IBN HALDUN UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY

MASTER THESIS

THE MUSLIM MALAY DIASPORA IN CANADA: A CASE OF MUSLIM AGENCY AND GLOBAL CIVILITY

SALMA EL-ZAMEL

THESIS SUPERVISOR: ASST. PROF. NURSEM KESKIN AKSAY

ISTANBUL, 2020

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by

SALMA EL-ZAMEL

A thesis submitted to the School of Graduate Studies in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology

THESIS SUPERVISOR: ASST. PROF. NURSEM KESKIN AKSAY

ISTANBUL, 2020

APPROVAL PAGE

This is to certify that we have read this thesis and that in our opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Sociology.

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Title - Name Surname	Opinion	Signature
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This is to confirm that this thesis complies with all the standards set by the School of Graduate Studies of Ibn Haldun University.

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I hereby declare that all information in this document has been obtained and presented in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct. I also declare that, as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced all material and results that are not original to this work.

Name Surname: Salma El-Zamel

Signature:

ÖZ

KANADA'DAKİ MÜSLÜMAN MALAY DİYASPORASI: MÜSLÜMAN FAİLLİĞİ VE KÜRESEL SİVİL TOPLUM ÜZERİNE BİR VAKA ÇALIŞMASI

Yazar: El-Zamel, Salma
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Dünya, postnormalist küreselleşmiş bir dünya sisteminin karmaşıklığı ve kaosuyla daha da sarsıldıkça, insanlar belirsizlik zamanlarında istikrarlı bir yaşam kalitesi ve zemini aradığı için kimlik ve aidiyet, ele alınması gereken daha önemli bir sorular haline geliyorlar. Bu tez, Kanada'nın Ontario eyaletinde ikamet eden Müslüman Malay Kanadalı diasporasındaki küçük bir grubun etnografik çalışma yoluyla, bölge-ötesi ve küresel sivil toplumun teorik çerçevesini ve bunların yerel ve küresel olarak performatif faillikte nasıl tezahür ettiklerini incelemektedir. Bu çalışmada, topluluğun üyelerinin benimsediği Malay gelenekleri, İslam inancı ve Batı Kanadalılığı tarafından şekillendirilen kimlik melezliğine dair normatif söylemlerin müzakerelerini inceleniyor. Müslüman Asyalıların küresel sivil toplumun aktif temsilcileri olarak tanınmasına katkıda bulunmaya çalıştım. Diasporanın bir parçası olan Malaylar; gönüllülük, sosyal hizmet, mesleki seçimler ve siyasi katılımla birlikte disipliner performans ve kendi geleneklerinden türetilen Malay dövüş sanatları, silat veya geleneksel Malay kıyafetlerinin giydirilmesi gibi diğer sanatsal aracılık biçimleri de dahil olmak üzere güç algılanan sessiz aktivizm biçimleri aracılığıyla medeniyetler çatışması anlatısı ile mücadelede kendi failliklerini uygularlar. Bu etnografik çalışma, küresel eğilimlerin bölge-ötesi ideallerini benimsemek ile bölgesellik yoluyla istikrar ve yuva kurma ihtiyacı olduğu arasında bir halat çekme yarışı olduğunu öne sürüyor. Bu, diasporaların kendilerine eşlik eden geleneklerini yeni bir memlekette yeniden tanımlamasıyla olur. Dinin, toplumu kültürel zorluklar karşısında zemin bulmasında oynadığı rolü de vurgular. Böylece, Avrupa merkezliliğe meydan okuyan modern ötesi bir teorik çerçeve aracılığıyla, adabın söylemsel geleneğinin küresel bir sivil toplumun temsilcileri olarak diasporanın sivil davranışını etkilemede oynadığı rolü tanıtır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Ajans; Performans; Küresel Sivil Toplum; Malay; Müslüman; Kanadalı

ABSTRACT

THE MUSLIM MALAY DIASPORA IN CANADA: A CASE OF MUSLIM AGENCY AND GLOBAL CIVILITY

Student Name: El-Zamel, Salma

MA in Sociology

Thesis Supervisor: Nursem Keskin Aksay

August 2020, 159 Pages

As the world is becoming more shaken by the complexity and choas of a postnormalist globalized world system, the question of identity and belonging becomes all the more important to address, as people look for grounding and a stable quality of life in times of uncertainty. This thesis examines the theoretical framework of transterritoriality and global civil society, and how they are manifested in preformative agency, locally and globally through the ethnographic study of a small group in the Muslim Malay Canadian diaspora residing in Ontario, Canada. The study explores the negotiations of the normative discourses of the hybridity of identity shaped by the Malay traditions, Islamic faith, and Western Canadiannes, members of the community embrace. I attempt to contribute to improving the recognition of Muslim Asians as active agents of global civil society. Members of the diaspora practice their agency in combating the clash of civilizations narrative, through forms of subtle quiet activism, such as volunteerism, social work, occupational choices, and political participation including other forms of artistic agency derived from their traditions such as the disciplinary performativity of the Malay martial arts, *silat*, or the dressing of traditional Malay wear. The ethnography suggests that there is a tug-of-war between adopting transterritorial ideals of global trends, yet a need for stability and home making through territoriality. This happens as diasporas redefine their traditions that accompanies them in a new homeland. In addition to highlighting the role religion plays in grounding the community in the face of cultural ordeals. Thus, introducing through a transmodern theoretical framework, that challenges eurocentricity, the role the discursive tradition of *adab* plays in affecting the civil conduct of the diaspora as agents of a global civil society.

Keywords: Agency; Performativity; Global Civil Society; Malay; Muslim; Canadian

DEDICATION

To Nur Artricia Mohd Jefrin
&
Ruhul Amin

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I remember my first day as a freshman in university, during welcome week, there was a talk over how education is a privilege that many in the world do not share. My young self didn't pay heed to such statements, like the many things I regretfully didn't pay heed to growing up. Looking back, this statement holds immense truth as I have travelled meeting incredible humans who are fighting for the right of education. I grew up in a social status where education is a given and is often taken for granted. And it truly saddens me to see how education as an institute has succumbed to institutionally elitist and neoliberal capitalistic needs often neglecting the nobility behind its societal mission.

On that note, I am forever indebted to my parents for valuing the Islamic ethics of knowledge and the gift of educational guidance. As a woman and a member of a faith minority in Canada, I am not only fortunate and blessed to travel that far in my academic career, but also privileged to learn in unorthodox means and that is through the school of travel. Knowing too well that a lot of Muslim women in my community and non-Muslim women outside of it, do not share such freedoms of thought, of education, or of movement. I am also fortunate to be born in a family structure that has been supportive throughout the challenges of learning in a white educational system that often puts immense pressure on Muslim women specifically. Definitely impacting our sense of self confidence and can go as far as to create an identity crisis that not only shakes us as individuals, but us as a community. Which is a double-edged sword I suppose.

Additionally, the last two years I have been struggling with serious health constrictions that are still under investigation. Not only did I recieve immense patience and accomodation from my supervisor, but I have recieved constant feedback on this study. Which is a preious treasure every graduate sttudent safeguards in appreciation of having a supervisor who makes time for them, knowing all too well the array of responsabilities academicians have to juggle. To Dr. Nursem Aksay and Dr. Heba Raof thank you for your patience, love and constant guidance.

One of the biggest challenges in ethnography is getting people to speak.And so, I extend my sincere thank yous to all my participants for their hospitality, patience, and willingness to share their stories. A special thank you to Fatin who pulled me in so to

speak, to Eliza and Jehan for their incredible resilience and courage, Norhani and Amina for gently embracing me, Shafiqah for her forever encouragements and never losing sight of what is precious, to Fad who will forever be my guru and someone I highly respect, Sopiah for her free and generous spirit, Mohamed for his patience, Nur for her radiating positivity, and last but not least Rahidah for all the work behind the scenes.

Alaa, Kawthar, and Nur no thank yous are enough to express my gratitude for your company through all the thick and thin. As a grad student, one of the most feared anxieties is to be stuck with terrifyingly horrid roommates. Worse off, to be stuck with horrid roommates abroad during a worldwide pandemic. You were my family away from home and I couldn't have been more blessed with a better one.

I am undeniably, one blessed woman!
Allhamudililah.

Salma El-Zamel
Canada, 2020

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

DMDI	Dunia Melayu Dunia Islam
CPC	Conservative Party Canada
GTA	Greater Toronto Area
IDB	Islamic Development Bank
ISNA	Islamic Society of North America
IIUM	Islamic University of Malaysia
JAKIM	Department of Islamic Development Malaysia
KSCIP	King Salman Center for International Peace
MASAT	Malaysian Student Association
MMI	Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia
MEDIU	Al Madinah International University
NCCM	National Council of Canadian Muslim
OIC	Organization of Islamic Conference
PERKIM	Muslim Welfare Organization of Malaysia
UKM	National University of Malaysia

Figure 1: Fundamental design of a *bambung panjang* [traditional Malay house].

Image Source[1]

※

People Are Enemies of That They Are Ignorant Of
- Al Ghazali

[1] Abdul Halim Nasir and Hashim Haji Wan Teh, *The Traditional Malay House* (ITBM, 2011).

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

I would like to first acknowledge that this thesis is written at a weary point in our time. This year has been a year of threatening environmental disasters, a global pandemic, and in this June we witnessed the ignited protests, in the middle of a pandemic, throughout the USA and other parts of Europe, in response to the unending systematic police brutality against black lives. All of which are issues that are highlighting alarming concerns to the politics of recognition, that is very much intertwined with people's self-identity. As Covid shapes new societal habits, health policy makers are observing who has access to masks and who does not. Social division is even evident in what kind of masks people wear. Who can afford to buy an N90mask and who can only make their mask from reused pieces of clothes? Whose lives matter? These are just a few examples that call attention to issues pertaining to the politics of recognition and the civil structure of body *politique*. And so, as an international student travelling and writing this thesis, that is very much concerned with identity formation, its contestation, and normative manifestation in local and global civil society, I could not have found a better time for reflection upon the modern evolutions of the modern Muslim identity.

My research is an assessment of the Muslim Malay diaspora in Canada with all its layered experiences of minority status, Muslim agency, and immigrant experience that exposes them to a set of challenges in identity making homemaking. These challenges have to do with self self-awareness, the translocality of tradition and religion, the otherizing and discrimination of minorities, and the emotional experience of immigration and community establishments. All of which are reflections of globalization's transterritoriality of ideologies, culture, and human movement, including a tribute to what makes a global civil society. While this topic tells the story of a small portion of the Muslim Malay diaspora in only one province in Canada, I find the experiences of my participants quite reflective of the universal trends of global civil society. Therefore, this is not only a storytelling of the immigration experiences

of the first generation of Malay Muslims in Canada, but also a reflection of the postmodern effects of global neoliberalism, civility, spatial transterritoriality, and a diasporic Islamic ecumenism.

And so, as social scientists who deal with the social problems of the world we are in need of providing an analysis of future studies of political inquiry, economic and technological intelligence, and cultural heritage of what is to become and how best can we prepare for it. I am referring here to Ziauddin Sardar's description of the world as a global civil society entering postnormal times. This means understanding that the transterritoriality of global civil society produces and reproduces local and global normative conduct that persists on challenging civility and redefining what counts as normal in societies. In postnormal analysis, Sardar considers the normal

> to be that which is frequently encountered: what is accepted as the dominant way of being, doing and knowing, conventionally seen as the standard, dictated by convention and tradition, backed by disciplinary structures and scholarship and what we are able to predict and control. The normal is thus located in the well-established modes of thought and behaviour: modernity, postmodernism, predatory capitalism, market fundamentalism, hierarchical structures of society, institutions and organisations, standard scientific procedures, recognised academic disciplines such as economics and political science as well as disciplinary structures, top down politics, broken government, polluting industries, runaway technology, marginalisation of the vast swathes of humanity, xenophobia, racism and misogyny, unjust social and political policies, scientism, and everything else that has shaped and defined the 'modern world'.[2]

To speak of a postmodern transterritorial global civil society is not to speak of a dystopian apocalyptic world. It is to speak of a world that is facing a transition in norms and power dynamics. The condition of postnormal times is accompanied by what Sardar refers to as the 3C's: complexity, chaos, and contradictions leading to uncertainty and ignorance.[3] There is a sense of instability simultaneous with high risk choices, yet moments of stability accompany it as well. It is "an in-between period where old orthodoxies are dying, new ones have yet to be born, and very few things seem to make sense."[4] To be postnormal suggests the existence of a period of time and space where people were accustomed to certain norms but now are facing a new period with new challenges and a reformulating of norms.

