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differential material rewards in relation to education and occupation. People should be encouraged to develop those talents and capacities that offer an opportunity for personal growth and self-realization (often achieved through social contributions) and to respect achievements in diverse fields. In the end, a society in which there are relatively few inequalities among individuals (and hence among groups) will be the one in which the kinds of differences we want to affirm (among individuals and groups) will be most likely to flourish.

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Cultural Adaptation and the Integration of Immigrants: The Case of Quebec

Questions about liberalism and culture have come to the fore in the past decade in part because of the growth in international migration. Many European states that had not thought of themselves as countries of immigration found themselves with substantial populations of immigrants, and states like Canada and the United States that were self-consciously countries of immigration found that the sources of immigration had changed.¹ In both Europe and North America, many people saw immigrants as the bearers of alien cultures, radically different from and perhaps incompatible with the existing cultures in these liberal states. These developments have raised urgent questions about the cultural adaptation of immigrants in liberal states. In this chapter and the next, I will explore some of those questions.

In broad terms, the key questions for this chapter are these: to what extent and in what ways may liberal states legitimately expect immigrants and their children to conform to the dominant culture of the society they have entered? To what extent and in what ways may immigrants expect the states they have entered to respect their pre-existing cultural identities and commitments and respect whatever concern they have to pass on these identities and commitments to their children?

I use the term 'expect' in a normative not an empirical sense. There is an extensive empirical literature on the cultural adaptation of immigrants that seeks to describe and explain how and why immigrants change (or do not change) culturally in response to their new environment. From such a perspective, one might say, for example, that one can expect a high degree of linguistic adaptation among the children of immigrants. That sort of expectation is sociological or predictive. By contrast, I am interested in the question of whether states are *entitled* to expect this sort of linguistic adaptation (and

¹ In both cases this was partly the result of forgetting one's own history. Several European states had experienced substantial immigration flows earlier in their history, and people in the North American states had forgotten how alien Irish, Eastern European, and Mediterranean cultures had seemed to the long-settled inhabitants of Canada and the United States in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

other forms of cultural transformation) as a condition of full membership for immigrants and their descendants. My questions are not about how immigrants *will* adapt in the course of living in a new society, but about how they *ought* to adapt.

I do not assume that all liberal democratic states ought to follow exactly the same policies with respect to the integration of immigrants. Different states have different histories, cultures, institutions, and goals. These differences may legitimately lead to different policies with respect to, say, education or health care, and presumably may legitimately lead to different policies with respect to the integration of immigrants as well. I do assume, however, that a commitment to liberal democratic principles sets limits to the range of morally permissible policies. There are some things that no liberal democratic state may legitimately do and other things that every liberal democratic state is obliged to do. Identifying those limits with respect to the cultural integration of immigrants is the principal task of this chapter.

In talking about integration, I have used the word 'membership' rather than 'citizenship'. This is deliberate. States may require certain kinds of cultural adaptation as a prerequisite for admission to citizenship, but they may also expect resident aliens who do not become citizens to adapt culturally in various ways and they may expect further cultural adaptation even of those already admitted to citizenship. Elsewhere, I have argued that access to legal citizenship should not be conditioned upon cultural adaptation but should be tied almost exclusively to length of residence (Carens 1989). I will not repeat those arguments here. Instead, I will focus on the question of how liberal democratic communities may legitimately expect new arrivals to change, regardless of their formal citizenship status, and how they may not. To put it another way, what moral principles ought to undergird and guide public policies with respect to the integration of immigrants?

Why the Case of Quebec?

Traditional countries of immigration like Canada, the United States, and Australia have all undergone broadly similar patterns of development with respect to the selection and integration of immigrants. For much of the twentieth century, each of these countries had in place a system for selecting immigrants that was racially and culturally biased and mechanisms of integration that were built upon the assumption that immigrants should assimilate to the prevailing, hegemonic culture. (Even the melting-pot myth was built upon the assumption that certain flavours would be dominant.) Over the past few decades, each of these societies has abolished its overtly discriminatory criteria of selection and each has adopted, in one form or another, an

ideal of multiculturalism rather than assimilation. Should these developments be viewed merely as a response to the particular historical situations of the countries in question or should they be viewed as required by—I do not say caused by—a new understanding of the requirements of liberal democratic principles? I believe the latter, but instead of trying to demonstrate that abstractly, I propose to explore it concretely by looking at a case in which a political community has an explicit collective cultural project and seeks to integrate immigrants into that project. Seeing what such a community thinks it can demand of immigrants may reveal a lot about liberalism and culture, both in terms of the kinds of cultural projects that a liberal political community can pursue and in terms of the way liberal principles limit the demands that can be placed on immigrants to adapt.

The case I will take up is Quebec. I propose to focus on what Quebec says about the principles guiding its policies with respect to the integration of immigrants and to critically evaluate Quebec's principles in the light of liberal democratic theory.

This may seem an odd way to proceed in two respects. First, Quebec is not—at least, not yet—an independent state. (There is a strong independence movement in Quebec, and Quebec's separation from Canada seems a realistic possibility in the near future). Secondly, what political communities say about the moral principles underlying their policies is a notoriously unreliable guide to their practices. Let me say why I think this is an appropriate way to proceed nevertheless.²

Although Quebec is not an independent state but a province of Canada, the Quebec government has negotiated with the federal government and acquired virtually complete authority over policies affecting the integration of immigrants to Canada who arrive in Quebec. None of the other Canadian provinces has shown any interest in exercising authority in this area. The Quebec government sought these powers precisely because it thinks of Quebec as a 'distinct society' from the rest of Canada and sees control over the selection and integration of immigrants as essential to the project of maintaining and developing this distinct society.

What makes Quebec a distinct society is the fact that the vast majority of the population (over 80 per cent) are francophones descended from the original French and other settlers of New France during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, whereas in the rest of Canada the overwhelming majority of the population are anglophones descended either from English settlers or subsequent immigrants who learned English. Moreover, many Quebec officials and intellectuals are hostile towards the term 'multiculturalism' because they regard the term as a way of placing francophone culture on a par with

² A third possible objection is that Quebec is not a liberal political community because of its collective project. I try to address this issue later in the text.

the cultures of ethnic minorities who became established in Canada through immigration in the late nineteenth or twentieth centuries or who are now still arriving. In the eyes of many Québécois, multiculturalism does not do justice to the conception of Canada as a country built upon two 'founding nations'—the French and the English.³ The Quebec government insists that Quebec has a distinct history and culture and it aims to integrate new immigrants to Quebec in a way that contributes to its distinct society.

I should add that immigration policy is not the subject of serious dispute between the federalist party (the Liberal Party) and the main elements of the separatist party (the *Parti-Québécois*) which is currently in power. Even if Quebec becomes independent, it seems unlikely that Quebec's immigration policy will change much.

In thinking about the issues posed by contemporary immigration in Europe, one objection to drawing lessons from classical countries of immigration like Canada and the United States is that the self-understandings of European countries are very different. Even a country like France that has traditionally accepted immigrants does not conceive of itself as a country built by immigration, and most European countries have much less ethnic and cultural diversity and populations with much deeper historical roots than the countries of immigration. These objections have a good deal less force when applied to Quebec, for the reasons outlined above. At the same time, Quebec officials have given a great deal of careful and explicit attention to the question of how to integrate immigrants in a way that preserves and contributes to Quebec's distinct society, so their reflections may illuminate some of the possibilities and limits of the demands a liberal democratic society can make of immigrants with respect to cultural adaptation.

Why focus on what Quebec says about its principles with respect to the integration of immigrants? Formal policy pronouncements are notoriously unreliable as a guide to actual practice. What is said in one document may be contradicted in another, or officials may speak in codes, using language that formally respects certain conventions while expressing the opposite in a way that is understood by all who care to listen. Moreover, actual policies often differ greatly from formal policies, and outcomes often do not correspond to intentions.

In studying social policy, social scientists tend to follow the advice of H. R. Haldeman (an aide to President Nixon subsequently sent to jail for his role in the Watergate scandal) who said, 'Don't watch what we say; watch what we do'. (To his chagrin, some reporters heeded his recommendation). So, social scientists want to learn about what is actually done, and, if they do study

³ The conception of Canada as having two founding nations is one that aboriginal people in Canada find particularly objectionable because of the way it ignores their prior settlement on the land. I discuss questions about aboriginal people in Canada further in Chapters 7 and 8, especially the latter.

what is said, they pay particular attention to the contradictions and codes rather than the formal pronouncements. This approach is justified on the grounds that the real commitments, values, and principles of the government are manifested in practice. Indeed, this sort of approach is entirely appropriate, in my view, when the task at hand is to explain what the government is doing and why.

But if the question is what people think is morally right (and what they should think), then a formal statement of principles becomes much more important. For purposes of critical reflection on legitimation, public discourse matters. Even the use of codes reveals something important about public criteria of legitimation. Hypocrisy is the tribute vice pays to virtue, as the old saying goes, and what public officials say they are doing can be an important indicator of what they think is generally regarded as the boundaries of the morally permissible, especially when they actually intend to do something else. Moreover, there are often genuine disagreements about what is and is not morally permissible. To criticize actual practices or even codes—except perhaps on grounds of ineffectiveness or inconsistency—one has to speak from a normative perspective. My task is to elucidate that normative perspective and to subject it to critical reflection.

