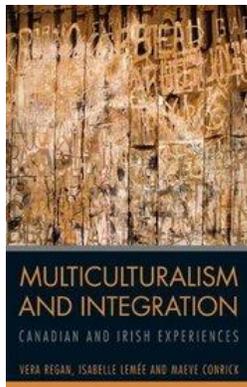


## Professional Book Review

Regan, V., Lemee, I., & Conrick, M. (2010). *Multiculturalism and Integration: Canadian and Irish Experiences*. Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press. 283 pp., ISBN: 978-0-7766-0722-1.

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As an academic who focuses on multicultural education and who has recently relocated from Canada to the Republic of Ireland, *Multiculturalism and Integration: Canadian and Irish Experiences*, edited by Regan, Lemee, and Conrick, presented a convenient starting point for exploring my host nation. This bilingual-edited collection with 13 contributions from both Irish and Canadian scholars focuses on how multiculturalism is experienced in the two countries with an interdisciplinary approach. The collection was born out of conference proceedings from the Association for Canadian Studies in Ireland.

In many ways Canada and Ireland seem natural candidates for comparative study: Both have a second official language other than English (French and Gaeilge also known as Irish); both have marginalized cultures that are indigenous to the land (the First Nations and Traveller community); both are deeply marked by British colonial rule; and both are often in the shadow of their geographic neighbors (the United States and the United Kingdom). Yet in terms of immigration patterns, Canada has been shaped more by immigration, while Ireland by emigration. As well the discourse or narrative of multiculturalism in each country differs, as multiculturalism has become part of the national narrative of Canada politically and socially. Contrastingly, in Ireland the discourse of multiculturalism is not part of the national narrative, and policy documents speak more of interculturalism (in keeping with European Union discourse on immigration) rather than multiculturalism.

The body of *Multiculturalism and Integration* is divided into four parts: Part I: Linguistic Diversity; Part II: Cultural Representations; Part III: the Irish-Canadian Experience; Part IV: Integration. Part I is where I concentrate this review, as it is the section that is most pertinent and relevant to educators.

Part I on linguistic diversity is perhaps the strongest and most coherent section, to be expected as the three editors of the collection are linguists. This is also the section that will probably be of most interest to educators as it delves into comparisons of the immersion language school systems. Cardinal, Plante, and Sauvé's chapter, "Immigration, Langue et Diversité Ethnoculturelle en Ontario," looks at the visible minority francophone community in Ontario and deconstructs the complexities of ethnic and linguistic identity in Canada. This type of work on multiculturalism is essential if we are to move away from thinking

about language and culture in a homogeneous way. The authors challenge the view that French-speaking Canadians are White Quebecois or White European immigrants by presenting statistics on visible minority francophones in Ontario such as the fact that 56% of francophones in Ontario are visible minorities with Chinese being the most prominent entry (p. 22). Another contribution in this section that is of interest to educators is Ní Chasaide and Regan's chapter "Immersion Education in Ireland and Canada: L2 Immersion Adolescents in L1 Anglophone Settings." Ní Chasaide and Regan do an excellent job at comparing the French immersion system in Canada with the gael scoileanna (Irish immersion schools) while appreciating the different contexts and spaces that each language occupies as the other official language.

Comparative works are certainly interesting and welcome in the field of multicultural studies; they can shed light on the commonalities of experiences and social practices as well as on how processes such as racism are institutionalized in curricula and government policies. Undertaking a comparison between nations that have such a large difference in size, population density, and socio-cultural and political history is bound to present challenges. The task of discussing the complexities of multiculturalism in two nations with such rich histories of immigration and emigration is a grand endeavor for thirteen chapters. Certain cultural groups, namely the First Nations in Canada and the Travelling community in the Republic of Ireland, are not a main focus in this collection. The First Nations and the Inuit are discussed in terms of representations in Québec literature in two insightful French contributions to the collection in Part II: Cultural Representations. On the other hand, the Travellers, who are a minority indigenous population to Ireland perhaps not widely known outside of Ireland and the United Kingdom, are not the subject of any chapter. This would have been a most interesting contribution to comparative scholarship in multicultural studies, as the First Nations and Traveller communities face similar institutional racism but have completely different places in the narratives of Canada and Ireland.

I recommend *Multiculturalism and Integration: Canadian and Irish Experiences* as reading for those interested in the comparative experiences in Canada and Ireland, especially from a linguistic perspective. The collection could be supplemented with a more in-depth snapshot of both nations' multicultural population, and perhaps Part I could have presented more on the linguistic diversity outside of the Anglophone-Francophone dichotomous construction of Canada and the ever growing linguistic diversity in urban areas of Ireland. Overall, however, I would highly recommend this edited collection, especially for those looking for research written in French on experiences of multiculturalism and integration in Canada; one third of the chapters are written in French and look uniquely at the francophone experience of multiculturalism, which can be neglected in Anglophone scholarship.