[2] Ziauddin Sardar, "Postnormal Times Revisited," *Futures* 67 (2015): 27.
[3] Ibid., 29.
[4] Ibid., 27.

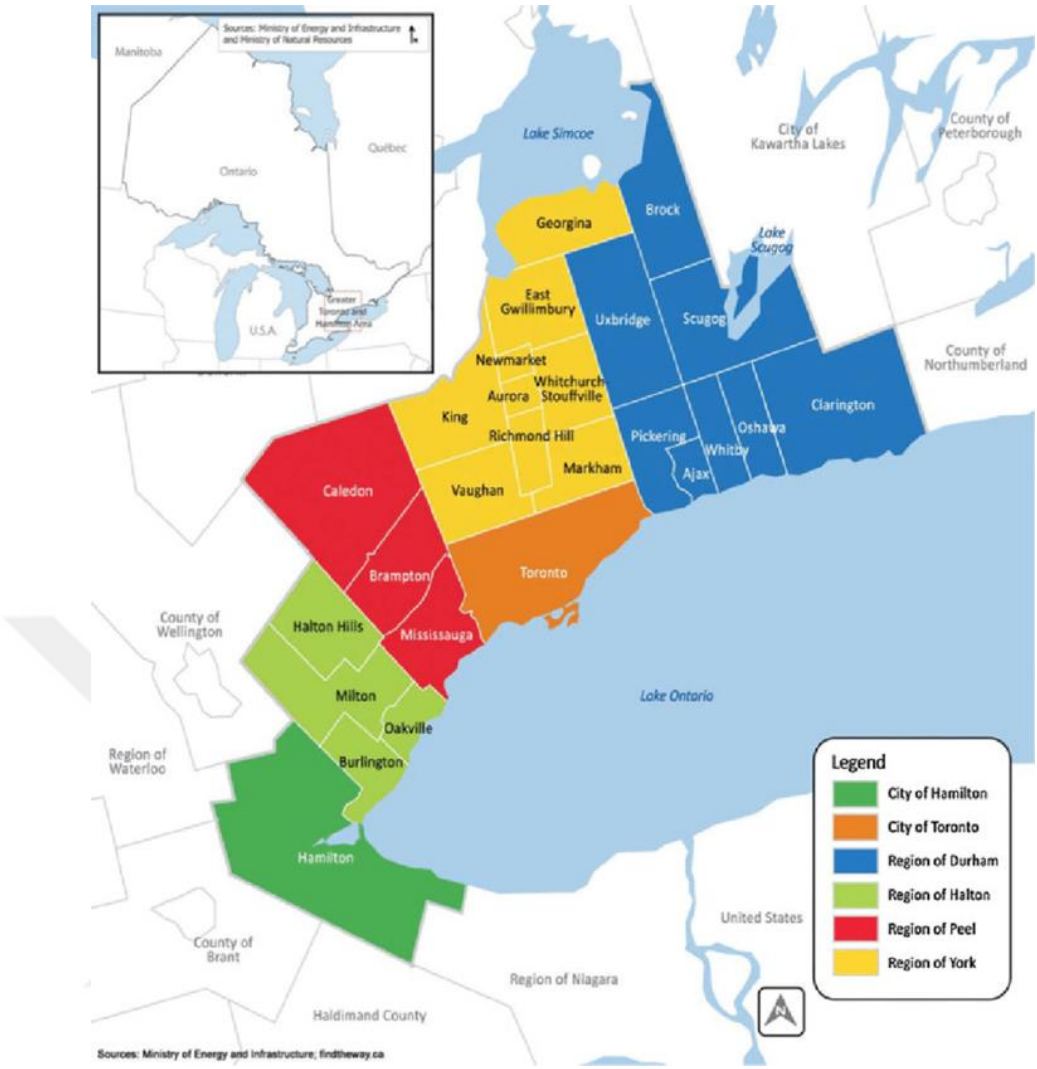

Figure 1. 1: Map of the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area.

Given this description, I found myself attracted to the Malay diaspora as I witnessed attempts of founding a community to face these waves of postnormal shakiness. My interest in conducting an ethnographic research of the Malay community in the GTA I suppose came upon two reasons and contributions. The first, is the uniqueness of the opportunity I was given. I reason that what attracted me is their high visibility of ethnoracial culture intertwined with Islamic performativity that I grew up lacking at home. I did not grow up in an entrenched household of Arabness or Egyptianness whatever that may be. In 2016, I was invited to attend *pencak silat* (*silat* for short) classes at the house of a Malay family in Mississauga, facilitated by *Dunia Melayu Dunia Islam* (DMDI) at the time, a Malay organization catered towards Malays living abroad. *Silat* is a martial arts discipline indigenous to the Malay Archipelago. During my stay with the community, I witnessed the diversity of the nationalistic backgrounds members of the community originate from (Singapore, Sri Lanka, Indonesia, and

Malaysia). Nevertheless, they are unified in their racial identity that has been divided by the birth of the nation-state and an intriguining high level of commitment to the program as members of the community came from neighboring cities that varied in distance of about thirty minutes to a more than an hour drive. Our *silat* classes were in Mississauga but members of the community came from much further cities such as Waterloo, Toronto, Hamilton, and Brampton (as seen in Figure 2)[5] in acknowledgment of the importance of their culture and communal gatherings. I also witnessed the efforts of the first generation parents who were keen on making sure that their their children's connection to their roots would be served. Throughout my visits I remember the members almost always spoke in Bahasa Malay, Malay cuisine was usually served, and Islamic prayer, call for prayer (*Azhan*), and Quran recitation were usually recited in the background from a computer or other technological devices. During the beginning of our practice there was an important emphasis on renewing our spiritual intention in starting our practice.

Ultimately, I found myself wondering what the motivational reasons were behind such cultural connectivity. The performativity of religio-cultural heritage is what intrigued me into understanding the complexities behind what seems as simple performativity. Why is it important to speak Malay for example? How do they come upon enforcing such integral parts of the Muslim Malay identity as a minority in the West? How do they adopt it into their Canadian spatial fabric or beyond? Are there other identities to consider and how are they reconciled or do they conflict? Eventually, how does this story of immigration manifest in civil conduct on a global scale? The diversity of epistemological cultural, religious, and nationalistic backgrounds simultaneously overlap and conflict reflecting the global multicultural trends of global civil society, putting the question of recognition at the forefront of social issues. And so, this research's main question asks how Muslim Malays, residing in Canada, give meaning to their Malay identity attached to their understanding of tradition, and how they relate and experience it as local members of a Canadian society and translocal members of global civil society. The research also explores postnormalism of a global civil society from the often unexplored lens of a Muslim Asian community.

[5] "The Big Move Transforming Transportation in the Greater Toronto and Hamilton Area," 2008, http://www.metrolinx.com/thebigmove/Docs/big_move/TheBigMove_020109.pdf.

1.1 Global Civil Society

Therefore, while upholding the uniqueness of the experience to this special group, it still reflects a wider trend of spatial mobility, of knowledge production, thought and action in time of global uncertainty. These factors contribute to the wider discourse on identity in the postmodern world and global civil society actors. Accordingly it is crucial to define what is meant by global civil society in this study. John Keane's intensive work on the phenomenon of global civil society provides a precise analysis of what global civil habits people worldwide are adopting, particularly in metropolis cities. Global civil society is "Linked to territories but not restricted to territory, caught up in a vast variety of overlapping and interlocking institutions and webs of group affiliations, these actors talk, think, interpret, question, negotiate, comply, innovate, resist."[6] When I started off my interviews asking my participants to introduce themselves, the majority introduced themselves in association with their careers first. Very few described their personalities, values, or likes and dislikes. When I followed up by asking about their value systems or assumed racial, religious, and/or nationalistic identities (What makes you Malay, Muslim, or Canadian?), some participants hesitated or requested more time to think. Others could not answer. These were common observations amongst the second generation. There were others who referred to the constitutional legal definition of who a Canadian, Malaysian, or even Malay is. The first generation was much quicker and more confident in their response in understanding their sense of identity and what it stands for.

This is significant because it is reflective of one of the main characteristics of members of a global civil society – the tendency to recalcitrance in the face of classifications, "which is never a fixed entity, but always a temporary assembly, subject to reshuffling and reassembly."[7] Global civil society is both a 'non-integrationist' notion and consists of 'multiplicity without unity', but its members treat it as fluid and reflexive.[8] The multiplicity of identities often meet and collide in a relationship of pushing and pulling. This fluidity is both a challenge and an ease in utilizing this framework. The lack of categorization, its flexibility, is what grants global civil society its charm. Indicating its postmodernistic tendency of this rise of individualism as people find the self-

[6] John Keane, *Global Civil Society?* (Cambridge University Press, 2003), 7.
[7] Ibid.
[8] Ibid.

autonomy to define themselves over a shared collective identity. Hence, global civil society is

> …a dynamic non-governmental system of interconnected socio-economic institutions that straddle the whole earth, and that have complex effects that are felt in its four corners Global civil society is neither a static object nor a fait accompli. It is an unfinished project that consists of sometimes thick, sometimes thinly stretched networks, pyramids and hub-and-spoke clusters of socio-economic institutions and actors who organise themselves across borders, with the deliberate aim of drawing the world together in new ways. These non-governmental institutions and actors tend to pluralise power and to problematise violence; consequently, their peaceful or 'civil' effects are felt everywhere, here and there, far and wide to and from local areas, through wider regions, to the planetary level itself.[9]

Global civil society is also defined as a non-governmental structure,[10] often convoluted with the idea that it includes everything but the state.[11] That it is a movement of everything but anything beyond the reach of the state and its territoriality since its core relies in its aterritoriality. I argue, however, that it grants a power of agency to its members for being non-governmental, focusing more on its bottom-up movement. Nonetheless, it is nowhere far from state influence and administrative reach as will be further elaborated below.

1.1.1 Globality

Members of a global civil society have a set of shared cosmopolitan values, but they are also lack a grounding of common moral values due to their diversity.[12] It has the capability to nourish multiple moralities.[13] This is reflected in the GTA's metropolitan urban structure that harnesses a vibrant visibility of multiculturalism that originates from a diversity of value systems that are expressed culturally through restaurants of different cultures, store signs in different languages other than French and English, and even sometimes the visibility of people dressed in their cultural clothes. Members of a global civil society encourage compromization and the formation mutual respect.[14] Which is also reflected in the Liberal Party's slogan since the 2015 Trudeau campaign: "Diversity is Canada's Strength." Even if their top-down diversity has been criticized

[9] Ibid., 8.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., 9.
[12] Ibid., 142.
[13] David Chandler, "The Communicative Realm," in *Constructing Global Civil Society* (Springer, 2004), 122.
[14] Ibid., 123.

for its shallowness.[15] Additionally, global civil society is a pluralist society that is ethically motivated bottom-up more so than it is politically.[16] Its global values are united over their shared dislike of domination – domination of ideologies or domination of the state.[17] They do so by encouraging non-violence either in the shape of peaceful unarmed protests or social work.[18] Advocates of this theory assume that activism within civil society can promote these values on a global scale. Mary Kaldor argues that what is important about the concept of global civil society is the fact that:

> ...at a transnational level [there] is the existence of a global public sphere – a global space where non-instrumental communication can take place, inhabited by transnational advocacy networks like Greenpeace or Amnesty International, global social movements... international media...[and] new global 'civic religions' like human rights and environmentalism.[19]

I would also add encouraged volunteerism and social work activities. That said, neoliberalism still lingers within the framework of a global civil society because as much as its members resist its capitalistic domination, I argue that they remain in a closely intertwined dialectical relationship between freedom and justice, and neoliberal capitalism. This holds true, for example, as expressed in an Op-Ed in the *Guardian* titled "Sex Doesn't Sell Any More, Activism Does. And Don't the Big Brands Know It". Startbucks CEO wrote an open letter to hire 10,000 refugees in staff.[20] The British coffee company Kenco advertises itself as an ethical company that trains young Latin American men in Honduras to become coffee farmers instead of gang members or child soldiers.[21] Pepsi joined the game in 2017, in its highly controversial Kendell Jenner Pepsi ad, that was heavily criticized on social media for its trivializing of the Black Lives Matter movement.[22] This neoliberalistic

[15] Robyn Urback, "Perhaps the Liberals Should Change Their Motto to 'Diversity Is Our Strength, Sorta,'" *CBC*, 2018, https://www.cbc.ca/news/opinion/diversity-is-our-strength-1.4496432.
[16] Chandler, "The Communicative Realm," 123.
[17] Ibid., 121.
[18] Ibid.
[19] Ibid., 124.
[20] Alex Holder. "Sex Doesn't Sell Any More, Activism Does. And Don't the Big Brands Know It | Alex Holder," February 3, 2017. https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2017/feb/03/activism-sells-brands-social-conscience-advertising?fbclid=IwAR32N_wpGYa69exWYLRpy83nMIBgNr_eAWialoQxH-n9M_wjh54QeFRLwIM.
[21] Ibid.
[22] Daniel Victor. "Pepsi Pulls Ad Accused of Trivializing Black Lives Matter," April 5, 2017. https://www.nytimes.com/2017/04/05/business/kendall-jenner-pepsi-ad.html.

capitalization of the representative diversity highlights the second component of a global civil society, which is society.