Questions about Belonging in Quebec

In what ways (according to Quebec) ought immigrants to change their behaviours, their beliefs, their cultural practices, or their identities? What does Quebec think they ought to do in order to become Québécois, not just legally but in some deeper, social sense? When, in Quebec's view, are they morally entitled to feel that they belong, that they are full members of Quebec society? And how does Quebec think it ought to adapt to the immigrants? In what ways does Quebec feel obliged to respect the immigrants' existing behaviours, beliefs, cultural practices, and identities? What sorts of acceptance and welcome does Quebec think it ought to extend? In short, in Quebec's view, what do the immigrants owe Quebec and what does Quebec owe the immigrants?

Let me repeat that I am not primarily concerned here with legal status and legal rights. Immigrants to Quebec normally become permanent residents of Canada when they arrive, with most of the rights of citizens apart from the right to vote. They are eligible to apply for citizenship after three years, and the requirements for admission are limited: modest linguistic competence, rudimentary knowledge of Canada's political institutions and history, no serious criminal record. These requirements would not be likely to change much in an independent Quebec.

My focus is on the normative conceptions of membership and community that Quebec says should govern the process of integrating immigrants into Quebec and that should inform particular policies, regardless of whether those immigrants have become citizens. My primary task is to identify and evaluate these normative conceptions.

There is one last preliminary complication. When I hypothesize Quebec, as in speaking of Quebec's demands or goals, I am referring implicitly or explicitly to the government of Quebec. When one considers the issues of social expectations, membership, belonging, and identity, however, the attitudes and behaviour of the whole population matter. An immigrant is not likely to feel as though she belongs, regardless of what government officials say, if most of the population see her as an outsider. To say that Quebec expects this or that of immigrants or that Quebec feels it owes this or that to immigrants thus risks a certain ambiguity. It is reasonable to ask whether the population as a whole shares the government's attitudes and assumptions. Despite this complication, I will focus primarily on the government's view of these issues, because I am trying, in this chapter, to identify and evaluate the normative presuppositions of public policies with regard to immigration. Moreover, while the government cannot entirely control the process of social integration, its policies and pronouncements play an important role in constructing norms of discourse about immigrants, membership, and community.

Quebec's Moral Contract with Immigrants

Quebec has issued a policy document that is particularly revealing about the government's normative presuppositions.⁴ It proposes a moral contract between immigrants and Quebec as a society, and it outlines the rights and

⁴ The document is entitled *Vision: A policy statement on immigration and integration*. It was issued by the Ministry of the Cultural Communities and of Immigration of the Government of Quebec (in French and English) in 1990 after a great deal of highly developed and highly moralized public debate about the place of immigrants in Quebec's distinct society. For a government document it is truly remarkable. Instead of the bureaucratic banalities that such documents usually contain, this one offers a sophisticated, self-conscious articulation of the goals of Quebec's policies and of some of the normative presuppositions underlying those policies—presuppositions about rights, duties, membership, community, democracy, pluralism, history, culture, and individual identity. Of course, any government document has its limits. As policy, it could be changed by this government or a new one. As an account of Quebec's understanding of immigration and political community, it cannot claim to be a reflection of the views of the population as a whole or even of all current government practices. As the title itself indicates, the policy statement is about a vision, a goal, rather than an accomplished fact. Nevertheless, the statement puts forward a set of standards, principles, and ideals that it says should guide the development of policy. As such, it invites comparison with alternative policies and rationales and that from a moral and theoretical perspective as well as a political and practical one. Page numbers in parentheses in the text of this chapter refer to this document.

responsibilities of each party in the integration process. By explicitly invoking the language of morality to describe the principles undergirding Quebec's policies, it sets out a clear claim to moral legitimacy that invites scrutiny—and, in my view, can largely sustain that scrutiny.

According to the document, three principles guide the integration process in Quebec, principles based on the 'social choices that characterize modern Quebec' (15). On this account, Quebec is:

- A society in which French is the common language of public life;
- A democratic society where everyone is expected and encouraged both to participate and contribute;
- A pluralist society that is open to multiple influences within the limits imposed by the respect for fundamental values and the need for intergroup exchanges (15).

Immigrants are expected to accept these characteristics of Quebec society. That is their primary moral responsibility with regard to integration. These characteristics also entail certain rights for the immigrants, not only legal rights but also moral rights in the sense of legitimate expectations about the way they will be treated and accepted in Quebec. For its part, Quebec as a society has a moral right to expect immigrants to accept these three characteristics but also a moral duty to meet the legitimate expectations of the immigrants and to make possible the integration that it expects.

What should we say about this moral framework that the government says is to guide Quebec's integration process? Obviously, we need to unpack it a good deal before we can evaluate it adequately. Still, one feature of the general picture is striking. Given the emphasis that Quebec has placed on building a *distinct* society and the importance it has attached to gaining control over all aspects of immigration and social integration, one might expect Quebec's policies on the integration of immigrants to be strongly assimilationist. What is surprising from this perspective is how little adaptation Quebec expects of immigrants and how little of that seems 'distinct'.

French as the Language of Public Life

Let us consider each of the three characteristics of Quebec society in more detail and what each entails for the integration of immigrants. First, consider the context of the assertion that French must be accepted as the common language of public life. The fact that a substantial majority of the Québécois (over 80 per cent) are francophones is at the heart of Quebec's self-understanding as a political community, as is the potential vulnerability of that fact

given the overwhelming dominance of the English language in the rest of North America and given Quebec's history.

The Québécois are acutely aware of the rapid and substantial diminution of the use of French among francophone emigrants from Quebec to parts of Canada where anglophones constitute a majority. In many cases in the past, the French language was deliberately and forcefully suppressed. But even if one sets aside such overt suppression and indeed takes the cases today where the francophone population outside Quebec receives the strongest public support, with bilingual institutions ostensibly in place and systems of public education in French, assimilation to English is rapid and widespread except in those cases where a particular francophone population is relatively isolated and self-contained geographically. In the North American context, the English language has an overwhelming presence. That is why the Québécois have concluded that bilingualism in Quebec would lead to the erosion and eventual demise of French.

Compared with the position of French in the rest of Canada, not to mention the United States, English has enjoyed a privileged position in Quebec until quite recently and, in some important respects, it still does. There was never any suppression of English in Quebec. On the contrary, Quebec established a system of anglophone public institutions—not only schools but also hospitals, a major university, legal and social service institutions—that has no parallel in terms of francophone public institutions outside Quebec. The creation of these anglophone institutions may have been the result of anglophone political and economic hegemony, but they remain largely in place even now after anglophone hegemony in Quebec has disappeared. Despite the fact that anglophones have always been a minority in Quebec, they dominated commercial life, including most managerial posts down to the shop floor. Until quite recently—the last twenty-five years or so—it was more advantageous in terms of economic opportunity to be a unilingual anglophone than to be a bilingual francophone, and many francophones could not use French in the ordinary course of their work. These are the sorts of facts that the Québécois remember and resent when Quebec is criticized for its efforts to ensure that the French language will be the central language of Quebec's public life.

Prior to the 1970s, immigrants to Quebec tended overwhelmingly to learn English rather than French (if they were not themselves already francophones) and, most importantly, to send their children to public schools in which English rather than French was the language of instruction, an option that was normally completely open to them. They chose this course because knowledge of English offered social and economic advantages even within Quebec and was overwhelmingly advantageous in the rest of North America and because the francophone community had a largely closed and insular character. Some francophone parents sent their children to anglophone schools for the same reasons.

Beginning with the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, successive governments in Quebec have taken various actions to establish and secure the position of French.⁵ The French language is to be 'the language of Government and the Law, as well as the normal and everyday language of work, instruction, communications, commerce and business' (15). But the centrality of the French language is politically important for more than instrumental reasons. 'It is also a symbol of Quebec identity' (16). The Quebec government thus takes the preservation of the French Fact and the promotion of the French language as a central political goal. Any foreseeable future government, whether Quebec remains part of Canada or not, seems certain to share this commitment:

What does this mean for immigrants to Quebec? In general terms, the following:

[T]he Government and the vast majority of Quebecers view the learning of French and its adoption as the common language of public life as the necessary conditions for integration. . . . The host-community therefore naturally expects immigrants and their descendants to be open to the French Fact, to make the necessary effort to learn the official language of Quebec and to gradually acquire a sense of commitment to its development. (16)⁶

The central message seems clear. If you want to belong in Quebec, both to feel that you belong and to have the rest of the population feel that you belong, you have to learn French and accept the central place of the French language in Quebec society. At one point, the government's document speaks 'about the need to send immigrants and Quebecers from the cultural communities a message about the importance of French. This should be correctly perceived as a message about belonging to Quebec society' (47). It is hard to be more explicit than that. There is nothing wrong, the government seems to be saying, in making full social membership contingent upon this sort of adaptation. It is a reasonable expectation that immigrants are morally obliged to meet.

