian context, discuss military culture and diversification with greater frequency, understanding will grow and positive change may result, including increased enlistment of individuals from minority groups. Beyond studying the Muslim CAF experience, many other non-Christian faith groups are represented in the CAF and have unique experiences of their own. The subject of religion in the Canadian Armed Forces would benefit from studies about other specific minority faith groups to investigate their reflections on military culture and accommodation. Relatedly, as the CAF and Canadian society continue to shift toward secularism, an exploration of secular religiosity and spirituality that builds on the reflections of Benham Rennick would also contribute productively to the dialogue regarding religion and military in Canada.

The so-called “other side of the coin” for this subject matter addresses how military participation by individuals from minority groups influences feelings of belonging to their ethnic communities, their hometowns and to Canadian society more broadly. Such research would examine the impact of military service on civilian life, rather than the impact of civilian realities and identities on military life. This field of study requires much further development and research, particularly in the context of the twenty-first century, as both Canada and the military face pivotal changes regarding culture and religiosity.

#### A Representative Force

In the first chapter of this study, I discussed the construction of Canadian identity. I argued that while the “mosaic” motif idealizes Canada as a haven of equality and diversity, wherein “there is no official culture” (Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada 1985: 15), there is in fact a hierarchy of power and rights that favours one ethnic group over all others. Positioned as normative, Anglo-Canadian culture dominates the institutional structure of Canada, and regulates the amount of “difference” that Canadians will “tolerate.” Further, white, English Canadians retain the foremost right to a sense of belonging in Canada, and a sense of ownership over Canadian identity. In actively maintaining a hybrid cultural identity, certain groups are marked as “ethnic” or “other” to the unmarked cultural norm in Canada. That the normative culture is in fact ethnic and racially connotative is significant, for it subliminally informs belonging and inclusion.

As a national institution, the Canadian Armed Forces maintains a similar normative, Anglo-Canadian culture. Rather than idealizing “multiculturalism” as the system to unite the diverse realities of the population in question, the CAF upholds “military culture” as the route to unity. For those that are unable or unwilling to participate in all that “military culture” entails, they outwardly mark themselves as “other,” as actively upholding a hybrid identity. That “military culture” is intended to serve as a totalizing force in the lives and identities of personnel is indicated by the need to “accommodate” difference and permit those activities and preferences that fall outside of the “norm.” In doing so, the institution regulates what “differences” will be considered “acceptable,” and simultaneously reinforces the dominant culture as normative and privileged. In managing and marking difference through official accommodation protocols, the CAF limits the sense of belonging and inclusion experienced by minority groups serving in the military. Their competing loyalties render them external to the group, at least to some degree.

Although an increasingly secular institution, the Christian roots of the CAF remain, subsumed under the normative Anglo-Canadian culture. That Christian religious practice is not marked by official accommodation, but is rather embedded into the structure and scheduling of the CAF and the CAFCB, indicates its normative position. The needs for non-Christian personnel to adapt and compromise to fit into the existing, Christian system, indicates their position as “other.”

Several interviewees expressed the sentiment that with time, the CAF will become increasingly diverse, eventually representing Canadian society both demographically and

culturally. I argue, however, that the CAF already is representative of Canadian society culturally, if not demographically. Both share a similar normative culture, affording full rights of belonging and inclusion to one group, limiting those same rights to all others.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Guide – Muslim Chaplains

1. Just tell me a bit about yourself? What’s your story? Is most of your extended family in Canada?
2. How did you get into the Forces? What does your job as an Imam consist of?
3. What does your average day look like?
  - a. Home visits? Programming?
4. How do personnel usually understand or articulate their faith?
  - a. What questions are they asking?
  - b. What are they looking for?
5. How do you understand your own faith?
6. What type of religious activities do you engage in?
  - a. Where do you worship?
7. You’ve mentioned that there is a small Muslim community on base here. Are you social with them? Is there a social aspect?
  - a. Many scholars suggest that ethnicity is significant to how Muslims practice Islam. Do you find that this is true?
8. You mentioned earlier that you **do/do not** conduct a worship service on base.
  - a. **DO**: What types of services are offered? Are you satisfied with what you offer?
  - b. **DO NOT**: Why don’t you conduct a worship service on base?
9. Does your family worship with you? On base?
10. What has been your experience with Duty to Accommodate?
  - a. “for religious requirements, not custom or tradition” (DND 2005: 97) – where do these lines get drawn?
11. In providing a multifaith chaplaincy, the Chaplain’s Manual mentions creating “a location of comfortable dignity” (DND 2005: 105) for worship for non-Christian faith groups within current chapels. What does this mean to you?
12. What is the make-up of the chapel here? Are you social with your colleagues?
  - a. The military commonly upholds the notion of “unity” as significant. Do you think that “unity” is a reality?
13. What has the experience of being a military chaplain been like for you?
  - a. Rewards? Challenges? Compassion fatigue? Balance?
14. Have your spiritual or religious beliefs changed at all since you enlisted/began working with the Forces?
15. Many scholars suggest that 9/11 had a significant impact on the experience of Muslims in this country. Do you agree?
  - a. How has 9/11 affected you?
16. Have you served on any other bases in Canada? Have they been different with regard to this topic?
17. What are your future plans?

18. Do you intend to stay with the Forces? If not, why are you considering a new direction?
19. When I'm writing, how would you like me to refer to your location? I'm seeking to preserve your privacy, so would *Alberta* be ok, or would you prefer *Western Canada*?
20. Would you like to be named in my writing? My base assumption is that no participant will be named, but if you'd like to be named in correlation with your statements, that would be fine as well.



APPENDIX B:  
Interview Guide – LCol Martine Bélanger

1. Tell me a bit about yourself? How'd you get in to the Forces?
  - a. Were you formerly a chaplain yourself?
2. What does your job consist of? What does your average day look like?
3. Tell me about the diversification efforts of the Chaplain Branch
  - a. What has been done recently?
  - b. What initiatives are in the works currently?
4. Do you have a familiarity with Chaplain training? I've read the Land Force Manual and certain items stand out to me:
  - a. Under "Duty to Accommodate", it reads that accommodations are made for "religious requirement[s], not merely a religious custom or tradition" (DND 2005: 97). How do you decide on where to draw these lines?
  - b. Are you aware of any issues that have arisen with accommodation?
5. The Chaplain's Manual also mentions that in creating a multifaith chaplaincy, one must create "a location of comfortable dignity" (DND 2005: 105) for worship for non-Christian faith groups within current chapels. What does this mean to you?
6. Do you feel that there is a significant difference between bases with regard to accommodation and resources for non-Christian faith groups?
7. How significant is having an Imam present on base to the experience and wellbeing of Muslim CAF members?
8. In your opinion and experience, how significant is spirituality and religiosity to CAF members at large?
  - a. Operational stress?
  - b. Community?
9. Do you think that the work of the chaplaincy would be facilitated by maintaining statistics and information on CAF religious identification?
10. The military commonly upholds the notion of "unity" as significant. Do you think that "unity" is a reality?
11. Do you believe that discrimination toward minority groups is an issue in the Forces?
12. Many scholars suggest that 9/11 had a significant impact on the experience of being Muslim in Canada. Do you agree?
13. What would you like to see the Chaplain Branch and the Forces do in the future? What are the next steps in your opinion?
14. What are your future plans?