1.1.2 Society

Global civil society is first and foremost a space – it is a form of *society* in the territorial (physically within borders) and the transterritorial (virtually within cyberspace) sense. Which means it is a structured dynamic *social* process. Keane defines this kind of society in paradoxical terms. It is

> …a vast, sprawling non-governmental constellation of many institutionalized structures, associations and networks within which individual and group actors are interrelated and functionally interdependent….it is 'bigger' and 'weightier' than any individual actor or organization or combined sum of its thousands of constituent parts – of whom, paradoxically, neither 'know' each other nor have any chance of ever meeting each other face-to-face. Global civil society is a highly complex ensemble of differently sized, overlapping forms of structured social action…[23]

Global civil society is a space for the creation of groups and individuals who value a globalized system of tolerance, civility and pluralism. Global cities are both geographically centered, in a sense that they are embedded in specific strategic locations, and transterritorial of how they connect sites and ideas together.[24] Toronto and Mississauga are at the hub of these connected transterritorial ideas as highly interconnected metropolitan cities. They are also a battlefield of classes. They are the centre of global political control, power and capital production, and contesting localization and globalization of new politics of identity and culture.[25] Making cities a powerful exposure to various forms of self-discovery and neoliberal exploitation. Mainly because global cities are spaces created for competing resources, rights, and representation.

In order to maneuver through the differences between members of such society, there has to be an established 'language of autonomy' that is respectful and celebratory towards cultural pluralism. Chandler argues that the reason Habermas' theory of communicative community is critical to theorists of global civil society is because

> it attempts to ground regulatory political institutions in the non-political language of morality and 'space' rather than in the legal and political equality

[23] Keane, *Global Civil Society?*, 11.
[24] Engin F Isin, "Citizenship, Class and the Global City," *Citizenship Studies* 3, no. 2 (1999): 269.
[25] Ibid., 270.

> of liberal democratic institutions…The communicative community does not regard dialogic discourse as 'a vehicle for reconciling value-differences but defend[s] it as the medium through which greater human variety can be discovered and explored'.[26]

Due to widespread communicative media outlets and telecommunication advancement, members of society have a sense of the world, monitoring political, humanitarian, and economic movements. Therefore, global society is *not* a global community, but a society that is aware of its hybridity and complexity.[27] It is *not* heterogeneous. It *is* chaotic, expansive, and polyarchic.[28] It pushes, pulls, and alters conflicts and compromises. It is entrenched with conflict and irony. It is neither self-producing, nor self-regulating.[29] It *is* full of contingency. This uncertainty is a crucial characteristic that ensures the excitement and anxiety its members experience paddling in between order and disorder, violence, and non-violence, social and economic stability and instability.[30] This uncertainty feeds into its transnationalistic qualities of territorial boundness yet territorial freedom. Hence, such civil society is global. The global does not mean international, world order, or an empire. It means a 'macro-society' that is unbounded and intertwined in social relations stretched across geographic territories.

1.1.3 Civility

Now, the reason I find global civil society a relevant theoretical framework to work with, is because it is a normative ideal – meaning it is a desirable and plausible collection of norms and values. This normative discourse is reflected on a global scale due to how the world is growing closer together, yet remains divided between 'us' and 'them' as Said highlights.[31] It is a concept that can be implemented by activists and non-activists and by NGOs and non-NGOs. It is an accurate representation of a dominant socio-political culture that consciously or unconsciously shapes the actions and thoughts of members of what debatably can be described as postcolonial societies. The participants of this research are non-activists in the broader sense of the term. They do not self-identify as so. They do not often go on protests nor do they hold

[26] Chandler, "The Communicative Realm," 137.
[27] Keane, *Global Civil Society?*, 15.
[28] Ibid.
[29] Ibid., 16.
[30] Ibid., 17.
[31] Edward W Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (Vintage, 2012), xxi–xxii.

banners in resistance against some notion, although they could. That said they are still active contributive citizens who engage heavily in volunteer and social work, they have a formed organization (DMDI) to preserve their language and cultural activities, and they utilize their jobs to achieve their social and individual goals. They are engineers, graphic designers, health workers, housewives, factory workers, students, researchers, artists, governmental officers etc. and mothers, fathers, sons, daughters, and siblings.

In that sense, "…global civil society enables its participants – athletes, campaigners, musicians, religious believers, managers, aid-workers, teleworkers, medics, scientists, journalists, academics – not only to regard this society as theirs but also to see through global civil society by calling it (more impersonally) this world or that world."[32] I find that identity, transterritoriality, and civil conduct are at the heart of global civil society. People's civil action is a reflection of their understanding of their identity and subjectivity. By transterritoriality, I mean the movement of ideologies and cultural meanings that affect the performativity of identity and home making. Civility is the normative ideal behind the philosophy or the knowledge in making of what makes the world global and what constitutes the space of society. "Civility is crucial for the 'functioning' of societies and the wellbeing of their individual members"[33] and they are to be understood as "a normative ideal of social behavior which varies in content over time and from one cultural context to another."[34] Civil society, thus, is the spatial arena where societal action takes place, it is the space that negotiates the interactions between the state, the economy, community and family life.[35] Linguistically, civility is a loan word from the Latin *civilitas*, similar to the French and German concepts *civilite´* and *Zivilita¨t* (civilisation/Zivilisation), it has long been reduced to denoting 'courtesy/politeness' or proper conduct and etiquette.[36] Whereas civility in the English-language denotes the extent of social behavior.[37]

[32] Keane, *Global Civil Society?*, 7.
[33] Britta Baumgarten, Dieter Gosewinkel, and Dieter Rucht, "Civility: Introductory Notes on the History and Systematic Analysis of a Concept," *European Review of History—Revue Européenne d'histoire* 18, no. 03 (2011): 289.
[34] Ibid., 290.
[35] Ibid., 291.
[36] Ibid., 293.
[37] Ibid.

Keane further elaborates stating that to be civil in a double sense "consists of non-governmental (or 'civilian') institutions that tend to have non-violent (or 'civil') effects."[38] And since civility in a global society values pluralism, in this context, cultures act out their own traditions of civility, it can as a result have a strong potential for conflict. Although global civil society values tolerance, difference is not always appreciated, especially with the establishment of the nation-state. Civility is the normative ideal of how people conduct themselves upon their processing of the philosophies or knowledge of what constitutes the space and time they occupy. Civility in a global society, values diversity and pluralism in which cultures act out cording to their own traditions of civility. Given the politics of discourse this recognition can result to it can result in conflict. And while global civil society emphasizes tolerance, difference have been utilized to justify wars, violence and hierarchical privileges,[39] such as the War on Terror to justify the war in Iraq, slavey, or the WWII atomic bombs in Japan.

This brings me to an important point I would like to highlight. That is the usage of language and the power to define what is in the name of being Malay or being Muslim, is essential because it goes beyond the superficiality of Huntington's clash of civilizations of an East versus West dichotomy. This is something my participants have echoed individually during various interviews despite the challenging pluralistic component of global civil society in which they live. Finding commonalities is more important than the underlying differences, despite how aggressive the Canadian political sphere and even sometimes its public sphere can be towards minorities. In relating their experiences of overlapping identities, my participants try to come to terms with differences and create their own version of who they are, influenced by the values they subjectively view as good, without falling into the trap of choosing between the '-izations' of Westernization and Easternization. Therefore, creating a series of civil conduct. Which is also manifested in the practice of traditional art such as *silat* or in community interactions as transcribed in Malay tradition or the Islamic faith.

[38] Keane, *Global Civil Society?*, 14.
[39] Baumgarten, Gosewinkel, and Rucht, "Civility: Introductory Notes on the History and Systematic Analysis of a Concept," 289.

1.2 The Muslim Asian Experience

Having explained the theoritical basis of global civil society and how it fits within the framework of this study, I would like to highlight the second reason this research is important, and that is because it offers a significant insight into the the overlooked representation of Muslim Asians in academia. I am challenging the overarching stereotyping of Muslims as only Arabs from war torn territories and sheding light on the diversity of races within the Islamic faith as a universal religion. In a long-term thorough study of 15 years, from 2000 to 2015, on Muslim representation in media, Ahmed and Matthes highlight that out of the 39 countries they investigated, the US and the UK ranked the highest in academic production on Muslim related studies.[40] These studies majorly concentrate on Muslim immigration and war-torn Muslim majority countries such as Iraq, Iran, and Afghanistan, with special focus on Arab states.[41] Research on Asia ranked low and it is unclear whether that included studies on Muslims in Asia or not.[42] This homogenizing stereotyping of Muslims as "an undifferentiated mob of scimitar-waving oil suppliers" and Islam as "a religion of irrational violence that subordinates its women [in particular]" urges me to break this academic trend by paying attention to other Muslim groups to grant them the respect they deserve as subjects with agency. Chapters two and three are an exploration of how Asianness is manifested in my participants interpretation of what is Asian when it comes to parenting, to family, and relations. Including how it is manifested in relation to intrepreted Malayness and Islamic values.

By subjectivity I mean the ways that individuals are subjected to power dynamics that positions them in different social structures such as history, economy, norms, law, economy, etc.[43] Most importantly, the liquidity of global civil society feeds into the uncertainty of postnormal times that forces members of society to question themselves as individuals in order to find grounding and purpose. This requires recognizability and a definability "within a particular grid of intelligibility that makes subjects appear."[44] Zygmunt Bauman once expressed, the identity discourse can tell us more

[40] Saifuddin Ahmed and Jörg Matthes, "Media Representation of Muslims and Islam from 2000 to 2015: A Meta-Analysis," *The International Communication Gazette* (London, England: SAGE Publications, n.d.), 226, doi:10.1177/1748048516656305.
[41] Ibid., 236.
[42] Ibid., 226.
[43] Anita Brady and Tony Schirato, *Understanding Judith Butler* (Sage, 2010).
[44] Ibid., 6.

about the "present-day state of human society."[45] Hence, saturating identity and recognition at the center of the global civil society discourse. Craig Calhoun writes,

> We know of no people without names, no languages or cultures in which some manner of distinctions between self and other, we and they, are not made . . . Self-knowledge – always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery – is never altogether separable from claims to be known in specific ways by others.[46]

People's identity is their source of meaning and experience in their lifetime. Identity as a social actor, constructs meaning from cultural attributes of tradition, religion, the nation, or even I would add neoliberal economic structures. For some individuals, identity can be singular. For others, and especially in a collective, it can be pluralistic.[47] Manuel Castells states that the plurality of identities can be a source of anxiety for self-representation that requires a negotiation between values, other individuals, and institutions.[48] Chapter two and three are an exploration of these transterritorially contesting yet intersecting identities that shape my participants sense of belonging, be it how their Malayness, their Canadianness, their Muslimness, or their Asianness shape their performative subjectivity – as participants refer to their homes 'here' (in Canada) and 'back there' interchangeably for example. All of which, I find, are attributes of a cultural umbrella. I define culture in Said's terms as

> …all these practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms and that often exist in aesthetic forms, one of whose principal aims is pleasure. Included, of course are both the popular stock of lore about distant parts of the world and specialized knowledge available in such learned disciplines as ethnography, historiography, philology, sociology, and literary history.[49]

Culture also has an element of refinement and elevation; a reservoir of each group's best thoughts that have been acted, said, and known.[50] That is why Norhani, a mother in her 50s, expressed immense pride in the Malay language's idiomatic expressions or when Malay dances are performed in public. That said, with the birth of the nation-