Linguistic adaptation is the strongest demand that the moral contract proposed in the policy document makes upon immigrants. Moreover, this is one moral demand that the government is prepared to enforce with legal

⁵ The 'Quiet Revolution' refers to the dramatic transformation of Quebec society during the early 1960s. Prior to this time, the anglophone minority in Quebec dominated the economy. The francophone community (including the elite) was predominantly conservative and Catholic, wedded to a rural way of life and traditional values, hostile to liberalism and capitalism. In the space of a relatively few years, the francophone community (especially the elite) became predominantly secular, liberal, modern, and entrepreneurial, active rather than passive, aggressive rather than defensive. Modernizing francophones gained control of Quebec's government and of its economy and used the two together to transform Quebec society.

⁶ The document uses the term 'Quebecers' to refer to the inhabitants of Quebec, whereas I use the term 'Québécois' in this book, except when quoting directly from the document. Usage in the literature on Quebec varies a good deal, and I am treating this entirely as a matter of stylistic preference. I do not intend the choice of words to imply anything substantive about my views on Quebec.

requirements in certain respects. For immigrants, the most important of these requirements is the law that says the language of instruction in the public schools to which immigrants send their children will be French, thus removing the option which had previously been available to them and is still available to anglophones in Quebec, of sending their children to schools in which the language of instruction is English.⁷ This requirement ensures that most children of immigrants will learn French, whether their parents do or not.

What are the limits on the demand for linguistic adaptation? First, the government asserts that the expectation that immigrants learn French and accept its place as the language of public life is not a demand for 'linguistic assimilation' (16). Individuals have the right to use the language of their choice in 'private communication' (16). Moreover, 'heritage languages' are viewed as 'an economic, social and cultural asset for the whole population of Quebec' (16). Thus Quebec actually promotes the retention of heritage languages among the children of immigrants through various publicly funded school programmes. Finally, the government recognizes that linguistic adaptation is something that occurs over time, and that the length of time required depends in important ways on people's circumstances.

What may immigrants expect of Quebec with regard to linguistic adaptation? First, the government acknowledges that expecting immigrants to adapt linguistically entails an obligation for the government to provide services that make it possible and attractive for them to learn French. Secondly, the government says that the existing francophone community has an obligation to be open to immigrants, as it was not prior to the Quiet Revolution, and that the desired linguistic adaptation will not occur without that openness. The goal, according to the government, is make it possible for 'the French language [to] become part of the shared heritage of all Quebecers, whatever their origin' (16).

Learning the official language of the society to which they are moving might seem like the prototypical example of the sort of adaptation a society can reasonably expect of its immigrants. And so it is, or so I shall argue below. But this paragraph shows that even in the case of linguistic adaptation, the expectations for change are not all on one side. Before examining the merits of Quebec's claims to be making legitimate demands of immigrants in asking

⁷ This way of describing the requirement oversimplifies things a bit. The actual rule stipulates that only children who have at least one parent who received a primary education in English in Canada are entitled to have access to the English language public school system in Quebec. Thus, for example, the children of British or American immigrants to Quebec would not be entitled to an education in English. Some have proposed softening this rule to permit immigrants whose native tongue is English—a relatively small proportion of the immigrants to Quebec—to send their children to the English language schools, but this proposal has not yet been adopted. My analysis later in the chapter implies that children of immigrants whose native tongue is English would have stronger moral claims to an English language education than the children of other immigrants. Whether the failure to provide them with such an education exceeds the bounds of justice as even-handedness is another question.

them to learn French, however, I want to consider more briefly the two other elements of Quebec's moral contract with immigrants: democracy and pluralism. Commitment to these principles may entail some kinds of adaptations by immigrants, but it also sets strong limits to the kinds of changes that can be demanded and imposes obligations on the receiving society as well.

Democracy and Pluralism

The principle that Quebec is 'a democratic society in which everyone is expected and encouraged to participate and contribute' seems to demand more of Quebec as a society than of immigrants. On the one hand, this does entail a duty for immigrants to exert themselves. Quebec 'is entitled to expect newcomers to make the necessary effort to engage gradually in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Quebec' (17). On the other hand, it requires Quebec to make this participation possible and to encourage it.

Quebec's commitment to the democratic ideal means that it 'assigns the highest importance to the values of equal opportunity and social justice' (16). Thus, Quebec has promulgated various human rights documents committing Quebec to principles of non-discrimination on various familiar liberal grounds, including language and ethnic or national origin, categories of special significance for immigrants. But the government goes further than a promise of formal equality:

[I]mmigrants can expect the host-society to provide them socio-economic support during the initial period and to back them up whenever they or their descendants confront institutional or social barriers that deny them equal access to employment, housing or various public and private services. Furthermore, immigrants can also expect the host-community to allow them, like all Quebecers, to help define the major orientations of our society (17).

Thus Quebec acknowledges a duty to promote the full participation of immigrants in economic and political life.

With respect to pluralism, the government draws a sharp contrast between traditional Quebec society which it says 'advocated a uniform cultural and ideological model to be shared by all Quebecers' and modern Quebec which it says 'has for more than 30 years resolutely styled itself as a pluralist society' (17). People in Quebec are free to 'choose their own lifestyles, opinions, values and allegiances to interest groups within the limits defined by the legal framework' (17). Ethnic minorities, including recent immigrants, have 'a right to maintain and develop their own cultural interests with the other members of their group' (17). All this clearly is incompatible with the notion that immigrants have an obligation to repudiate their cultures of origin and to adopt the culture of Quebec or that this sort of cultural transformation is

a prerequisite for becoming full Québécois. The principle of pluralism seems to rule out any strong version of cultural assimilation.

What does Quebec demand of immigrants with respect to the principle of pluralism? Does Quebec expect any cultural adaptation beyond the learning of French? It does expect immigrants, like all Québécois, to respect the democratic values in which the commitment to pluralism is embedded. The government emphasizes three concerns in this context: 'equality of the sexes, the status of children and the censure of all discrimination based on race or ethnic origin' (18). Beyond this, the language is much more tentative. The main emphasis is on openness between groups. The government certainly suggests that immigrants will integrate more effectively if they learn about the history and culture of Quebec, but it is also at pains to acknowledge that immigrants and 'the cultural communities' have contributed to Quebec's history and culture in the past and continue to do so in the present, and that Quebec has an obligation to be open to these contributions. It talks about the history of Quebec as a 'common heritage', while insisting that 'Quebeckers from the cultural communities must be recognized as full-fledged Quebeckers with their similarities and differences' (75). Moreover, these differences may sometimes oblige Quebec to adapt, to modify its practices out of respect for these differences. Thus, for example, it acknowledges that in matters of 'dress, dietary prescriptions, work schedules and the observance of religious holidays' the practices of religious minorities may differ from those of the Christian majority and these differences should be respected wherever feasible (72).

In all this, the contrast with the much stronger demand for linguistic adaptation is striking. There the message was 'Learn French and adopt it as the language of public communication if you want to be accepted'. Here the message is not at all 'Learn about Quebec culture and adopt it as your own public culture if you want to be accepted'. There the message was 'The immigrants' responsibility is to learn French and the government's responsibility is to make that possible and attractive'. Here the message is not (as it could conceivably be) 'The immigrants' responsibility is to internalize Quebec's culture, at least with respect to public interactions, and the government's job is to facilitate that adaptation for them'. On the contrary, the message is that all Québécois, whatever their cultural origins and commitments, have an obligation to be open to one another.

Evaluating the Moral Contract

How should we evaluate this moral contract that Quebec proposes to establish with immigrants? Is it morally permissible for a liberal democratic society to impose these sorts of expectations on newcomers?

Let me make one preliminary point. Talk of a 'moral contract' may seem to suggest that the expectations are legitimate because immigrants were informed about them in advance and came anyway, thus accepting the terms of the contract. The government's document evokes this normative view by saying that 'Applicants will be able to make an informed choice between Quebec and other host-societies' (18). This moral appeal to contractual agreement is seductive but specious. Most immigrants are not able to pick and choose among alternative host societies. They must choose between moving to the one that has admitted them and staying at home. That is still a choice, of course, but it is misleading to construct it as an entirely free choice. It is no doubt true, given the conditions in the world today, that most immigrants would readily agree to Quebec's requirements. But many would undoubtedly agree to much harsher terms, even perhaps indentured servitude. No one today would defend that sort of contract. Consent alone cannot make any agreement whatsoever legitimate, regardless of the circumstances. There are standards of fairness and justice beyond actual consent for assessing the ways in which states treat their own citizens and others. So, the mere fact that Quebec informed immigrants in advance about its expectations would not make the expectations legitimate, not even if the immigrants explicitly said that they understood and accepted them. Quebec does indeed have an obligation to let the immigrants know what it expects, even if the expectations are morally permissible. To that extent, the idea that informed choice matters is correct. But we have to employ independent moral standards for evaluating the legitimacy of the expectations themselves. At a minimum, they must be compatible with liberal democratic principles and respect for human rights to be morally defensible.

