Building the Intercultural City: From Practice to Policy and Back

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What is LABRRI?

*The Laboratory for Research on Intercultural Relations at the University of Montreal is a space for research, teaching and expertise in intercultural dynamics.*

- Created in 2010 / approximately 20 researchers and students
- Pluridisciplinary approach: anthropology, philosophie, psychologie, history, communications, political science, sociology
- Flagship project: « Toward an Intercultural City » (SSHRC 2012-2015)
- Recent publication: Lomomba Emongo and Bob W. White (eds.) « L’interculturel au Québec: Rencontres historiques et enjeux politiques »
« Toward an Intercultural City »
(SSHRC 2012-2015)
« Toward an Intercultural City »  
(SSHRC 2012-2015)

Contact with the Intercultural Cities Program of the Council of Europe

• Montreal and the ICC index
• Informal encounters between ICC and the City of Montreal
• Common reflexion about policy design and processes
Forum Objectives

• Bring together researchers and practitioners specializing in intercultural issues in order to mobilize knowledge about conditions, principles and strategies for intercultural policies in cities.

• Facilitate communication between actors and institutions with expertise in intercultural policy in order to develop a comparative analytical framework.

• Elaborate a series of common principles that will be able to guide the actions of local decision-makers, analysts and everyday citizens.
Several notions or concepts will be useful throughout the forum:

- **Process**: understanding the steps that lead to policy or social change; the importance of the time as a factor
- **Knots**: can take the form of obstacles but can also constitute elements that make links
- **Scales**: cities are at the heart of a complex, global system; meaning changes with differences in scale
Recurring question in our research:

*What is the best way to reduce the gap between intercultural practices on the ground and intercultural policies?*

- Policy formation and processes
- Good understanding of the field
- Collaborative approach
Expected Outcomes

- **City-based Case Studies.** Each city represented at the workshop will be the subject of a short case study focusing on the process of policy design and implementation in their local context.

- **Comparative Framework Analysis.** Following preliminary research on the different types of intercultural policies and policy frameworks, members of the LABBRI intercultural policies working group will propose a preliminary version of this analysis in order to get feedback from forum participants and revise the analysis for future publication and dissemination through the on-line resource.

- **Proposal of Common Principles.** The final roundtable of the workshop will be reserved for a discussion about the possibility of identifying a series of principles that characterise effective intercultural policy frameworks for cities anywhere
City-based Case Studies

Important aspects to keep in mind for case studies:

• Each city is unique
• Dyad model (ICC expert, city rep)
• Obstacles and difficulties: knots
• Cities part of a larger system: scale
• Process: How did we get here?
City-based Case Studies

Guidelines for orienting the work:

1) What are the necessary conditions for creating an intercultural policy framework?

2) What are the best strategies for ensuring the durability of these policies?

3) What are the principles that guide action and planning, especially in times of difficulty or crisis?
These workshops bring together researchers from LABRRI with various non-university research partners. Workshops begin from the observation that non-academics conduct research also and that too often institutional imperatives create a false dichotomy between theoreticians and practitioners.

These are the objectives of the Practical Theory Workshops:

• Reinforce the partnership by creating new links and projects between the different researchers and partners associated with the projet

• Deepen our theoretical or conceptual understanding of a theme that directly emerges from research being done on the ground

• Elaborate new tools for conducting research on intercultural dynamics
The LABRRI
Intercultural Model

The 3Ds

We have identified three postures or orientations which influence the way we conceive of cultural difference:

- **Diversity**: recognize and protect the plural nature of societies
- **Discrimination**: fight against inequality and protect those who are vulnerable
- **Dialogue**: facilitate encounters and work towards mutual understanding

The balance between these three orientations has an influence on the impact and the nature of programs and policies.
Three ways of using the term « intercultural » in Québec:

- Social phenomenon (people from different cultural horizons that interact)
- Public policy or state-based ideology (« interculturalisme »)
- Philosophy or worldview (based on a relational ethic)

Our research process combines the three uses of the term:

- Use an intercultural philosophy to study an intercultural reality in order to make meaningful recommendations for intercultural policy.
An analysis of theoretical or conceptual frameworks shows the presence of three aspects or moments in intercultural interactions:

- The shock of difference
- Mutual explicitation
- Search for common meaning
The LABRRI Intercultural Model

What are the criteria that we use to identify an intercultural approach?

• We are all vectors of tradition
• Promoting equality, fighting discrimination
• Balance between similarities and differences
• Creating conditions for positive interaction
• Taking into the account the question of time
Québec and the Americas

Intercultural dynamics in Québec are part of a long history of contact, not always harmonious, between people from here and people from elsewhere.

- Indigenous people present in the Americas for millenia
- In the 16th century, four empires begin expansion into the Americas, only France remains a majority in relation to its former colony.
- Québec is the only province or state to have French as its official language in North America.
- In Canada, Québec is losing ground in demographic terms and this has an impact on its political influence and future.
Québec and Immigration

• For small nations, especially those that find themselves in the position of national minorities, the issue of immigration represents specific challenges.

• Since the 1970s, Québec has worked towards establishing its status as a « société distincte » and clarifying the notion of integration
  
  o 1974: Law 22 recognizes French as the official language
  o 1977: Loi 101 protecting French in education, workplace, etc.
  o 1991: Recognition of interculturalism as a framework for integration

• The Declaration of Common Values
  
  o Commitment by future immigrants to respect a series of common values
Historical Context

Montréal and Immigration

• Montreal hosts the majority of immigrants in Québec:
  
  o Montréal, ¼ of the population of Québec, hosts ¾ of immigrant population

• Impact and conditions of immigration:
  
  o More than a third of its population is foreign-born;
  o More than half of its children have parents born in a foreign country
  o Ethnic, religious and linguistic splits with the rest of Québec

• Intercultural framework for integration:
  
  o In 2011 Montréal is recognized as a intercultural city by the Council of Europe
  o Québec uses interculturalism to position itself in relation to Canadian multiculturalism
It takes a village…

We would like to thank…

- SSHRC, ICC, City of Montréal, City of Oslo
- Organizing Committee
- Steering Committee
- Facilitation Team

A few announcements

- Interpreters
- First day schedule very full
- Poster presentations (1:20 Wednesday and Thursday)
- Reception at City Hall (Wednesday) / Benefit night with DAM (Thursday)
- Video recording and consent / headphones / construction on Berri Street