[45] Zygmunt Bauman, "Identity in the Globalising World," *Social Anthropology* 9, no. 2 (2001): 1.
[46] Craig Calhoun, *Social Theory and the Politics of Identity* (Blackwell, 1994), 4.
[47] Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age, Economy, Society, and Culture*, 2nd ed., vol. 2 (John Wiley & Sons, 2009), 7.
[48] Ibid.
[49] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, xii.
[50] Ibid., xiii.

state, culture becomes more associated with identity, in an 'us' versus 'them' narrative often aggressively differentiating people to a degree of xenophobia.[51]

Said explains, "Culture in this sense is a source of identity, and a rather combative one at that, as we see in recent 'returns' to culture and traditions. These 'returns' accompany rigorous codes of intellectual and moral behavior that are opposed to the permissiveness associated with such relatively liberal philosophies as multiculturalism and hybridity." [52] Additionally, Charles Taylor points out that identity is a story that individuals weave and a form of self-definition that is quite modernistic and new in process. Chapter one is an exploration of how individualistic self-discovery came to be and how I argue that remains challenged in Canada's neoliberal multicultural political social structure as cultures become combated against one another, leading to the otherization of minority groups. That said, this is important to understand, because it emphasizes individuality in identity making even when individuals are members of religious, cultural, nationalistic, or occupational groups. And in the construct of a global civil society people have more fluidity to explore themselves beyond the shackles of group expectations because global civil society is a worldwide network that is not always structured with clear roles and expectations as people adopt or belong to multiple identities.[53]

Furthermore, what my participants have indicated is that identity making is a significant part of homemaking and belonging, because identity is a strong source of meaning that is formed through a process of social construction.[54] Chapter two is a deeper look into how my participants, as global civil actors, identify themselves transterritoriality without the need to box themselves to a specific identity and what it entails, which is a characteristic of global civil society that enables the fluid movement of meanings and value systems shaped by the globalization of information. Thus, showcasing how the various traveling value systems and epistemologies shape their normative civility and identity making process – from Arabization, British colonialism, Asian values, including their occupations.

[51] Ibid.
[52] Ibid.
[53] Keane, *Global Civil Society?*
[54] Castells, *The Power of Identity: The Information Age, Economy, Society, and Culture*, 2:7.

1.3 The Diaspora Mediating the Generalizations of East and West

Through understanding one's identity, the individual can determine the purpose of their actions. This meaning can be found in their occupational choices in a neoliberal sense, in their nationalistic values of Canadianness as they makes sense of being a visible minority on a settler colonial land, in their adaptation of Malay and Asian cultural habits as a reminder of racial identity in a white land, and their faith identity as Muslims, which is often put in conflict with Western values. Thus, I argue that meaning and purpose motivate people's self-representation, which allows them to become agents of their subjectivity. Accordingly, their agency impacts their civil action.

Consider this example of Shafiqah, a younger woman in her 20s, who immigrated with her parents at the age of ten, describes how upon her first visit back to Singapore, after her family gained their Canadian citizenship, she and her sisters found the general Singaporean lifestyle and perceptions drastically different from their own.

Shafiqah recalls that,

> There were a lot of lifestyle and perceptions that upon going back to Singapore we couldn't agree with. For one thing being, materialism was very evident when we came back. Our cousins were all wearing brand name goods, fancy shoes, fancy purses and we were just in our Walmart pants and very basic type of t-shirt. I remember my cousin was surprised my hair is not blonde…I have cousins who dyed their hair blonde and a little bit more Western than my sisters and I. It was a bit of a cultural shock to be honest. – There was also this teasing and joking of how I will be married to a white man and be all 'Canadian'. There is this glorified perception of what my future family unit will look like, which seems very white. I have often had to explain to everybody that Canada is very multicultural.

Shafiqah also described how such narratives have enforced expectations of religious and cultural preservation on her parents, as her mom often played the Singaporean radio at home to get them used to the language and Singaporean songs, or how her father was advised to locate near to a mosque upon their arrival to Canada. Her account describes the realization of how the immigrant identity is shaped by two worlds connected yet disconnected with one another, and in that experience she came to conclude who she is, where she belongs and what she values.

Her immigration experience highlights what I mean by the delicate maneuvering that goes into travelling in between both worlds – the land of origin and the new home.

Nonetheless, the Muslim immigrant identity is often put in a dilemma of an East versus West dichotomy. Shafiqah explains that within some day in the first week of her first family visit to Singapore she felt that her home is back in Canada, which became further reassured upon her most recent visit in 2015. In which this time she travelled back solo. She laughingly describes how upon her arrival to the airport she was swarmed in a parade of extended family members of cousins, aunts, and uncles. She jokingly recalls,

> I think they were expecting someone a little more elegant, but out I came in like my hoodie, and a backpack with running shoes with nothing grand at all, looking like I'm really grumpy. And they were like, 'Oh! Welcome back', we thought [referring to the expressions of her relatives] you would be coming out with like a *Gucci* bag or something like that. I remember my aunt being you know, 'You could've at least bring a suitcase instead of a backpack.' And I said, 'Well the backpack is all I need, that's all my clothes. – Then again continues the line of questioning is your boyfriend white? Are you gonna be married soon?

The idea that the East, for the lack of a better description, is more "Western" than the West, is another notion Norhani, reiterated in her interviews where she also expressed how they [Malays in Malaysia] behave in imitation to perceived norms of a problematically generalized Western culture. This shows that the ideas of what is Western and Easteren continue to hold broad and vague meanings often intertwining in performativity. Hence, this requires a defining of the West, what is Western, and how they are constructed in relation to the otherization of Islam and the Muslim subject.

Geopolitically, scholars argue that the West includes Germany, Netherlands, Italy, Spain, Portugal; France and England imperially dominating the *idea* of Europe.[55] Said would add Canada, Australia, and America.[56] In which America takes over the imperial domination of what is culturally and epistemologically Western. Which creates a rather problematic, generalized, imprecise geopolitical construct of Eurocentricism. More so, through the work of writers such as Samuel Huntington and Brenard Lewis, the West is pitted as a universal globalized force of progression, while Islam and the Orient as backward and stagnant. Therefore, justifying political intervention and cultural imperialism in Muslim majority states. Both of these ideas are culturally impeded in a

[55] Mohammad R Salama, *Islam, Orientalism and Intellectual History: Modernity and the Politics of Exclusion Since Ibn Khaldun* (Bloomsbury Publishing, 2011), 27.
[56] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, xxvi.

way that standardizes Islam and the West as homogenous opposing civilizational divisions of the world. Which feeds into the knowledge production of misinformation and the imagination of what makes the 'us' and what makes the 'them' as imagined communities as seen through Shafiqah's family's reaction. Mohammed Salama asserts that "This misunderstanding is in large part caused by the condition of modernity, which serves as the sociohistorical background to the speculative formalization of categories like 'the clash of civilizations' and 'the end of history.'"[57] This consequence confines moral and cultural values into spatially defined entities and disregards the mobility of epistemology and the reproduction of ideas and the identities that are constantly reshaped out of global movement of knowledge production and civil conduct. The historiography of Islam, in particular, is always positioned in opposition to modern Europe, in which modernity is considered a sole European product. As a result, situating itself as the benchmark of human civilization and progress. This very much affects Muslim performativity and the representation of Muslims in Canada and the positioning of Islam as unconducive to global civil society universally.

To better illustrate how the Muslim minority is affected by this orientalist cultural production manifested in the West, I would like to start by journeying a little back in time, about six years ago. On July 3rd, 2013 the Oxford Union held a debate in motion that the house believes that Islam is a religion of peace. Members of the opposition were right-wing journalist Daniel Johnson, Oxford chemistry professor Peter Atkins, and far-right British politician Anne-Marie Waters. Al Jazeera journalist Mehdi Hassan's response to the opposition panel in the Oxford Union went viral on Youtube now reaching about 5 million views.[58] I remember vividly how the Oxford clip flooded my social media. That said, I also remember choosing not to pay much attention to it. I suppose my lack of enthusiasm was attributed to a mix of anger and exhaustion for being positioned in the defense, which was reflected in my undergraduate experience. That year was my second undergraduate year, and it was around that time that one of my political philosophy professors took an interest in my vocalism and questions in his lectures. He eventually struck a long conversation with me once after one of his lectures, which ended in a rather idiosyncratic fashion. He advised me to reconsider

[57] Salama, *Islam, Orientalism and Intellectual History: Modernity and the Politics of Exclusion Since Ibn Khaldun*, 28.
[58] Oxford Union, "Mehdi Hasan | Islam Is A Peaceful Religion | Oxfor Union" (UK, 2013), https://youtu.be/Jy9tNyp03M0.

my own choice of faith, for as a young Muslim woman I seemed too intelligent for it. 2013 for me marked the beginning of underhanded orientalist influenced 'save the Muslim woman' series of academic interactions in tutorials and lectures. It took me four to five years later to listen attentively to the full debate as it appeared one day on my recommended newsfeed. I noticed an interesting trend in the opposition's narrative. Underlining all their criticism of Islam, which shared similarities with my professor's argument, was a concern for civility.

Peace, intellectuality, prosperity, freedom were all very much interlinked with civility. Not once was the word civility mentioned in the debate, but it was certainly implied in what constituted it. Of course, what constituted civility aligned with dominant Eurocentric notions of what counts as civil. Consider this argument by Daniel Johnson for instance:

> I have come precisely because I do not want to live in fear in a free country, our country [the United Kingdom] … I do not want free speech to die in the land that gave this most precious of liberties to the rest of the world, including many of the 56 states that call themselves Islamic. I do not want Muslim women to endure domestic tyranny…Not only would a warlike doctrine like Gaza have no place in an Islamic country, but a university like Oxford, in which liberty of research is into everything, including Islam, is not merely permitted but obligatory, could not exist. There are no universities in this sense in the Muslim world, and the academic study of Islam and especially of its founder are greatly inhibited by the suppression of free inquiry.[59]

Johnson starts off with clear oblique tones of Eurocentricism, as he ascribes the civil notions of liberty, women's rights, and intellectual prosperity as Western civil notions. Near the end of his argument, Johnson professes that Islam can be a religion of peace, only if it readjusts its ideology to what suits a Eurocentric model of civil prosperity. He goes on to claim that,

> Islam has the potential to be a religion of peace, but it will need to evolve a great deal to be a religion of peace. Islam cannot evolve, unless Muslim authorities both religious and secular allow the freedoms we in the West take for granted. Freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom of conscious. Of course these freedoms go together with other basic principles which are absent in those countries, equality before the law, civil and political rights, constitutional democracy, economic liberty, the separation of church or mosque and state. All these ideas emerged in the West because the Judeuo-

[59] Oxford Union, "Daniel Johnson| Islam Is Not A Peaceful Religion | Oxford Union" (UK, 2013), https://youtu.be/2MDlZk89oaQ.