Do Quebec's expectations meet these standards? I think so. Let me reverse the order of exposition by starting with an assessment of the way Quebec invokes the principles of democracy and pluralism before I turn to its demands with respect to French.

The Demands of Democracy and Pluralism

Some immigrants may come from cultural traditions in which democracy and pluralism are not valued.⁸ That is clearly the presupposition of the

⁸ This is not to say that one can presuppose anything about the values of particular immigrants on the basis of the dominant cultural traditions in the countries from which they come. After all, they may have left in part because they rejected elements of their inherited culture and wanted to live under a liberal democratic regime. More generally, one should not assume that immigrants are hostile to liberal democratic values while native-born members support them. Many people who have been born and raised in liberal democratic states have deep commitments to illiberal and undemocratic values, whereas, as just noted, many immigrants have such deep commitments to liberal democratic values that they have left home to live in a state that is committed to respect them. Nevertheless, in thinking about what sorts of cultural adaptation one may expect of immigrants, it is not unreasonable to assume that at least some of the immigrants come without a commitment to liberal democratic values and to inquire what that entails for the issue of cultural adaptation.

government's document at many points. But Quebec says that immigrants ought to recognize and respect Quebec's fundamental commitment to the values of democracy and pluralism. In other words, democracy and pluralism are aspects of Quebec's political culture, and Quebec aims to protect and maintain that culture and to demand that immigrants accept it. How can that demand be justified?

One answer is that immigrants to Quebec ought to recognize and respect the values of democracy and pluralism, not (as the government's document seems at times to suggest) because these are Quebec's 'social choices', but rather because respect for these values is the precondition for the maintenance of a morally legitimate political order. To repudiate these values, at least with respect to the public culture, is to advocate injustice. This answer obviously presupposes that liberal democracy is the only just political order, at least under modern political conditions. I suggested in Chapter 2 that this is the view of most contemporary liberals, even one like Michael Walzer who appears to deny it but then implicitly relies upon it for his own arguments. In any event, it is my view. That view requires a defence, of course, but the elaboration of such a defence goes beyond the scope of this book.

A second answer might be connected more specifically to the immigrants' position *vis-à-vis* the receiving society. Immigrants should accept the values of pluralism and democracy because these are the very values that provide immigrants with a moral basis for challenging certain kinds of demands for cultural adaptation or cultural conformity. Why are the Québécois morally obliged to respect the pre-existing social identities of immigrants at all? What would be morally objectionable about coercive forms of assimilation or about the social and political subordination of those who refuse to assimilate or are incapable of doing so? If the answers to these questions depend on appeals to liberal democratic conceptions of people as free and equal moral agents, as I think they do, then they presuppose a commitment to the values of pluralism and democracy as outlined in the government's document. Hence it would not be possible for immigrants to reject pluralism and democracy without rejecting the very principles they need to employ in order to claim moral standing in the first place.⁹

These general arguments conceal some deep perplexities, however. In what sense are immigrants morally obliged to accept the values of pluralism and

⁹ This argument presupposes that immigrants are seeking to engage in a moral dialogue with Québécois who themselves accept democracy and pluralism and that the immigrants are seeking to appeal to principles that such Québécois would respect. To develop this argument at a deeper level, one would have to show that there is no alternative (liberal and anti-democratic) set of principles that is morally superior to democracy and pluralism, or at least one would have to make a positive case for democracy and pluralism. But as I say in the text, that goes beyond the scope of this book. In this project, I am simply assuming the moral validity of liberal democratic principles and trying to explore what they entail.

democracy? Is 'acceptance' a question of behaviour or belief, of external conformity or internal integration?

All that is required, in my view, is that people accept these values as political values, as the principles that regulate the public life of the society. Liberal democratic principles establish norms about actions and even discourse that people are morally obliged to respect in the public sphere. But this does not mean that every person must be a liberal democrat in her heart of hearts. It is not morally forbidden in liberal democracies to believe, say, that Plato's views on justice and the relative ranking of regimes are correct.¹⁰

Liberal democracies have a very deep commitment to freedom of religion, of conscience, of thought, and of opinion. One might expect sociologically that most people's beliefs will eventually tend to conform to their actions and that they will find ways to reinterpret their values so as to make them compatible with the ways in which they are expected to behave, so that people living in liberal democratic regimes will tend to adopt liberal democratic values, at least over the long run. But that is very different from saying that people have a moral obligation to abandon their philosophical judgments, moral convictions, or religious beliefs to the extent that these conflict with democracy and pluralism. On the contrary, it is characteristic of liberal democratic societies that they are (or ought to be) open even to views that challenge the basic presuppositions of the regime.¹¹

Take the norm of 'equality of the sexes' which Quebec cites as a fundamental democratic value. The government's document seems to suggest at various points that immigrants who come from cultures that do not accept this value must learn to do so. But as I argued in the previous chapter, we must distinguish between the public political culture of a liberal democratic state and the cultures of religious and ethnic groups. It is right to insist that the public political culture must be committed to gender equality, but, at the same time, the commitment to pluralism requires liberal democratic states to tolerate group cultures that conflict with this norm.

Let me place this issue in a more concrete context with regard to Quebec. The traditional Catholicism that was such a deep part of Quebec's culture prior to the Quiet Revolution was deeply patriarchal. Indeed, it seems fair to

¹⁰ Of course, Plato himself thought that democracies permitted all sorts of opinions, including opinions about the merits of different regimes. This uncontrolled freedom—of opinion and every-thing else—was what made democracies such an inferior form of regime in his view. See *Republic* Book VIII (Plato 1991).

¹¹ I am not suggesting that this openness is unlimited. For one thing, there is the familiar problem of the toleration of the intolerant in liberal democratic societies, and it can be argued that there is no obligation to tolerate those who actually threaten the existence of the regime. But the mere fact that some people may hold illiberal or undemocratic views does not in itself constitute such a threat (Rawls 1971: 216–21). For another thing, particular cultural practices may be so incompatible with liberal democratic norms (e.g. regarding gender) that they should be prohibited, even though they pose no political threat to the regime. I explore the claim that Muslim immigrants have such practices in the next chapter.

say that it was hostile to the principles of democracy and pluralism, at least as they are generally interpreted in Quebec today.¹² But like every revolution, the Quiet Revolution met some resistance. It did not elicit unanimous support. Presumably there are people in Quebec today who still hold to this traditional Catholicism, perhaps even young people who have acquired traditional Catholic beliefs and values from their parents.¹³ What does Quebec expect of them? Presumably it does not expect them to abandon their religious convictions. Certainly it does expect them to obey the laws which include various laws against discrimination on the basis of sex and also laws requiring them to send their children to schools where they may be exposed in various ways to the values of gender equality, and more broadly of pluralism and democracy.¹⁴ Quebec can reasonably demand the same of immigrants. But no more.

Democracy, Pluralism, and the Distinct Society

Thus far I have been exploring whether Quebec is morally entitled to expect immigrants to accept the principles of pluralism and democracy, two of the three elements in Quebec's proposed moral contract with immigrants. My answer to that has been 'yes', with the qualifications and clarifications that I have just discussed. But Quebec is entitled to expect this of immigrants, at

¹² This is evident even in the government's document (17). It is this earlier illiberal Quebec that opponents of Quebec often evoke in criticizing the delegation of the central government's powers to Quebec and in insisting that final authority on matters relating to individual rights and liberties should rest with the central government. They imply and sometimes even explicitly say that the transformation is only skin deep. The Québécois respond with understandable irritation to all this, noting that the record of the rest of Canada, both the central government and the other provinces, is far from unblemished when it comes to protecting rights and liberties (not least of francophones) and that the Québécois almost always do as well as or better than non-Québécois in surveys on toleration and liberal values generally.

¹³ The Catholic Church went through its own revolution with Vatican II, but not everyone joined that revolution either and it has arguably been reversed much more than Quebec's Quiet Revolution. There are many traditional Catholic beliefs and values (e.g. on issues of gender equality) which continue to play an important role in the lives of some Catholics and which are not easily reconciled with Quebec's current understanding of democracy and pluralism.

¹⁴ This is undoubtedly an optimistic reading of what goes on in Quebec's schools (if they are anything like other schools in North America), but it would not be unrealistic to think that the messages the students get from Quebec's schools today are generally more sympathetic to gender equality, pluralism, and democracy than the messages they would have received in a traditional Catholic education forty years ago.

Quebec does permit private schools, but even private religious schools are subject to public regulation to some extent. In fact in Quebec, as in other parts of Canada, much of the public school system has an explicit religious affiliation as either Catholic or Protestant, so that the incentive for the Christian segment of the population to create separate private schools is substantially less than in the United States where the constitutional requirement of the separation of church and state greatly restricts the connections between religion and public education. Of course, these denominational public schools are subject to closer and greater restraints than private religious schools.

least according to my analysis, only because these principles are not unique to Quebec but are characteristic requirements of all liberal democratic societies.

