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Executive summary

A new residential order?: The Social Geography of Visible Minority and Religious Groups in Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver in 2031

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July 2012



Canada

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R&E Ref. No.: RR20120701E

Executive summary

This report presents the third phase of a study of the changing ethnocultural landscapes of Montreal, Toronto, and Vancouver.

The first phase¹ set the conceptual foundations and analyzed changes occurring between 1996 and 2006. It developed a neighbourhood typology taking into account both the concentration and composition – single or mixed -- of Visible Minorities (see Appendix B for definitions of neighbourhood types, the Index of Dissimilarity and the Index of Segregation). It identified simultaneous processes of concentration of the Visible Minority population in enclaves, and dispersion (increasingly diverse composition in both enclave and white neighbourhoods) taking place especially in Toronto and Vancouver. It also analyzed the socio-economic characteristics of enclaves, highlighting that patterns of socio-economic marginalization are complex, and not univocally associated with high ethnocultural concentration.

The second phase² shifted attention to the issue of residential trajectories, especially whether the Canadian-born children of immigrants live in the same neighbourhoods as their parents' generation. Three Visible Minority groups (people self-identified as Black, Chinese, and South Asian) and four European origin groups (those self-identified as Italian, Jewish, Polish, and Portuguese) were selected in a case study design. The study shows that, in Toronto, across nearly all of the groups, the Canadian-born generations are more dispersed and, if Visible Minority, less likely to live in enclaves than first-generation immigrants. Patterns are much less clear and differ across groups in Montreal and Vancouver. In terms of dispersion, no straightforward distinction was found between European origin and Visible Minority groups.

The third phase adapts the ethno-demographic projections made by Statistics Canada for 2031 at the metropolitan scale to the intra-urban scale, allocating the number for any particular group provided at the CMA scale to the Census Tract scale. This phase included consideration of populations with various religious affiliations, in addition to Visible Minority populations. Brian Klinkenberg developed the method to accomplish the allocation of the CMA projections to the Census Tract scale (a separate report details the methodology and maps developed for this exercise³). The development of the projection algorithm required several assumptions, achieving a necessarily simplified picture of the complex processes that will in fact forge the ethnocultural and religious landscape of the three CMAs. More specifically, it was assumed that the same socio-economic, policy, and urban planning conditions will be in place between 2006 (2001 for religious groups) and 2031 as in the previous twenty years, so that residential decisions would maintain a similar pattern as they did between 1996 and 2006 (2001 for religious groups). In addition, the algorithm may have an inherent bias to overestimate high concentrations, especially in extreme cases. It is therefore important to keep in mind these assumptions and limitations when interpreting the results.

According to the projections, while Montreal is likely to undergo changes that mirror the general Canadian situation, Toronto and Vancouver are likely to have a social geography that is entirely new to Canada. Overall, Montreal will still have a smaller proportion of Visible Minorities (projected

¹ Hiebert, Daniel, 2009. *Exploring minority enclave areas in Montréal, Toronto, and Vancouver*, available at www.cic.gc.ca/english/resources/research/minority-enclave.asp

² Hiebert, Daniel, 2009. *Inter-generational dynamics of ethno-cultural residential concentration in Canadian metropolitan areas*. Unpublished study completed under contract to PCH.

³ Klinkenberg, Brian, 2012. *Demographics and population trends in Montreal Toronto, and Vancouver: 2006 to 2031*. Unpublished methodological study completed under contract to CIC.

at 31 percent) than that in Toronto or Vancouver in 2006. In Montreal, about nine out of ten Whites will live in White-dominated areas, while the Visible Minority population will be spread across neighbourhoods of all types (i.e. characterized by the full range of Visible Minority or White concentration), indicating a fairly high degree of ethnocultural mixing. By contrast, Toronto and Vancouver are projected to become 'majority-minority' cities, with an overall Visible Minority population at 63 and 59 percent respectively. In Toronto and Vancouver, the degree of separation between Whites and Visible Minorities is projected to rise considerably, beginning to approach that in the average US city in 2010 between Whites and African Americans.

These changes will also be reflected in inter-generational dynamics. In Montreal, the propensity for members of Visible Minority groups to reside in enclaves will likely tend to dissipate across generations to an extent greater than that already observed in the past. By contrast, in Toronto and Vancouver, the propensity for second-generation immigrants to live in enclaves is projected to be only moderately lower than that of the first-generation immigrant cohort.

Considering religious affiliations, all three cities will see a growth in the population with non-Christian religious affiliations, while Vancouver will maintain its distinctly larger population with no religious affiliation. Considering the major non-Christian categories, in Montreal the Sikh community and, to a slightly lesser extent, the Jewish community, are projected to have a high degree of isolation. By contrast, Muslims are projected to have the least degree of isolation among non-Christian categories. In Toronto, the Jewish community is projected to be the most residentially distinct non-Christian group, and to be quite isolated from others. Sikhs are also projected to be highly isolated. The other three groups (Buddhist, Hindu and Muslims) in Toronto have much more dispersed socio-spatial profiles, particularly Muslims. The residential concentration of non-Christian groups in Vancouver is projected to be similar to that in Toronto, but with much higher dispersion of the (much smaller) Jewish community.

In parallel, non-Christian religious communities in both Toronto and Vancouver will be mostly found in enclave neighbourhoods (i.e. where Visible Minorities are over 70 percent). Non-Christian groups that are composite, such as Buddhists and Muslims, will reside in neighbourhoods that vary in term of their ethnic composition and Visible Minority concentration. Religious groups that are more closely associated with a specific Visible Minority category (such as Hindus and Sikhs, which are overwhelmingly identified as South Asians), will be much more geographically concentrated and situated within single-group enclaves.

To conclude, it is important to emphasize that there is no empirically verified relationship between ethnocultural mixing vs. isolation and residential strife or pathology. Social policy and programming have a salient role to play that will ameliorate or intensify any of the impacts that ethnocultural concentration may have. For example, if programs for integrating immigrants are accessible and well utilized, newcomers believe that the labour market is open to them, and Visible Minority children succeed in school, it is hard to think that ethnocultural enclaves would have a negative impact on society.