> Christian religions have always evolved in classical and medieval renaissance and Enlightenment periods and is still evolving today… A religion of peace has to practice what it preaches. You only have to watch the news of persecution, war and terror from the Muslim world and beyond to find that religion of peace brings hollow. Peace is not an offer to the rest of us, except to the price that is unacceptable. The price of submission – submission to the Islamists who increasingly dominate their fellow Muslims across the globe…until it is purged off the radicals who preach in its name, until we can feel safe on our streets again. Islam does not deserve to call itself a religion of peace.[60]

Peter Atkins, on the same oppositional team, echoes Johnson's arguments stating that

> The trouble with Islam is that for some reason although it professes peace and has generated art and literature of exquisite beauty, so giving peace to the sensitive soul it does in practice seem to inspire violence rather more openly in comparison to the other Abrahamic religions…all the terrorists that were mentioned were Islamic terrorists….I would add however that when in a few minutes when you come to consider how you will vote this evening, then you should not weigh good and evil equally in the balance. It is the case that one evil outweighs one good many times over. For loss of life, inhibition of aspiration, barbaric punishment and imposition, and intellectual stifling cannot be skewed by acts of hospitality however generous. All the seas incarnadine cannot wash blood from a religion's hand by an act of piety. Islam seems peculiarly suited to the inspiration of violence.[61]

The debate blew up on social media because of Hassan's response that pointed out the stripping of the notions of civility from Muslim agency and complete dismissal of their contributions to modernity. Adding on to the concept of Muslim agency is the fact that my participants are also Asian actors who face another layer of orientalism that portrays the Asian self as obedient, submissive, uncontroversial, and apathetic.[62] When in reality, my participants have been very active mobilizers of social active community work and political participation. By stripping away the civility of an individual and their society, including their civil participation, acts of violence, dehumanization and inferiorization are easily justified against them. We do not need to go too far in history to see how this is manifested in colonial projects in various nations or the justified campaign of Bush's war on terror. These orientalist modes of thoughts form local and global travelling epistemologies that impact the Muslim individual and collective

[60] Ibid.
[61] Oxford Union, "Peter Atkins | Islam Is Not a Peaceful Religion | Oxford Union" (UK, 2013), https://youtu.be/MkxakWfz59o.
[62] Rosalind S Chou, *Asian American Sexual Politics: The Construction of Race, Gender, and Sexuality* (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2012).

agency and identity formation. As expressed in Franz Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*, imperialism very much is a psychological experience.[63]

This brings me to another phenomenon my participants have emphasized, and that is the referencing of religion as a deciding factor that balances out the contestations between the different value systems impeded in their identities, particularly of culture and nationalism. Rather, chapter three is an exploration of how Islam is seen as a driving force of civility that motivates civil conduct through social activism and the impact it has on attempting to balance gender roles, as my participants question the cultural expectations of weighing the reasonability of identity preservation on Malay women. Which leads to an important reassessment of what Islam means as a religion. Atkin's and Johnson's arguments above are clearly rooted in a Eurocentric secular experience of what defines religion and civility, where they advocate for a strict separation between the public and private sphere. That being said, Talal Asad considers that such an overused description of secularism is deeply superficial. He roots down secularism as a political doctrine that arose in modern Euro-America[64] in the nineteenth century[65] that "presupposes new concepts of 'religion,' 'ethics,' and 'policies,' and new imperatives associated with them"[66] making it a much more complex and multilayered socio-political structure, than a simple separation of public and private beliefs. Asad asserts that, "Secularism is not simply an intellectual answer to a question about enduring social peace and toleration"[67] as specified by the oxford debate team.

Rather, "it is an enactment by which a *political medium* (representation of citizenship) redefines and transcends particular and differentiating practices of the self that are articulated through class, gender, and religion."[68] Additionally, the emergence of secularism is closely connected to the establishment of the Westphalian nation-state that is linked to a Eurocentric vision of what is democratic, making it a global phenomenon whether non Euro-American states like it or not.[69] Therefore, the

[63] Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (Grove/Atlantic, Inc., 2007), 80–81.
[64] Talal Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity* (Stanford University Press, 2003), 1.
[65] Ibid., 23.
[66] Ibid., 2.
[67] Ibid., 5.
[68] Ibid.
[69] Ibid., 2.

argument that the Middle East and Muslim majority states are anti-secular, which is a notion they seem to indicate, and in fact has been resisted in these societies, is still inapplicable sociologically given the globalization of the secular phenomenon.[70] More so, secularism is presented as being one of the key achievements of Western cultural formations. Saba Mahmood argues that 9/11 has paved way for an increasing reinstatement of secularism in global religious politics.[71]

Subsequently, Eurocentric secularism has posed itself through certain trajectories. It claims that scientism goes hand in hand with secularism; without secularism there would be no scientific and technological advancement but a succumbing to the magical unreasonable beliefs of religion. Secondly, it highlights its civic benefits. Peace and social harmony are incumbent upon the existence of secularism that prevents religions from going down each other's throats. Thirdly, some argue that secularism is an indispensable precondition for the execution of democracy, tracing its roots to the modernization movement. Sayyid argues that following this logic, modernity "remains a narrative about Western exceptionality, as in this sense secularism becomes a marker of Western identity." The epistemological, civic and democratic arguments for secularism are formulated as part of the narrative of Western exceptionality. Therefore, the articulation of a Muslim subject position within the context of the ethnoscapes of Western countries presents a peculiar challenge to Western identity. Hence, Mahmood asserts that

> not so much stringent and pious calls for the reassertion of secularism but a critical analysis of what has been assumed to be the truth of secularism, its normative claims, and its assumptions about what constitutes 'the human' in this world. This is not simply because such an exercise is intellectually compelling, but because what we take to be the moral superiority of the secular vision needs to be rethought urgently. Apart from the fact that this secular vision does not command broad allegiance in the world today, I fear that it is premised on a propensity to violence that is seldom questioned.[72]

More so, the Oxford debators's used terminologies and contextual civilizational essentialism is what Edward Said refers to as "latent orientalism." Latent orientalism is "an unconscious Western certainty about Oriental existence that conceives of the

[70] Ibid.
[71] Saba Mahmood, "Secularism, Hermeneutics, and Empire: The Politics of Islamic Reformation," *Public Culture* 18, no. 2 (2006): 323.
[72] Ibid., 347.

Orient as backward, separate, and different."[73] Such orientalism often describes the oriental Other as a "backward, degenerate, uncivilized, and retarded"[74], Islam in particular has been referred to as "wretched, bare, and trivial."[75] Said analyzes nineteenth century scholarship to have portrayed Islam as specifically undeveloped.[76] Atkin's and Johnson's beliefs is what Salama metaphorizes as "those particularly supremacist factories of remapping global order, and which Said has once referred to as 'latent Orientalism,' that are responsible for generating Huntington-like mentalities of political antagonism, xenophobia, and civilizational essentialism, and which we ought to confront."[77]

Accordingly, global civil society is also a suitable discourse within a transmodern theoretical framework that is discussed in more details in chapter one. Enrique Dussel's transmodernity goes hand in hand with John Keane's theory of a global civil society. If Keane's description of a global civil society as a pluralistic, multicultural society that values tolerance and that is both united and exists in a fluid multiplicity without unity,[78] then Dussel's transmodernity fits such a global system. Dussel proposes a transmodernity that can be "multicultural, versatile, hybrid, postcolonial, pluralist, tolerant, and democratic (interestingly enough beyond the modern liberal democracy of the European state). It will have splendid millenary traditions and be respectful of exteriority and heterogeneous identities."[79] This theoretical framework is relevant and applicable because it establishes new meanings and self-understanding of subjectivity and identity, of the community, and a new economic attitude that absorbs the dominant Eurocentric experience while creating the possibility of something new out of it. In this regard, the stripping of the Muslim from the essence of their identity that at the heart of it is their faith, robs them from what makes them who they are, their normative civil conduct, their history, their cultures and traditions, and the dismissing

[73] Sean P.(Sean Patrick) Hier, *Contemporary Sociological Thought: Themes and Theories* (Canadian Scholars' Press, 2005), 420.
[74] Edward Said, "Latent and Manifest Orientalism," *Race and Racialization, 2E: Essential Readings* 64 (2018): 427.
[75] Ibid., 428.
[76] Said, "Latent and Manifest Orientalism."
[77] Salama, *Islam, Orientalism and Intellectual History: Modernity and the Politics of Exclusion Since Ibn Khaldun*, 30.
[78] Keane, *Global Civil Society?*
[79] Enrique D Dussel and Alessandro Fornazzari, "World-System and 'Trans'-Modernity," *Nepantla: Views from South* 3, no. 2 (2002): 236.

of any contributions to the world. Through transmodernity, my participants can reclaim their agency to emphasize their humanism and civil legacy.

Therefore, chapter three is a deliberate exploration of how the Malay diaspora reproduces their cultures that transterritorially travelled with them to Canada such as how Fad, a man in his 30s, a *silat* guru, accentuates the importance of the Malay martial arts in preserving the Malay Muslim identity in a multicultural Canada, or how Norhani's art studio is a personal sanctuary for her but a space of communal gathering. Canada's neoliberal multiculturalism, a concept that is explained in chapter one, opens doors of reassessment of the Malay traditions that allows the Malay diaspora to reexamine what from its traditions they find applicable with global trends of civility and their Islamic faith. These reassessments are assessments of the female role in cultural reproduction, the diversity of exposure to other cultures and the acceptance of different interpretations of Islam. As Fad, describes, he appreciates how there are so many Muslims who practice Islam differently through the Islamic four schools of thought, something he cannot experience and lacks appreciation in Singapore where he originates from. In addition to, how they locate themselves within the translocality of identity preservation as a minority on a settler colonial land, which impacts how some participants describe their Canadianness. Thus chapter three explores how they negotiate being Muslim and Malay and Canadian, in which religion plays a big role in balancing these values and motivating social activism.

Moreover, in order to put Dussel's transmodern theory into work I deliberately examine a different kind of civil discourse, which is the Islamic secular tradition of *adab* and how my participants practice it as a form of civil conduct. I also explore the debates over how the Islamic faith transcends nationalism through its transterritorial classic vision of the notion of an *Ummah* – a collective group bound by faith no matter the territory. By exploring *adab* I am proposing an explanation to how my participants make sense of the uncertainty and lack of structure a postnormal global civil society enforces. Religion, local community, culture, and a root to civil conduct that motivates volunteerism and social activism provide grounding and a sense of belonging and home in a world that is in a weary transition and in constant movement.

Henceforth, I argue that my participants continue to challenge such narratives of otherizing and the rhetoric of the clash of civilization, as they are aware of the

transterritoriality of meaning, extracted from their Malay culture and Islamic faith as they contribute to their civility and their agency as Canadians. Which influences their performativity as they also adopt Western cultural values that is over all encompassing to their normative civility, home making, and identity formation locally and globally. That is why I find that the Muslim Malay diaspora in Canada is a suitable case study of how global civil society is manifested in a world undergoing waves of transitions. Moreover, Canada's multicultural social construct brings into attention the so many historical backgrounds that affect its nation building. Given the Eurocentricity of the world, from a transmodern perspective, multicultural debates will hardly lead to the "Lebanonization" of Canada per say, as Said puts it.[80] Nonetheless, it brings forward an awareness of people's diversity and civil values, and it accentuates certain identities more so than others. Which creates a multicultural hierarchy of those recognized and those unrecognized, affecting people's sense of belonging and home making process. Including how groups of multiple identities negotiate their value systems individually and collectively, to create a sense of belonging in Canadian society.

By doing so, I challenge the perceived stagnancy of traditional values as a normative discourse that is more mobile, fluid, and constantly reproduced. I also challenge the orientalist discourse that steals away the civility of Muslims in the West, by looking at some of the core, described secular forms of Islamic civility that travel with the Muslim Malay diaspora such as *adab*. Through introducing *adab* as a sophisticated discipline of normative civil conduct that has adopted its own construct in a Malay Asian tradition, I am contributing to Dussel's theory of transmodernism, where he envisions a world that is gradually detaching itself from Eurocentricism. Which means that how the Muslim Malay diaspora conducts itself locally as Muslim Canadians, they are also affecting a global chain of civility through their volunteerism and political engagement and a conscious detachment of problematic generalizations of Eastern and Western. I delve into the complexities of how the diaspora makes sense of their cultural traditions in relation to their faith, and how religion ultimately takes on the role of a deciding factor of what they morally value as individuals and as a collective. This affects their choice of jobs, their personal and public relations, and their conscious awareness of Canada's colonial history and minority challenges in the country. By analyzing their environment and willfully selecting what from their traditions travels

[80] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, xxvi.

with them, what from their religion they emphasize to practice, particularly respect and civility. I argue that Muslim diasporic groups and minorities are very much agents of their stories, and local and global contributors, not victims of unfortunate circumstances or voiceless and faceless citizens, who are contributing to the world structure as global civil actors.

CHAPTER II

TRANSMODERNITY, POLITICS OF RECOGNITION, AND THE DILEMMAS OF NEOLIBERAL MULTICULTURALISM

My interest in Malay culture came about a series of unplanned fortunes and encounters. I have had an academic interest in Asian studies since my final year in high school and as I started my postgraduate education I enrolled in a few classes in Asian studies and Chinese history. For some reason Southeast Asia was never an explored topic in my Asian studies courses. The focus was generally on East Asia and a bit of South Asia, particularly their Buddhist and Hindu socio-religious heritage. I presume it is a reflection of the aesthetics of molded Asian familiarity that styles its way into the social fabric of a multicultural North America, picking and choosing what best fits

Figure 2. 1: Summer of 2016 Muslimfest *silat* and Malay wedding performance.

with its Eurocentric secular image. For some reason, a Southeast Asian religio-cultural form does not fit into that mold yet I suppose. I was introduced to a small fraction of the Southeastern socio-political body *politique* from two of my professors, one from Singapore and the other from Malaysia. It still was not enough to ignite my interest in the Malay Archipelago though. It was not until 2016 when I was invited by Fatin, who is one of the main participants in this study, to help volunteer in the setting up of a Malaysian booth in Muslimfest in Mississauga, the biggest Muslim festival in North America. It was an interesting and new experience so I thought why not. The community quickly welcomed me in with hospitality and pride in its heritage. While helping in the booth, I was introduced to an array of colorful traditional Malay games and customs. Games such as *batu seremban, congkak, gasing*,[81] were played with visitors. Then *silat*[82] and a wedding ceremony were performed on stage. There was also a flux of masses who frequently surrounded the booth intrigued by the often overshadowed culture in the Canadian Muslim community(given that Malays are a Muslim minority). By the end of the festival I was invited to join *silat* classes that were facilitated by *Dunia Melayu Dunia Islam* (DMDI) at the time. I was welcomed in the community and I counted as the only non-Malay in my *silat* group. I was treated with immense hospitality, a gesture Malays certainly pride themselves with.