Not only are Quebec's demands regarding democracy and pluralism not unique to Quebec, but the very liberal democratic commitments that Quebec wants immigrants to respect severely limit the kinds of cultural adaptation or personal transformation that Quebec can demand of immigrants. We see here why the idea that justice requires a hands off approach to culture has such power. Justice does require a hands off approach to many of the choices people make about how to live their lives. The fact of becoming an immigrant cannot mean that one has given oneself up to the receiving society to be made over according to its will, at least not in a society that respects liberal democratic principles. The government's document is obviously well aware of this and develops the point in talking about free choice of 'lifestyles, opinions, [and] values' as well as in its affirmation of the rights of minorities to pursue their own cultural interests. Given such principles, on what basis could Quebec claim that immigrants have an obligation to accept some specific aspect of Quebec's culture? It will never be a sufficient reason to expect conformity to say that the values and norms in question are shared by most of the non-immigrant population. In their dress and diet, in their reading and recreations, in their interests and inclinations, in their relationships and, generally, in how they live, immigrants should be left free to choose their own course, including retaining as much of their culture of origin as they wish, without suffering any moral disapprobation or social pressures to the contrary from the government or the people of Quebec.

I do not mean to overstate the likelihood that immigrants will not adapt to the dominant culture of Quebec. On the contrary, as a matter of sociological fact, most immigrants do undergo profound cultural transformations if they move to a country in which most people share a very different culture. Even trying to retain one's original culture in that sort of environment requires adaptation and change. Moreover, market forces and the mass media have powerful socializing and homogenizing effects in modern mass consumption, capitalist societies. Furthermore, one should not assume that adaptation always goes against the grain for immigrants. Many immigrants have a strong desire to integrate culturally, at least to some extent. In addition, the children of immigrants face even more powerful and fundamental socializing experiences in the public schools, even if the schools are committed to pluralism and are open to influences from sources outside the dominant culture. For all these reasons and more, immigrants to Quebec are likely to become much more like the rest of the population of Quebec after they have lived there for a while than they were before they arrived.

But would Quebec be satisfied with such empirical expectations, coupled with and constrained by the public recognition that Quebec as a society is not

entitled to expect or demand any specific cultural adaptation from immigrants? I think not. What would this leave of the vision that immigration can help Quebec to build a distinct society? The phrase 'distinct society' certainly evokes the image of a society with a distinctive culture. Immigrants can contribute to building a distinct society then, only to the extent that they contribute to and share in that distinctive culture. Is that to be left as a purely contingent, empirical development? Is there no sense in which Quebec can say that it *expects* immigrants to join in building the distinct society? Clearly the whole thrust of the document we have been considering is exactly the opposite. The whole point of the 'moral contract' between Quebec and its immigrants is to provide a normative foundation for the claim that immigrants will contribute to building Quebec's distinct society, to say that Quebec can legitimately expect them to contribute to the project of building the distinct society (as well as to identify Quebec's obligations to them in return). But what we have just seen is that the principles of democracy and pluralism are in no way distinctive to Quebec and that commitment to these principles limits severely any normative demand for adaptation to a distinctive, local culture. So, what kind of obligation might the immigrants have that would be specific to Quebec's distinct society, not common to any liberal democracy?

The Moral Status of Quebec's Commitment to French¹⁵

The answer, of course, is the third element of the moral contract, the principle that immigrants should accept French as the language of public life in Quebec. As we have seen, there are specific and strong normative expectations of immigrants put forward in connection with this principle, such as that immigrants should try to learn French and should accept the fact that their children will be educated in French in the public schools and that French is the language of public life. Are these expectations justifiable? I will argue that they are, but also that the corresponding obligations they impose on Quebec require a public, official understanding of the distinct society that is at odds with, and may eventually lead to a transformation of, the popular understanding of the distinct society.

In considering Quebec's language policies, we must keep in mind the distinction between claims about what is morally permissible and claims about what course a society ought to take among the morally permissible alternatives. Many of the objections to Quebec's policies are inspired by a particular vision of the kind of country Canada ought to be, not by a claim

¹⁵ My position in this section is, I think, generally compatible with the one taken by Charles Taylor in his well-known discussion of these issues, though I construct my arguments rather differently (Taylor 1994). See also Tully (1995).

about what justice requires, though the two are sometimes confounded. Some people think that English should have an even more hegemonic position than it already enjoys in Canada, because it is the language of the majority. On this view, French should not have equal official status with English because francophones comprise only about 25 per cent of the population of Canada. Others remain committed to the idea that Canada should be a bilingual state but favour what has been called personal bilingualism. They want a Canada that has two official languages throughout its territory, so that (ideally) citizens could use French or English as they wished wherever they were in Canada. At the very least, they would be able to receive public services in French or English, including public education, anywhere in the country.¹⁶ Quebec's government also has a vision of Canada as a bilingual country, with two official languages for its federal institutions. But most social institutions are under provincial jurisdiction, and Quebec's view is that each province should be free to establish itself as bilingual or to adopt one of the two official languages. This approach has been called territorial bilingualism. Quebec, of course, has followed this policy, establishing French as its official language.

I do not intend to try to assess the merits of these competing visions of Canada.¹⁷ Rather I wish only to argue that Quebec's vision is a morally permissible one, that it does not violate the minimal moral standards that a liberal democratic society ought to meet. As we saw in Chapter 3, Belgium and Switzerland have versions of territorial bilingualism that resemble Quebec's vision in many respects, although Quebec provides more extensive public services to its anglophone minority than the sub-units of these states usually do to their linguistic minorities. With respect to public schooling, this largely reflects the requirements of the Canadian Constitution, but in other important ways the services go well beyond what is required by federal law. As I argued in Chapter 3, this basic pattern of linguistic policy falls within the parameters of what is required by a conception of justice as evenhandedness.

While territorial bilingualism may be broadly justifiable as one way of accommodating linguistic differences within a state, there may be objections to particular features of the way such a policy is implemented. I can imagine three moral objections that might be launched from the perspective of immigrants to Quebec against Quebec's language policies. (1) Some parts of Quebec's language legislation not only promote the use of French but restrict the use of other languages, thus interfering with the linguistic freedom of individuals in a way that is morally impermissible. (2) It is not justifiable to treat the

¹⁶ Various aspects of this policy have been implemented, at least in theory. This includes a requirement that commercial packaging contain product information in both French and English. However, in some parts of Canada, one is much more likely to find a cereal box with French on it than a public servant who understands French.

¹⁷ Some versions of English hegemony would be unjust for reasons spelled out in Chapter 3, but that is not my focus here.

acquisition of French as a precondition for full acceptance into Quebec society and to impose a moral duty to learn French and to accept French as the language of public life. (3) The policy of requiring immigrants to send their children to French language public schools (if they send them to public schools) is unfair when native-born anglophone Canadians have the right to send their children to English language public schools.

Of the three objections, I regard the third as the most important for the purposes of this chapter because it entails a specific demand relating to linguistic integration aimed primarily at immigrants. I will argue that Quebec's policy is entirely defensible. With respect to the other two, I see some merit in the objections, but I do not regard either one as especially important. All of the policies to which the objections refer must be understood in the context of the potential vulnerability of the French language for the historical and demographic reasons that I discussed above. All of the policies are defensive. In other words, they are not aimed at establishing the hegemony of French over the disparate languages of origin of the immigrants. If the contest were between French and the immigrants' languages of origin, Quebec could simply rely on the normal social advantages of the majority language in a society to create sufficient incentives for immigrants and their children to learn French. Indeed, as I noted above, Quebec actually spends money to support heritage language programmes for immigrants. Quebec's primary concern, obviously, is that immigrants will choose to learn English rather than French, because of the dominance of English on the North American continent and that such a pattern of linguistic adaptation in Quebec would render French vulnerable over the long run, especially if Quebec took in substantial numbers of immigrants.

I start with the first objection. Most of Quebec's language legislation is aimed at promoting French, rather than at restricting any other language, and to the extent that it is restrictive, the target is clearly English not the various other languages that immigrants bring with them to Quebec. Moreover, it is aimed primarily at the regulation of commercial activities. It seeks to ensure both that the francophone majority will not be disadvantaged in the workplace because of their language, as they had been historically, and that the public face of Quebec, as presented in commercial advertisements, will be a French face. Quebec explicitly affirms, as I noted above, that individuals may use the language of their choice in private interactions and in cultural and political expressions. It is only commercial speech that is regulated. Nevertheless, one law did prohibit people from posting commercial signs outside their place of business in any language other than French. The main object of the legislation was undoubtedly to prevent highly visible commercial advertising in English, especially by large Anglo-run enterprises. Nevertheless, the law was comprehensive and thus also formally prohibited immigrant shopkeepers from posting signs in their language of origin outside

their shops, even though their primary clientele might be fellow immigrants.

This is a small issue in many respects, but I do regard it as an unreasonable restriction of linguistic freedom. As I argued in Chapter 3, the conception of justice as neutrality rightly condemns prohibitions on a person's use of her own language. If someone wants to communicate in her native tongue, the political community should keep its hands off. Moreover, as anyone who has walked through the ethnic neighbourhoods of Toronto or New York can testify, the signs on the shops are an integral part of the cultural life of the local communities, so that prohibiting such signs has a restrictive impact beyond its effect on the individual shopkeeper. The fact that the law was normally not aggressively enforced in immigrant neighbourhoods lessened the damage somewhat but did not make it legitimate in principle. A number of commentators (including the Supreme Court of Canada) suggested it would not be objectionable to have legislation requiring that signs using languages other than French also communicate their messages in French and could even require that the French lettering be more visible. A positive requirement for French along with other languages can be seen as a way of addressing in an evenhanded fashion both the interests of individuals in communication in their own language (even in commercial contexts) and the interests of the francophone majority in the political community in creating a French linguistic landscape as part of its effort to secure the place of French in a North American context dominated by English. Avigail Eisenberg has conducted a careful and illuminating study of the judicial reasoning of the Canadian Supreme Court in cases affecting this language legislation and related issues (Eisenberg 1994). She shows that the judges do not think of these issues primarily as ones involving a conflict between individual and group rights but rather as ones raising the question of the appropriate recognition due to different cultures and identities. The problem with the Quebec sign law was not that it required French (an appropriate insistence on cultural recognition) but that it prohibited other languages, denying their speakers the recognition that was due to them. In response to these criticisms, perhaps especially to a critical judgement by a United Nations human rights tribunal, Quebec revised its legislation to require only that French be predominant on signs.¹⁸

The second objection is partly informed by the sense that expecting people to learn French, or at least treating the acquisition of French as a moral duty, asks too much of people. The overall approach of the policy document is to present a version of liberal democracy that links rights with duties both for the immigrants and for Quebec. In that respect, it differs from some versions of liberalism that focus almost exclusively on the rights of individuals against society, and I think it is generally on the right track. The duty to learn French

¹⁸ For further discussion of these cases see Tully (1995).

is intimately connected to the duty to contribute to and participate in society, which is connected, on this account, to fundamental democratic principles. Learning French is, among other things, a necessary means to participation in society so that if one can defend the duty to participate, and I think one can, one can defend the duty to learn French. Moreover, the goal of this discourse about duty is not the legitimization of moral condemnations of, say, isolated immigrant women for failing to learn French. On the contrary, the document makes clear that Quebec must reach out to immigrants, especially to those who are socially isolated, to make it possible and attractive for them to learn French. Furthermore, the document recognizes that language acquisition is something that occurs over a long period of time. Undoubtedly, there might be particular circumstances in which it would be unreasonable to expect an immigrant to learn French, but on the whole it seems to me that the document is balancing the relevant considerations in an evenhanded way and establishing a reasonable expectation that immigrants to Quebec ought to meet.

Despite this general defence, it may be useful to consider more closely what is being demanded, to see whether it asks too much of immigrants. What does it mean from the immigrants' perspective to have to learn French as a condition of integration into Quebec? What sort of personal transformation does this entail? How significant a demand is it in terms of the immigrants' pre-existing or future cultural commitments?

In addressing these questions, let me distinguish between two conflicting ideal types of what language acquisition entails with respect to one's own cultural commitments. The first sees language in purely instrumental terms, as a means of communication and no more. On this account, learning a language has no necessary or even likely impact on one's other cultural commitments. Call this the thin theory of language. The second view sees a shared language as centrally connected to and expressive of the culture of a community. On this view, learning a language shapes our cultural options and commitments in profound ways. Call this the thick theory of language.

My own view is that what language acquisition entails for other dimensions of one's cultural world ranges between these two ideal types, varying according to the circumstances in which the language is acquired and other circumstances as well. An immigrant who learns French as an adult may have already adopted deep cultural commitments. Learning French does not require her to abandon any of them, although it is likely to open her to new influences and to make her less tied to, because less dependent upon, her culture of origin. For adults then, learning French is, at least potentially, a liberating experience that opens new possibilities without foreclosing old ones (though I have to acknowledge immediately that not everyone experiences liberation as a positive thing).

An immigrant to Quebec who learns French as a child is likely to be much

more profoundly affected by the experience than one who learns it as an adult. To learn a language as a child is normally to acquire a culture, at least to some extent, in part because one learns the language primarily in the course of learning other things. In school, children hear stories and acquire models for behaviour, both formally through the things they read and experience in the curriculum and informally through their interactions with other people, especially with their peers. Thus, it seems plausible to argue that a language acquired as a child is normally much more likely to have the intimate connection to one's most fundamental cultural commitments that the thick theory ascribes to it than a language acquired as an adult. Still, one ought not to overstate the cultural significance of language or to posit a necessary connection between language and cultural orientation. In a society committed to pluralism, as Quebec is, the same language may be a vehicle for widely different and conflicting cultural values and perspectives. And the cultural messages a child receives from her family and local community may or may not be congruent with the ones she gets at school from authorities and peers.

On the account I have just given, the norms about learning French are much more significant for the cultural commitments of children than of adults. That makes the third objection, which focuses on the exclusion of immigrants' children from the English language public school system in Quebec particularly important. Some people see this as the kind of policy that Kymlicka calls an internal restriction, a means of maintaining a cultural community by limiting the rights of members and forcing them to belong (Moon 1993). Primary education is compulsory in Quebec (as in every Western society), and in restricting immigrants to French language schools, Quebec has indeed deprived recent immigrants of a legal right that previous immigrants had enjoyed. Nevertheless, I think that Quebec's policy is entirely justifiable. The previous legal right was never a fundamental moral entitlement. As I argued in Chapter 3, no one is entitled to an education at public expense in the language of his or her choice. And the previous system did not provide that option. It offered education in only two languages. In removing the English language option for immigrants (and for francophone Québécois, too), the Quebec government was making the sort of choice among alternative educational policies that democratic governments are fully entitled to make, judging what allocation of educational resources and options will best meet the needs of the community as a whole over the long run as well as the needs of particular students in the near term. No action has done more to integrate immigrants with the francophone community and none is more likely to have lasting, long-term effects with respect to linguistic integration. These are important and legitimate social goals. The change reduced the options for immigrants, but it did not deprive them of anything to which they had a fundamental right and it does not violate the norm of justice as evenhandedness.

If Quebec were an independent state without any system of public education in English, no one would suppose that immigrants had a moral right to expect that their children should be educated in a language other than that used by the vast majority of the population. For reasons explored in Chapter 3, it is normally justifiable to require immigrants to be educated in the dominant language of the territory they have entered. In other linguistically divided societies like Belgium and Switzerland, the children of immigrants (like the children of citizens) do not normally enjoy the right to demand an education in any of the state's official languages. It is only because Quebec is part of Canada (which does have extensive provisions for education in both official languages) and because Quebec has a system of public education in English in place that the view that immigrants should have the option of an English language education seems at all plausible.

One argument against Quebec's policy focuses on the principle of equal treatment. It goes something like this. Perhaps Quebec has no moral obligation to provide a system of public education in English, but if it does provide such a system it must provide it as an option to all, not just to some. The suggestion is that restricting the English language system to the children of people educated in English in Canada, Quebec is discriminating against the children of immigrants.

If the option of attending English language public schools were open to the children of francophone Québécois, but not to the children of immigrants, this argument would be more persuasive. Then one could claim that immigrants were selected for disadvantageous treatment, that the government was not being evenhanded. As it is, the argument depends on the claim that the children of anglophone Canadians are unduly privileged in Quebec in relation to everyone else. It is a claim that seems implausible on its face. An independent Quebec could respond to such a criticism by abolishing the English language system of education altogether, thus treating everyone the same. The harshness of that approach reveals the flaws of a formalistic approach to equality. To treat everyone the same is not always to treat them evenhandedly. As I argued in Chapter 3 long-settled linguistic minorities have much stronger interests in having public education provided in their own language than do recent immigrants. In Quebec's unusual circumstances (i.e. its position as a French island in an English sea and the extensive English language institutions already established in Quebec), immigrants might have some interest in being able to have their children educated in a language which is not that of the majority in the territory, but this interest should not be regarded as so weighty that it would be unjust not to satisfy it. The immigrants' interest in choosing the language of education of their children may properly be weighed against the interests of the francophone majority in securing French as the language of public life.

As a province of Canada, Quebec is bound by constitutional requirements

to provide an English language public education to the children of any Canadian who received an English language education in Canada, but not to other children. The critics of Quebec's policy rarely mention that the other provinces of Canada are under no obligation to offer a French language education to their inhabitants (whether recent immigrants or citizens of long descent) unless the children have a parent who received a French language public education in Canada. Even when there is a system of French language public education established, anglophone parents can be and often are denied the right to send their children to these schools.¹⁹ Thus the question becomes whether the Canadian Constitution is morally justified in providing special guarantees regarding education in the language of one's parents to the two major language groups in Canada. I think that is a morally permissible policy, for the reasons I have offered here and in Chapter 3 regarding the differences between the interests of immigrants and long-standing linguistic minorities.