[81] Names of traditional Malay folk games.
[82] A form of Indigenous martial arts to the Malay Archipelago.

Figure 2. 2: ASEAN *silat* performance 2017. Fad performing beside his son. I am standing at the back in position.

And so, I spent 2016-2017 practicing *silat* and even performing in the 2017 ASEAN festival in Toronto. I did not think much of my involvement with the community. I enjoyed the unique company and respected the form of martial arts that I was learning which is composed of multiple Islamic religious symbolism and ecologically inspired animal forms. I suppose my positionality was unusual in a sense that I was the only non-Malay in the group. I was also welcomed in a community that to me comes off as very protective of itself within the larger Canadian Muslim community. It is a minority within a minority. Although Canada Statistics does not gather racial data, the 2016 Canadian census shows that about 2,555 Canadians claimed Malay as their single origin while a 14,365 claimed Malay with multiple origins.[83] In 2016 a total of 16,920 claimed that they are originally Malaysian.[84] It is estimated that nearly half of these Canadians (7,310) live in the province of Ontario.[85] As for Canadians who emigrated from Singapore they were about 2,850.[86] There is a high possibility that the numbers

[83] H.E. Wilson, "Malaysian Canadians," *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, 2006, https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/malaysians#:~:text=In the 2016 Canadian Census,(7%2C310) live in Ontario.
[84] Statistics Canada, "Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Highlight Tables," 2016, https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/hlt-fst/imm/Table.cfm?Lang=E&T=31&Geo=01&SO=4D.
[85] Wilson, "Malaysian Canadians."
[86] Canada, "Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity Highlight Tables."

of immigrants from both states have increased since then, but it remains unknown how many of the provided statistics are Muslim Malay and how many Canadians from Singapore are Malay racially. Nevertheless, it is safe to conclude that they are quite a minority, as well amongst the Muslim majority that remains dominantly Arab and South Asian.[87]

This chapter argues that there is a serious need for transitioning into a transmodernistic vision of the world that goes beyond the long dominating Eurocentric world structure of space and time. My main theoretical framework of this chapter deciphers what identity means to a Muslim Malay Canadian in Canada. Identity is formulated in a spatial arena, locally (can be within state territory or even narrower, at home) and globally. Context of what constitutes cultural norms and religious understandings of one's identity is formed in a postcolonial ethnoscape that is heavily linked to global neoliberalism and a modernization process of the self.[88] Rather than giving in to the Eurocentric process of identity making, which confronts my participants with a lack of recognition, and orientalized perceptions of who they are and what they value in culture and religion, the Muslim Malay diaspora voices out a vision of going beyond the clash of civilization rhetoric. They do so in understanding the transterritorial experience that goes into identity making of immigrants and diasporas in Canada and by focusing on connecting the values of so described East and West rather than giving in to a clashing mentality.

They also do so through a conscious assessment of Canada's neoliberal multiculturalism, aware of the minority structure in its socio-political frame, adopting a neoliberal characteristic of choosing how to become agents of their own narratives through personal interest and social responsibility. The chapter also analyzes the experience of what I perceive travelling in between emotional uncharted territories – the immigration experience of belonging in a new home while connecting with the older homeland. What I mean by uncharted territories is the following: my participants are mainly first generation Malay Canadians, which means parents and children travelled in between two homes – two spaces with different cultural norms and family gatherings that are not particularly confined by state territoriality. In some of the talks,

[87] Ibid.
[88] Arjun Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, vol. 1 (U of Minnesota Press, 1996).

some participants would unconsciously exchange the word 'home' between Canada and Malaysia or Singapore. These are unconfined phenomenological spaces charged with emotions of family attachments, traditional nostalgia, and socio-cultural differences that require intricate maneuvering and thoughtful sensitivity. The experience of visitations to extended families and friends back in Malaysia or Singapore and then returning back to Canada has profound consequences on identity formation. Many are happy to reconnect with old school friends like Sopiah who went for a relative's wedding last summer and was reunited with her school teacher and classmates of more than twenty years.

In every visit she is excited to return with a bag of Singaporean goods of dessert or ingredients she has difficulty finding in Canada. Her children however are now interracially married and have very much settled in Canada and she now takes it upon herself to connect her interracial grandchildren, whom she is very proud of, with their cultural heritage. In the case of Norhani, she calls her parents every day to check on them and finds that she is now much closer to them emotionally despite the distance. "I just found out my father was sick, while my sister next door didn't. I called her right away and told her go see your father now", Norhani narrates as she describes how the distance strengthened the bond she has with her parents. Similarly was the account of Shafiqah in the introduction who formed an earlier sense of belonging given the drastic cultural contrast she experienced in her visits to Singapore. This also indicates that the experience of the first generation in the families varies from the second generation, adding to the complexity of thought, consciously or unconsciously, put into building a life that is adoptable enough to the differences of cultural, normative, and ideological epistemologies that come with the experience of immigration.

The experiences of international students now residing in the GTA is quite telling as well on how the experiences back in Malaysia or Singapore either prepared them for their Canadian journey of a difference in normative values and how that might affect their return. Most of the international students who were not living in Kuala Lumpur, a much more multiracial cosmopolitan society, lived in different states or on different islands. The level of one's exposure to diversity depended on two factors; individual comfort in accommodating difference and curiosity, and how diverse the state actually is. Mikhail, who lives in a highly touristic island in Malaysia, had no problem accepting difference in normative ideals, but what normalized this acceptance was the

experience of his elder sister as she left to study in Kuala Lumpur, bringing with her ideas of acceptance of difference in the family. And so, his transition to Canada does not culturally shock him.

On another spectrum, Arief's first serious female interactions were in his undergraduate transition in Canada. He grew up in a much more conservative state that was predominantly Malay with minimum interaction with the opposite gender in school. His transition to Kuala Lumpur exposed him to more cultural diversity but nothing like his Canadian exposure to multiculturalism and gender fluidity in interactions. And so, he embraces these experiences to his personal growth whenever he decides to return back. Hence, the idea of the clash of civilizations; the East versus the West, Islam versus modernization, Malayness versus Arabization or Sinicization, these exposures of travelling normative epistemologies exposes the individual to a variety of expectations, stereotypes, and self-negotiations, all within the transterritoriality of traveling ideologies of a collective and an individual body.

This chapter portrays how interconnected the world really is despite its dominant Eurocentricism, and how being a Muslim Asian minority in Canada pushes the Malay community to assess their subjectivity as Muslim Canadians. The ethnographic case study attempts to showcase the complexities of identity formation and subjective performativity of the Muslim Malay diaspora residing in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) of Ontario, Canada. I start by introducing my participant's demographic information and fieldwork experience, my methodology and positionality as a non-Malay researcher. Then I delve into a deeper exploration of the politics of recognition and neoliberal multiculturalism in Canada. But first, I provide an analytical outlook on the Eurocentrism of the world through Dussel's work, which provides a basis to the creation of global civil society that will be further discussed in chapter two.

2.1 Methodological Process and Fieldwork

Given the ethnographic nature of this study, I collected primary data from my participants through semi-structured interviews and participant observation. I narrowed my focus to the GTA and Halton Region areas in Ontario given they are the most accessible within my means of transportation especially considering how scattered the community is. More specifically I focused on participants in the metropolitan urban cities of Toronto, Mississauga, Brampton, and Hamilton. All of

which are on the list of top ten fast growing metropolitan cities in Ontario.[89] Two participants were skyped as they lived in further cities. The duration of the fieldwork was about three months from August to early November. I interviewed a total of nineteen participants; eighteen primary participants and one secondary participant. The primary participants are half Malay Canadian, half Malaysian international students most of whom would prefer to stay indefinitely in Canada, or stay longer before their return to Malaysia or Singapore. The secondary participant is Sheikh Abdullah Idris, senior community counselor of ISNA Mosque in the GTA.

My participants consist of ten Canadian citizens, the majority of whom are women, and seven international students, some of whom are considering staying in Canada and others who have landed work after graduation. The majority of my participants originate from Malaysia, but some are from Singapore and a few from Sri Lanka. That said, the majority of them are of mixed diversity of racial backgrounds. The appendix table breaks down the participants' backgrounds which provides context to their experiences and identity formation. It also highlights the variety of racial backgrounds despite citizenship statuses and occupational diversity.[90] I would like to make a few reservations that I believe could affect the analytical outcome of this study and would benefit from future improvements. The fieldwork took place during an interesting two months of Canadian politics, in which Canada was holding its 43rd federal election in a time of global anxiety over the rise of right-wing nationalism in Europe and Trumps' republicanism.[91] The election certainly heightened questions of belonging, racism, and multiculturalism including the question of who is a Canadian and what are Canadian values that are propagated by the Canadian liberal left. The result of the election is quite telling in the discourse of liberal multiculturalism since no party won majority seats in the House of Commons forming an all minority government. This hinders the policy making process as it does not grant much power to the party that won with the popular vote. Additionally, given the diverse nationalistic and racioethnic backgrounds (both of which are social constructs) of the participants in this research and the limitations of time resources, and space in this Master's thesis, I decided to narrow my

[89] "City Population." Ontario (Canada): Province, Major Cities & Towns - Population Statistics, Maps, Charts, Weather and Web Information, n.d. https://www.citypopulation.de/Canada-Ontario.html.
[90] Refer to appendix A.
[91] "Europe and Right-Wing Nationalism: A Country-by-Country Guide." BBC News. BBC, May 24, 2019. https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-36130006.

focus on the Malaysian historical experience with elements of globalization and multiculturalism, for two reasons. The first is because it seems that most of my participants' backgrounds originate from Malaysia, nationalistically speaking. The second is given Malaysia's large Malay population, granting more information on the Malay dilemma. There will be some reference to the Singaporean experience as well given its close historical connection and geographic proximity to Malaysia. Finally, I decided to include the experience of Malay international students due to two reasons: (a) they are active participants of the local Canadian Malay community; (b) they indicate a pattern of immigration, as I have observed that the majority of my participants decide to move to the West upon their experience of studying abroad first.

In terms of improvements, I believe this study deserves a much longer duration for an all encompassing ethnography. Time was one of the biggest challenge in accessing the community, gaining their trust, and conducting the interviews. This study deserves at least a year of community observation and involvement. Including visiting or residing in Malaysia and Singapore for some time to better understand the cultural background transterritorial history of the diaspora. Language is certainly another barrier further explored in the following section. Additionally, this research attempts to narrow the focus on the diasporic experience with more emphasis on the Southeast Asian experience. I acknowledge in doing so, I could be creating an imbalance in the analysis of Canada's social and historical experience, especially given that this research is about the identity delimmas of immigration. Thus, what this research could benefit from is also an includion of interviews non-Malay Muslims and white nonMuslims given the positionality of the Muslims minority in a majority white Canada.