Integration and Identity in Quebec

Having argued for the moral permissibility of Quebec's policies on integration, at least for the most part, I want to turn in the final part of the chapter to the question of how Quebec's policies on integration affect its self-understanding as a political community, or, to hypostatize less, how Québécois who support these policies are likely to think of Quebec as a distinct society.

So far we have seen that Quebec's commitment to pluralism means that the only distinctive cultural commitment (i.e. the only commitment that is not common to every liberal democratic society) that Quebec requires of immigrants for full social membership is knowledge of French. There is no requirement that immigrants prove their loyalty to Quebec by proclaiming an attachment to its symbols or an identification with its history, though Quebec seeks to promote both of these attitudes as we shall see. Immigrants can be full members of Quebec's distinct society even if they look and act differently from the substantial segment of the population whose ancestors inhabited Quebec and even if they do not in any way alter their own customs and cultural patterns with respect to work and play, diet and dress, sleep and sex, celebration and mourning, so long as they act within the confines of the law.

On this account, given the commitment to pluralism, Quebec's distinct

¹⁹ It is often the francophone schools that choose to exclude anglophone children whose parents want them to receive a French language education. They do this out of fear that the anglophone children's lesser competence in the language will have a deleterious effect on the overall quality of the education provided to those whose native tongue is French. But this still illustrates the point that there is no individualized right to instruction in the official language of one's choice.

society becomes identified, almost exclusively, with the French Fact. That is, Quebec's distinctiveness consists essentially in the fact that it is a society situated in North America in which the vast majority of the population speak French (whether as a first or second language is irrelevant) and in which French is the language of public life. There may be other facts about Quebec that would mark it off to an outside observer as different from other societies or other cultural commitments that are widely shared by Québécois and not by members of other societies, but such facts and commitments are not and cannot be normatively central to Quebec's project of building a distinct society.

Some see Quebec's claim to cultural distinctiveness as superficial, if not false. They argue that Quebec's embrace of liberal capitalism since the 1960s has essentially destroyed the distinctive culture it once enjoyed and rendered it virtually indistinguishable from other North American societies, despite the linguistic differences. Can one build a distinct society on the basis of language alone? Is a shared language sufficient for a claim of cultural distinctiveness? I do not have any particular views on this question. It seems to me to be just the sort of issue that ought to be left to the people of Quebec to decide. How much do they value this form of distinctiveness? Do they regard it as significant, as something relevant to their identities as individuals and as citizens?

These questions point to an ambiguity in the principle that French is to be accepted as the language of public life, because immigrants must be included in the group to whom these questions are addressed. Unlike the commitment to democracy and pluralism, which can be defended on independent moral grounds, the commitment to French as the language of public life clearly is something that derives its normative status entirely from the fact that it is Quebec's 'social choice', that is, from the fact that the majority of Québécois are deeply committed to this principle. But that commitment could change. In saying that immigrants are morally obliged to accept French as the language of public life, then, the government must appeal to respect for the democratic process. But once immigrants are members of Quebec's society, and certainly once they have become citizens, they have a right to participate in that process, or, as the document itself says, 'to help define the major orientations of our society' (17). But language policy cannot be excluded from the democratic process in which the immigrants participate. If immigrants or their adult children choose to try to reshape Quebec's linguistic orientation, say, by supporting a more bilingual public policy, they cannot be criticized for violating the moral contract.

The importance of this issue will increase as the proportion of immigrants in Quebec's population increases, which it will if the policies outlined in the document are followed. Moreover, immigrants would not have to constitute a majority of the population in order to have significant, perhaps even decisive weight, if the Quebec-born francophone population were divided. In

the long run then, the viability of Quebec's distinct society and the maintenance of the French Fact may depend in important respects on the extent to which immigrants and their children identify with, and are committed to, that project. To be sure, if the children have been educated in French, if they have become francophones, they may feel that their interests would be served most by preserving the position of French in Quebec. But the project of maintaining the distinct society may well depend on their having a deeper, less instrumental commitment than that.

How can that commitment be created? By making sure that the project of the distinct society is genuinely open to them, that it is not too closely identified with a particular group, namely, those descended from the francophone settlers of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. What appeared above as a moral imperative arising out of a commitment to pluralism—a conception of Quebec society with no specific cultural commitments beyond democracy, pluralism, and the French language—reappears here as a political imperative arising out of the need to enlist the support of immigrants and their children in the project of maintaining the French language in Quebec. In integrating immigrants, Quebec is transforming not only their identity but its own as well.

In Quebec, the word 'multiculturalism' has pejorative connotations, in part because a federal commission which was charged several years ago with the task of developing policies for Canada based on its *bicultural* and bilingual character emerged, after consultation with immigrant groups among others, with a recommendation that Canada think of itself as a *multicultural* and bilingual country. Francophone Québécois were outraged by this decision, seeing it as a policy that placed francophone culture on a par with that of minority ethnic groups and that betrayed the conception of Canada as a country built upon two 'founding nations'.²⁰ But now they face the same dilemma in Quebec, whatever term they choose to use. If the collective identity of Quebec is too closely tied with the 'founding nation' and with its particular history and culture, then immigrants and their children will find it hard to feel as though they belong to that collectivity and will be disinclined to support its projects. But if the collectivity is defined in the open way that I have been suggesting, with an almost exclusive emphasis on the French language as the shared cultural commitment and without any claim of privilege or priority for the more particular features of the history and culture of the descendants of the settlers, then Quebec is committed to its own internal version of multiculturalism, even if it rejects that term.

One might object here that the policy document upon which I have been relying so heavily in my analysis is not representative of the views of the government as a whole, not to mention the population at large. After all, it

²⁰ See note 3 above.

was issued by a ministry which is responsible not only for immigration but also for 'the cultural communities' of Quebec. It would not be surprising if this institutional location led to an official line from this ministry which was more open and more pluralistic than the position of other parts of the government.

There is certainly something to this concern. Indeed, the document itself is titled *Vision* which certainly suggests that there is some gap between the principles it professes and the social and political realities of immigration in Quebec.²¹ Surveys of the population on attitudes towards immigrants and membership in Quebec indicate that the positions proposed by the document are not universally accepted. Moreover, the document itself expresses a degree of frustration that other parts of the government do not seem to feel it necessary to think about the implications of their policies for immigrants and the cultural communities, treating that as the preserve of a single ministry.

While there are reasons for caution therefore in viewing Quebec through the lens provided by this document, I think that the document nevertheless captures something fundamental about the normative logic of immigration in Quebec, and perhaps in any modern liberal democratic society. I will try to illustrate the working of this normative logic by discussing briefly a couple of examples of the ways in which the presence of immigrants has affected discourse about Quebec's identity and policies in apparently unrelated areas.²²

The first illustration concerns a report drawn up for Montreal's School Council, called 'Les Francophones québécois' (Bouchard *et al.* 1991). The Council had already commissioned a series of reports on Montreal's ethnic communities and their cultures and thought it would be useful to commission a report on that huge part of the population that had French as a mother tongue and that was not composed of or descended from recent immigrants. I use this awkward phrase because, as the report indicated, there was no convenient label. It rejected the terms 'Canadiens' and 'Canadiens français' which were formerly used about this population but which fell into disfavour with the rise of a nationalist sentiment closely tied to the territory and government of Quebec. What about 'Québécois français?' Too narrow, it said,

21. One famous incident illustrates some of the ambiguities of contemporary Quebec nationalism. In 1995, Quebec held a referendum on sovereignty. The pro-sovereignty forces were defeated very narrowly (i.e. by about 1 per cent of the vote) and received a clear majority of francophone votes according to all subsequent surveys and analyses. On the evening of the vote, after the outcome was clear, Jacques Parizeau, the then Premier of Quebec, gave a speech announcing his resignation and asserting that the defeat was due only to 'money and the ethnic vote' and that a majority of the Quebec people had clearly expressed their desire for sovereignty. But most other major sovereigntist figures, including Lucien Bouchard, the leader of the movement and the current Premier of Quebec, repudiated Parizeau's exclusion of ethnic groups (i.e. immigrants) from the Quebec people and his implicit denial of the legitimacy of their participation.

22. Normative logics do not always triumph in politics, but it is instructive to understand them none the less.

because settlers from Ireland, Scotland, and elsewhere integrated with this group culturally and linguistically centuries ago. And, I suspect, that phrase might have sounded a bit too much like the description of an ethnic group, and the authors did not want this population to be thought of as just another ethnic group, no matter how large. Finally, it settled on 'Francophones québécois' while acknowledging that this label, too, was unsatisfactory because it placed primary emphasis on language and the point was to identify and describe a shared historical culture. Besides, did the term include recent francophone immigrants from places like Haiti and Belgium? To exclude them would seem insulting. What are they if not *francophones québécois*? But to include them would distract the project from its central focus.

This long discussion of labels reveals an ambiguity about identity and legitimacy that runs throughout the report. The authors are clearly committed to linking Quebec's distinct society and its nationalist project to a specific history and culture, but they want to do that without repudiating pluralism and democracy. They want to affirm a Quebec in which everyone is a full member, regardless of origin, and simultaneously one in which a particular culture holds a privileged place. This leads to a tortuous discussion at many points.

In general, the report faces the following dilemma. The more closely it identifies Quebec with the francophone community and francophone culture, the more open that community and culture have to be to people who speak French but are not descended from French settlers and thus open to diverse cultural influences. The more it ties the identity of the francophone community to a specific history, to specific cultural practices, and especially to specific lines of descent (i.e. the more particularistic it is), the stronger the claim for the distinctiveness of this francophone community but the weaker the claim for identifying this particular community, even though numerically very large, with Quebec as a state. Others can then say, 'We are citizens too, and we clearly do not belong to your group and can't join it because it's an ascriptive group, so it is not fair to identify the state with a group that comprehends only part of the population, even if it is the largest part. In particular, it is not fair to use the state to impose the norms and values of your group on people whom the group is not willing to accept.'

The report dances around these issues in various ways, at times emphasizing the historical particularity of the *francophonie québécoise* and at times emphasizing its openness to others on pluralist, not assimilationist, terms. One striking feature of the report is that despite the authors' commitment to making the historical francophone community central, when it turned to the question of the integration of immigrants it came up with a list of expectations remarkably similar to the one provided in the document that I have discussed at length here: learning French; sharing fundamental values of democracy, liberty, toleration, citizenship, and equality of the sexes; participation in

economic, cultural, and political life. To this it added learning about the territory, institutions, and history of the *francophonie québécoise* and respecting and appropriating the symbols at the heart of public life in Quebec, such as the flag and the national holiday. (The last addition brought a sharp retort from a representative of ethnic groups in Quebec about preferring the Canadian flag, a retort that illustrates again the ways in which Quebec's status as a province creates dilemmas for its nationalist project, since Canada provides alternative symbols of political legitimacy to which those who are disaffected with Quebec's course or who feel excluded from its project can appeal.)

In the minds of most people, both inside and outside Quebec, the phrase 'distinct society' is intimately connected to the preservation and development of the (evolving) historical culture shared by people who are largely descended from the original French settlers in Quebec. But in a society which takes in substantial numbers of immigrants and tries to integrate them with francophone institutions and public life without requiring cultural assimilation, that connection is harder to maintain. It does not entirely disappear, of course, but it loses much of its normative force. Such historical links can no longer serve as a criterion of authenticity for what is or is not part of the culture of Quebec's distinct society. With the opening of francophone institutions and public life to immigrants, it becomes necessary to think of the culture of Quebec's distinct society as including whatever is part of the culture of the inhabitants of Quebec.²³ Indeed, the very concept of francophone culture in Quebec takes on a systematic ambiguity.

Let me conclude with another story that illustrates the dynamics at work here and the ways in which immigration transforms the identity of Quebec as a community even while immigrants are being transformed into Québécois. The Quebec government set up a programme in Ontario (and a few other provinces) to support francophone culture outside Quebec. This was motivated largely by a desire to respond in some way to the complaints of francophones outside Quebec that they had been thrown to the anglophone wolves by Quebec's focus on provincial autonomy rather than linguistic solidarity, and those complaints aroused some sympathy in Quebec because of the sense that these francophones elsewhere shared the same cultural and ethnic roots as francophones in Quebec. But then representatives of a group of francophone African-Canadians applied for a grant under this programme to support a cultural newspaper for francophone African-Canadians in Ontario. How were Quebec officials to respond? This

²³ Perhaps I should say the culture of those inhabitants who use French (and not simply those for whom it is the mother tongue). The latter more qualified phrase leaves open, in particular, the possibility of thinking about anglophone culture in Quebec as a minority culture rather than as an integral part of the culture of the distinct society. Many people would object to that, arguing that Quebec anglophones must also be counted as full Québécois and that their anglophone culture also contributes to Quebec's distinct society. I do not want to enter that debate here.

was clearly not the sort of thing they had in mind in setting up the programme. If they gave the grant, people in Quebec might ask why the Quebec government was spending its money on multicultural activities for recent immigrants to Ontario. Wasn't that the job of Ontario or of the federal government? What did these people have to do with Quebec? But if they denied the grant, what grounds could they use? The applicants were francophones after all. Could they say that they had intended the programme for those with ethnic ties to Québécois? Not really. Besides some of these people probably did have ethnic ties to Québécois, that is, to the new Québécois from francophone Africa. And if francophone culture within Quebec is now genuinely open to Asian and African francophones, as the public rhetoric declares, how could the francophone culture outside Quebec worthy of support be narrowly defined in terms of ethnic or historical links to Québécois of European descent? In the end, the Quebec officials could not say no (though they did not just say yes either).²⁴

The case shows, I think, how the integration of immigrants within the francophone community of Quebec has begun to and will continue to change the identity of that community. Where once francophone Québécois implied a specific culture, ethos, history and way of life, all of which played a role in defining Quebec as a political community, now a logic of multiculturalism (both sociological and moral) has been introduced which will lead Quebec to look more and more like a French-speaking version of English-speaking multicultural Canada or at least will make it hard to defend an alternative vision of Quebec in public.

The Lessons of the Quebec Case

What does the Quebec case reveal about the general principles that apply to all liberal democratic states with regard to the integration of immigrants? For example, does it have implications for the way European states ought to deal with the immigrants in their midst?

I think it does. In brief, I want to suggest that no European state can legitimately demand much more of immigrants by way of cultural adaptation than Quebec does. On the one hand, this means that states can make some significant demands because, as I argued above, being educated in a language normally has significant cultural consequences. Thinking about the education of children and the thick theory of language acquisition deepens the point that there is no culturally neutral language.

²⁴ The final decision was to grant less than the group had requested and to try to tie the grant in various ways to the francophone, rather than African, dimensions of the newspaper though this merely continued the contradiction.

On the other hand, the whole point of my analysis of Quebec's demands with respect to pluralism and democracy was to show both that Quebec's public commitment to these principles was common to all liberal democratic states and that these principles drastically limit the ability of a liberal democratic state to require cultural conformity. If that argument was correct, it should apply to European (and other) states as well. The same moral principles that constrain demands for adaptation to Quebec's distinct society also constrain whatever demands for cultural adaptation European states might put forward.

I recognize, of course, that many of the cultural traditions within the various European states are more ancient and more deeply rooted than are those in Quebec and that the populations of some European states are more culturally homogeneous than the population of Quebec (though it may be useful to recall here that one of my reasons for choosing Quebec as a subject of study was that its population is more like those of many European states in terms of the degree of cultural homogeneity than are the populations of other parts of North America). But I do not see how the relative thickness, depth, or uniformity of the cultural commitments of the population in a receiving country affects the *moral* argument about what may be demanded of immigrants. European states, too, are committed to respecting individual freedom, and so, they cannot avoid the pluralism that is legitimated by that freedom. On what moral grounds could any European state demand, as a condition of full acceptance, that immigrants dress, eat, read, think, play, pray, or live differently from the way the immigrants themselves choose?

I recognize that European states have traditions of citizenship and membership at odds with the overall line of argument I am taking here. France, for example, while traditionally open to immigration, has also insisted on the homogeneity of French culture and on cultural assimilation as a condition of full membership. Germany has had an ethnocultural conception of the nation that has effectively excluded the possibility of any substantial number of outsiders from joining (Brubaker 1992). But how can one defend either of these traditions today, at least if they are interpreted as requiring more by way of personal transformation than Quebec requires? It is not enough to say that these are 'our' traditions. The challenge is to show that these traditions are compatible with liberal democratic commitments.

From a liberal democratic perspective, the German understanding of membership is particularly hard to defend, as I have argued above in Chapter 3. The French tradition draws upon a secular, rational, universal ideal of citizenship which may be easier to reconcile with liberal democratic principles, but only if it does not place too much weight on French content, as it were. I will pursue this issue a bit further in the next chapter in a discussion of the famous debate in France over *les foulards*.

Let me conclude with a reminder and a caveat. As I emphasized at the

beginning, I am writing primarily from a normative perspective. From a sociological perspective, and even from a political perspective, the historical and cultural differences between Europe and North America (even Quebec) may play a crucial role in shaping both public debate about immigration and the process of integration. After all, there are many factors at play here besides liberal democratic principles. Indeed those principles could be compromised or defeated in the political struggles and social practices affecting immigration.

I know, furthermore, that no European state currently recruits new immigrants as Quebec does and that none of them faces quite the same political need to win the attachment, loyalty, and identification of its immigrants. Nevertheless, all of the European states have significant immigrant populations. If the immigrants and their descendants are not successfully incorporated, this is bound to create serious social problems over the long run. More fundamentally, from a normative perspective, these settled populations have a moral claim to belong to the societies in which they live. They deserve to be accepted. To repeat, I do not see how any European state can justly demand more, as the price of that acceptance, than Quebec demands of its immigrants. While multiculturalism is the *bête noire* of many Europeans as it is of many Québécois, any defensible version of liberal democracy today entails a commitment to pluralism that inevitably opens the door to multiculturalism in some form.