With all this, identity is very much lingering in the background of Canadian society, which makes this study a heavy literary review of theory. Bauman goes as far as to consider identity a modern problem,[92] mainly because this individualistic quest of the self lies in the premise that one's identity is lost and requires sole searching (a question of who we are and where we come from). It is no longer a set defined path of community guidance and divine notions of a Supreme power. The inner search can be a lonely quest and a necessary one, but the individual cannot escape the shackles of

[92] Zygmunt Bauman, "From Pilgrim to Tourist–or a Short History of Identity," *Questions of Cultural Identity* 1 (1996): 18–36.

societal influences. The individual will forever be in need of the education of human interaction.[93] Thus, there is a paradox in the modern identity formation – it relies on two spheres of subjectivity – the public and private sphere. The private sphere is infused with a search of self-authenticity that is inspired by the eighteenth century reshaping of the human sense of morality.[94] What was once a collective enforced belief of moral agreement is now a subjectivity defined by what the self finds most suitable for itself. It is also a space where the religious can exist in comparison to the modern secular public that privatizes religious subjectivity.[95] The public is then where the individual subjectivity is subject to the public's aspirations of achieving equal recognition in hopes of avoiding first rate and second rate citizenry of who is Canadian enough or in the case of Malaysia not Malaysian enough. The public sphere is also where civility portrays itself reflecting societal values that is also based on individual choices in the private sphere. Both spheres form a dialectical relationship that feed into each other's imaginations.[96]

The importance of this section of analysis lies in why my participants for instance would emphasize their experiences as their *own* experiences. They often stress that it is their *own* opinion, even if they think it is shared by popular opinion. The modern identity paved way to a culture of avoiding generalizations and focusing on the self. The second chapter will better present how when asked to introduce oneself a process of soul searching flourishes. Participants preferred to properly think of who they are, some expressing that they did not think deeply of what identity is, especially when I pose it in the form of a collective. For example when I asked Shila what is Malay and what are Asian values she took a long pause and contemplated the questions seriously. "Yea I am not sure what Asian values are? What are Asian values?" she giggled, sarcastically finding the generalization of the 'Asian' absurd. She explained, "According to my grandma we follow a lot from Indian and Hindu [culture] because in Malaysia it's very normal for people to wear *henna* and in weddings as well…in my dad's side because he is half Indian half Chinese, because my mom is Malay they

[93] C Wright Mills, *The Sociological Imagination* (Oxford University Press, 2000).
[94] Charles Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*. (ERIC, 1994), 37.
[95] Asad, *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*, 8.
[96] Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 12–14.

would wear traditional Malay clothes but from my dad's side they would never wear it. They would wear *saris*." When asked about what is Malay she reflects,

> **Shila:** What is Malay to me – I don't want to answer the way we dress or the way we speak.
> **Me:** Why not?
> **Shila:** It's a normal answer. I wish if I knew something that would is different. All I could think about is – to me as long as I speak the language, I eat the food, the Malay traditional food, dress like how a Malay would dress. But then everyone can do that. Like Chinese Malay. They speak Malay, they eat the Malay food, and they do dress as a Malay but then on paper they are not Malay. In Singapore it is different because even the Malays don't speak the Malay language now. They used to, but now all my cousins they don't speak the language anymore. At home they would speak English.

What makes you a Malay or what makes you a Canadian are both identities that belong to a collective.

After Fatin welcomed me to her home, a young mother of now two babies, we shared an insightful conversation over our experiences as first generation immigrants who moved to Canada at a younger age and how that shaped who we are today. What I did not expect is how profound the conversation left her in thought. I returned home to find her posting a photo of her, dressed in her colorful navy blue and maroon red *baju kurung*[97] with a long dangling intricate traditional gold crescent-shaped of what seemed like a *sukun*[98] leaf pendant. Her post captioned,

> Week 2: Self-identity
>
> I am a Malay. However, some days I question my Malayness. "How Malay am I?". There is nothing wrong with reflecting on this idea. I am, *allhamudillilah*, happily living my life as a Malay-Muslim, wife to a Bangaldeshi, mother to a daughter with I-guess-4-or-5-cultural backgrounds-combined (did I use the hyphens correctly?). The wish to understand my "Malayness" extends beyond language, food and traditional attrire. But to me, above all, I am a Canadian Muslim and I am my own definition of all the labels above.

I find this quote an optimum example of how my participants pave way for a transmodern society that is comfortable with the ambiguity of identities and values and consider that as a healthy part of the human condition. Fatin's outlook on identity formation also emphasizes the flexibility of accepting all experiences the individual

[97] Traditional Malay female dress.
[98] Also known as breadfruit. A plant native to the Malay Archipelago.

makes or passes on to shape the self. More so, it emphasizes a shared rhetoric of embracing multiculturalism and cosmopolitan epistemologies of civility.

2.2 The Modernist Dilemma's of Recognition and Self-Positionality

Therefore, considering Zygmunt Bauman's assessment of identity as one of the inventions of modernity,[99] I find it important to first explain what is meant by modernity given that it is the underlining theme of this study. I approach modernity using Dussel's analytical discourse of modernity and Eurocentricism. Dussel proposes what he considers a radicalized theoretical option to the discourse on modernization. In which he goes beyond the fluctuating debates as to whether to describe our contemporary period as modern or postmodern periods. Rather he coins the term '*trans-modernity*' believing that postmodernity continues to be a limiting product of Western socio-historical context.[100] Postmodernity indicates a process that "emerges 'from *within'* modernity"[101] which is Eurocentered in experience and narrative. Transmodernity, on the other hand, subsumes the best of the globalized Euro-americocentric modernity experience and "emerges 'from *without*'".[102] It observes how the modernization process transcends the Western Eurocentric experience and has produced various social, political, religious, and economic responses to the challenges of modernity, in other world cultures and civilizations such as the Chinese, Japanese, Southeast Asian, Hindu, Islamic, Bantu, Latin American civilizations.[103] Transmodernity is the eruption of new cultural horizons reflecting the growing global multiculturalism that is transcending methodological nationalism and state territoriality.

Eurocentric experiences of identity formation, especially as propagated throughout Hollywood and mass media, are no longer the only cultural phenomenon or forms of soft power exported abroad[104] that have allowed for the exportation of the misconceived notions of what is Western as was the case in Shafiqah's experience. Scholars can argue that they might still remain dominant, but cyberspace has now

[99] Bauman, "From Pilgrim to Tourist–or a Short History of Identity," 19–20.
[100] Dussel and Fornazzari, "World-System and 'Trans'-Modernity," 221.
[101] Ibid., 223.
[102] Ibid., 223–24.
[103] Ibid., 221.
[104] Ibid.

allowed for a competition of other cultural soft powers such as the globalization of Bollywood, K-pop and K-dramas, Anime, Spanish soap operas, and Turkish dramas. Accordingly, modern subjectivity develops spatially. Space is like a canvas where cultural difference, historical memory, and societal organization are sketched on. Dussel conceptualizes modernity as the "culture of the center of the 'world-system'" that is the result of "the management of this 'centrality'".[105] Meaning that European modernity is not "an independent, autopoietic, self-referential system, but instead is part of a world-system: in fact, its center."[106] Therefore, making modernity a global system with globalized normative ideals. Nonetheless, this kind of planetary modernity that we refer to as Eurocentric or Western does not mean that modernity is a phenomenon of Europe as an independent system, but of Europe as the center. This is another analytical shortcoming of the postmodernist discourse.

Postmodernity tends to fail in assessing universalism as Eurocentrically dominant, rather it critiques it as a consequence of modernity.[107] My biggest concern with postmodernity, however, is how it poses itself as culturally relative and portrays a respect to the diversity of cultural norms and epistemologies, but in broad general descriptions that are often held in relativity to Eurocentrism. Arguably, this can be seen in the work of Taylor, for instance, whom I will use his work on multiculturalism to explain the dilemmas of identity. Postmodernists often avoid a thorough investigation of the possible positive and enlightening epistemologies and norms other cultures can offer to the table. Thus, postmodernity remains confined within its shackles of its Eurocentrism. Therefore, this study's theoretical framework falls within a spectrum between postmodernity and transmodernity. I say a spectrum because, I believe our world still functions within a postmodernist framework, but in my opinion, it also seems be heading towards a transmodernistic vision.

Consider my positionality for an example. I started fieldwork with fluctuating anxiety as to how the Malay community will respond to my interest in them. I want to make it clear that this is not a work where I act as a representative of the Muslim Malay community residing in Ontario. I am quite aware that there are distinct barriers that can be held against me in the conducting of this research. For one, I am clearly an

[105] Enrique Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-System and the Limits of Modernity," *The Cultures of Globalization* 2 (1998): 4.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Dussel and Fornazzari, "World-System and 'Trans'-Modernity," 233.

outsider, as in, I am not Malay, not racially at least. I have never visited nor lived in Malaysia, Singapore, and/or Indonesia (the main states with a substantial Malay Muslim population of the Malay Archipelago). I also do not speak Bhasa Malay. The interviews were all conducted in English and very few shared Arabic terminologies, which in my opinion evidently overshadowed the Malayness in the conversations. Malay English expressions, such as the renowned "Leh" at the end of a sentence were rarely expressed for instance. Not to mention the abundance of possible Malay proverbs that that Malay language inhibits,[108] that were certainly toned down in the discussions for my sake out of consideration for my lack of Malay literacy.

The language barrier has also proven to be quite limiting in secondary research as well. There are cultural resources on popular media, news outlets, and academic resources that would have been an enlightening addition to the research if it were not for my linguistic disadvantage. There was also the inability to reach out to male figures in their 30s and 40s in the community. Gender relations in the community seems fluid to me as I have observed their gatherings, but there was this invisible wall that I could not overcome. A wall that pushed me away from even approaching Malay fathers or middle aged men in their 40s and 50s. I have requested and asked the female members of the families to allow me to interview their husbands or sons. The answers I have received often implied that they are occupied with work. To which in some cases is true, but there was also a clear disinterest from others that highlighted the proactivity of women in the community more so than that of the men. I also cannot help but feel that my gender as a young female woman contributed to preventing me from reaching out to that demographic of male Canadian Malays. I did not face this conflict with Malay international students.

Somehow, I also feared rejection on the basis of my foreignness I suppose, which happened eventually. One of my friends whom I had high hopes for in participating in my research, has politely declined my request or an interview on the ground of her pressing discomfort participating in a research conducted "on a group of people by someone who is not part of the group." Although, this was my only direct confrontational rejection (there were other rejections through a lack of response), I felt a bucket of cold water splashed in my face, because it is a reminder of the historical

[108] Wan Norasikin Wan Ismail, Abdul Latif Samian, and Nazri Muslim, "Bird Element Symbolism in Malay Proverbs," *International Journal of Asian Social Science* 7, no. 2 (2017): 119–25.

colonial roots of the anthropological discipline.[109] It was also during a time, where I was struggling with my diagnosis, which unexpectedly did shape the response of my participants as well. From my experience, Malays pride themselves on hospitality and food, therefore the immense understanding I received from my participants cannot go unnoticed and was, frankly unexpected. Some participants even offered to meet me in my own city, drive me back home, or tried to adjust their schedules, cuisine, and setting to ensure my comfort. Which reflects the *adab* behind their civil conduct that is inspired by a Malay and Islamic discourse of tradition.

Despite all these ethnographic challenges, I would like to touch upon that bucket of splashed water. All these research barriers and my friend's rejection are an echoing plea for authentic representation and recognition in a transterritorial global civil society. I, a Muslim Arab Canadian finding an interest in a Muslim Asian community is an act of transterritoriality and, I argue of transmodernity. I asked Aqil, my very first participant, "Does it bother you that I am not Malay?" I often received a response of puzzlement and intrigue from my Malay friends as to why a non-Malay like myself would even be interested in them, a very small minority. To which his response was a trifling of the matter. He confirmed that my interest in the community was intriguing, but reacted to my concern of foreignness as a matter he saw as a triviality. Aqil concluded that there is no confirming if it would have helped more if I am Malay. Knowing the language would surely help, but the fact that I am Muslim, for him was more important. "If white people can study the Other, then why can I not?", or so was his sentiment and I believe is mine. At this point he pointed out, the fact that being a Muslim is more important for him and that at least he hopes that will help in the non-othering since I will understand the demographic better on the basis of our shared religious background. He additionally hopes that as an outsider I can observe better and judge with minimized prejudices. To which seemed to be an echoed response by some of my other participants. Aqil's opinion also brings into attention the *Ummatic* transterritorial connection Muslims have through their faith. I wish to clarify that this does not mean an element of spuriousity or blind belonging, but it points out to elements of transmodernism amongst Muslims who hope for analytical work that is less Eurocentric.

[109] Talal Asad, *Anthropology & the Colonial Encounter*, vol. 6 (Ithaca Press London, 1973).

I received a remarkably unexpected response of gratitude from Shafiqah thanking me for even thinking of doing an ethnography on the Malay diaspora in Canada, "I have always kind of wondered, who is gonna actually document and objectively assess our diaspora. I can't do it because I am way too attached to the larger diaspora but to have an objective perspective is something I'm really looking forward to reading and understanding even further." Which brings me to another important matter, which is the general apparent lack of interest in Malay and Southeastern studies amongst the wider Muslim community. At least as expressed by my participants when asked if Muslims in general are aware of their history in the Islamic ecumene. To which the response was mostly a disappointed negative. Shila for instance expressed how nine years ago when she told her fellow Muslims that she is from Malaysia, they would ask back "which country is that?" and they would inquire about her race out of ignorance. Similarly, Mohamed expressed his disappointment in how due to the brown color of his skin, he is often mistaken for a South Asian and that Muslims would not bother to ask him where his origins are from. A concern echoed by a number of the colored male participants as well who were mistaken as Pakistanis, Indians, or Filipino.

This is another manifestation of a need for a transition beyond postmodernity to transmodernity on an academic scale.[110] Ariel Heyranto asserts that there is a negligence of Southeast Asian studies in Asian studies, particularly beyond white academic production that has been heavily dominated by Eurocentric analysis of the region and its people. On a social diasporic level, the Orientalized presentation of Asians as a model minority in the West, in which other minorities need to look up to, has also often excluded South Asian and Southeast Asian diasporas.[111] Not to mention pitting minorities in the West against each other. Therefore, I hope this study contributes to the transmodernity of global civil society, considering the transterritoriality of the Muslim Malay diasporic experience in North America and their contributions academically to a more inclusive Asian studies that challenges the Eurocentric generalization of Asia, and their contributions to civil society as social actors. In order to pave the way for a transmodernistic inclusive vision of the world it

[110] Ariel Heryanto, "Can There Be Southeast Asians in Southeast Asian Studies?," *Moussons. Recherche En Sciences Humaines Sur l'Asie Du Sud-Est*, no. 5 (2002): 3–30.
[111] KaYing Yang, "Southeast Asian American Children: Not the" Model Minority".," *Future of Children* 14, no. 2 (2004): 131.

is important to understand Eurocentricism in a non-Eurocentric discourse. To relearn its genealogy and understand how a modern Eurocentricism functions.

2.2.1 Transmodernizing the Politics of Recognition

Dussel further radicalizes this notion of modernity by introducing a different birthdate to the genealogy of modernity. Rather than analyzing modernity from the eighteenth and nineteenth century of the industrial revolutions or of the colonial projects of the Anglo-Saxon-Germanic Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth century, that dominate the modernity discourse as often argued by classical theorists such as Weber and Habermas,[112] Dussel goes back much further in time. Although I would like to intercept here and acknowledge that the current European hegemony is still very much influenced by the British and French Industrial Revolution that is inspired by the Enlightenment period.[113] Dussel argues that modernity started as a new world order in 1492 with the fall of a Muslim Granada in Andalusia, now Spain, and the stumbling of Christopher Columbus upon the Indigenous Amerindians, now in Latin America.[114] It is coined to be the Age of Discovery after all. A new world order of modernity was built upon the European experience of the othering, discovery, colonization, forceful assimilation and enslavement of the Indigenous Amerindians.[115]

It is important to note that modernity is not the cause of these trials, but the fruit of them.[116] The exploitation of the colonized value systems, discoveries, inventions, technologies, political institutions, aided in managing the centralization of Europe as the center of world order while the rest of the world counts as a periphery. It also displaced the ancient center that was a "Hispanic, humanist, Renaissance modernity, still linked to the old interregional system of Mediterranean, Muslim, and Christian."[117] Hence, also witnessing a shift in faith based exchange and knowledge production to a system of heightened secularism, commodification and labor production. Subsequently, centralizing the economy in Europe, particularly through a long history of slavery. From a Marxist perspective at the core of it all, it is about exploitation of free labor paving way to the neoliberal culture of the twentieth and twenty-first

[112] Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-System and the Limits of Modernity," 13.
[113] Dussel and Fornazzari, "World-System and 'Trans'-Modernity," 229.
[114] Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-System and the Limits of Modernity."
[115] Ibid., 5.
[116] Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-System and the Limits of Modernity."
[117] Ibid., 13.

century. 1492 and Spanish colonialism was the start of a new world order that is European in its center, capitalist in its economy, and eventually neoliberal in its structure. Eventually leading up to all sorts of liquefactions (fluidity) of space, time, values, individualization, labor relations, family relations, and community relations as explored in Bauman's work in *Liquid Modernity* and *Liquid Love*.[118]

Eurocentric modernity simplified the much more sophisticated normative aspects of societies such as the anthropological, religious, political, cultural, ethical, and ecological (the relationship with nature), to serve its materialistic and capitalistic goals. Moreover, the early European civilizing mission establishes a process of modern reasoning that "'excluded,' negated, and confined to 'Exteriority' all it considered worthless in terms of the modern values and 'universal' criteria of civilization by which it deemed everything should be evaluated, rapidly extended itself from the beginning of the nineteenth century to all the non-European cultures."[119] Ultimately, Eurocentric modes of knowledge production found their way in the niche of non-European societies, embraced forcefully through assimilation and imperialism, or willingly through who Frantz Fanon describes as the colonized intellectuals[120] – intellectuals who either received their education from the mainland of their colonizers (UK or France) or through educational institutions run by or influenced with Eurocentric educational systems. As a result Dussel and Fornazzari assert that,

> The exclusion, as a civilizing criterion, of everything non-European also gave Europe—which already had military, economic, and political hegemony—cultural and ideological domination. What was non-European finally disappeared from all practical and theoretical considerations. The Spanish and Portuguese (with respect to the first modernity) and the Chinese, the Hindustanis, and the members of the Islamic world, whether from Granada, Cairo, Baghdad, Samarqand, Delhi, Melaka, or Mindanao (with respect to their "centrality" in the Old World and to the beginning of the world-system until the end of the eighteenth century) would end up accepting the northern Eurocentric interpretation.[121]

In contrast, transmodernity compliments Shmuel Eisenstadt's multiple modernities to an extent. Dussel asserts that transmodernity has an element of exteriority that "originates, and mobilizes itself from an 'other' place (one 'beyond' the 'world' and

[118] Nicholas Gane, "Zygmunt Bauman: Liquid Modernity and Beyond," *Acta Sociologica* 44, no. 3 (2001): 268–69.
[119] Dussel and Fornazzari, "World-System and 'Trans'-Modernity," 232.
[120] Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*, 44.
[121] Dussel and Fornazzari, "World-System and 'Trans'-Modernity," 232.

modernity's 'Being,' one that maintains a certain exteriority, than European and North American modernity."[122] In other words, the exteriority in transmodernity allows for the exploration of what Eurocentric postmodernity labels as 'barbaric', 'backward', 'premodern' 'uncivilized', 'irrational', and 'noncultural'[123] – variables of exclusion, inferiorization, and othering.

Accordingly, given that Dussel's argument changes the concept of modernity, its origin, and development, challenging theoretical notions of postmodernity, because it offers a new and hopeful transition beyond postmodernity. On this note, this is what this study seems to show, a new outlook that does not box members of society into this and that, despite the evident divisions. At the crux of it all, is a fight for recognition. This is where Taylor's examination of the formation of the modern identity comes in. This is important because multiculturalism is an important element of the modern and the transmodern global civil society. Transmodernity is built on challenging the historic othering of other civilizational achievements; multiculturalism is a product of modernity, equally a structure drenched with exclusion and inclusion.

2.2.2 The Social Manifestations of the Struggle for Recognition

I was invited over at Zara's place to continue our interview and in the midst of our conversation news popped up on my social media about controversial Indian Muslim preacher, Zakir Naik, who has sought asylum in Malaysia over charges by the Indian government of money laundering and hate speech in India.[124] It appears that he has stirred racial remarks against Malaysia's Indian and Chinese minority in a speech in Kelantan, Malaysia. I asked Zara about him to which she sighed in unease expressing her disappointment with Naik's racial instigations. In the talk, Naik gave a speech about denying the orientalist historical claim that Islam spread by the sword in which he sidetracked exclaiming,

> [...] Malaysia became fully Muslim. Then you have the Chinese coming, the Indians coming, the British coming. They are our new guests. You know someone called me a guest. So I said, before me, the Chinese were the guests. If you want the new guest to go first, ask the old guest to go back. The Chinese aren't born here, most of them. Maybe the new generations, yes. If you want

[122] Ibid., 235.
[123] Ibid., 234; Dussel, "Beyond Eurocentrism: The World-System and the Limits of Modernity," 17.
[124] Amy Chew, "Malaysia to Question Zakir Naik as Government Weighs Deportation," *Al Jazeera*, August 16, 219AD, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2019/08/malaysia-question-zakir-naik-government-weighs-deportation-190816022131813.html.

> the guest to go back, and those guests which are bringing peace in the community, they are benefit for the family.[125]

Subsequently, he claimed that Malaysian Hindus in comparison to Indian Muslims enjoy more than a 100% rights of citizenship, questioning the loyalty of Malaysian Hindus alleging that they are more loyal to the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi than to the Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir.[126]

Two months later after my interview with Zara, Canada finalized its 43rd federal elections with an unsatisfying result of no particular party majority winning in the House of Commons. A month after the elections, my Iraqi Canadian friend, Bouthaina, shared how defeated and frustrated she was when her senior manager in her radiology clinic demanded she should pin a red poppy pin on her chest in respect to the senior clients who assumingly share feverous sentiments of patriotism for Remembrance Day in November. Bouthaina who is a survivor of the 2003 Iraq war, politely refused, explaining her personal stance against war glorification. Her senior manager retaliated accusing her of disrespect and ingratitude that she has been given a safe haven and the least she could do is to remember the men and women who sacrificed their lives to grant her freedom and liberty. Boutahaina argued back in tears that she did not wish to abruptly move her life here [in Canada]; she was happy in her homeland and she should not feel an obligation to express gratitude towards participants of a war who forced her to seek refuge somewhere else. While her manager sympathized she still insisted that Bouthaina wears a poppy pin given that the majority of the clinic's patients are white elderly seniors.

While wearing a poppy pin is a personal choice and while there is in fact a white poppy pin initiative that stemmed out of British Columbia as a symbol of an anti-war alternative[127] in retaliation to the symbolic war romanticization of the red poppy, this interaction showcases how this freedom is not applicable to everyone. It presents an interesting example of how minorities can feel coerced to participate in an activity that contains a different historical and memorial significance than that of the majority's.

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[125] "Zakir: You Want Me to Leave, Then Ask the 'Old Guests' Chinese to Go Back Too," *KiniTV*, 2019, https://www.kinitv.com/video/e90390af-2829-402f-b6ae-1612e8294ce4.
[126] "Malaysian Ministers Tell Mahathir They Want Controversial Indian Preacher Zakir Naik Out," *The Straits Times*, August 14, 2019, https://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysian-ministers-tell-mahathir-they-want-controversial-indian-preacher-zakir-naikhttps://www.straitstimes.com/asia/se-asia/malaysian-ministers-tell-mahathir-they-want-controversial-indian-preacher-zakir-naik.
[127] "No Title," *Peace Poppy*, n.d., https://peacepoppies.ca/.

Bouthaina's experience was instigated by multicultural tension as the result of similar remarks to that of Niak's in Malaysia. Also highlighting that the challenges of multiculturalism are not only manifested in the Western world but are a global phenomenon.

November 2019 was a month of unspoken tension after Canada's admired ex-hockey host, Don Cherry, furiously remarked in his "Coach Segment" how he lives in Mississauga and does not see Canadians in either Mississauga or Toronto (two of the fastest growing metropolitan cities in Ontario) wearing as much poppies in comparison to "smaller cities."[128] He went on an agitated tirade exclaiming that "you people [non-white immigrants] love — that come here, whatever it is — you love our way of life, you love our milk and honey, at least you can pay a couple bucks for a poppy or something like that. These guys paid for your way of life that you enjoy in Canada, these guys paid the biggest price."[129] Ron MacLean, the co-host, kept nodding and giving a thumbs up later apologizing for his apathetic response stating that "Don Cherry made remarks which were hurtful, discriminatory, which were flat-out wrong," adding, "I owe you an apology too. That's the big thing I want to emphasize. I sat there, I did not catch it, did not respond."[130] Once again, vague broad acquisitive terms are used so to escape direct confrontation and stir racial prejudice. Similar to the term "barbaric", there is "you people", "our way of life" – emphasis on "you" and "our".

In this month, my mother was harassed in a parking lot and I once again had to be extra cautious walking in the streets of Yonge and Bloor on my way for an interview, in fear and anticipation of some racist Islamophobic remark that could be thrown at me here or there. After all, between 2012 and 2015 the number of anti-Muslim hate crimes has more than tripled despite the general decrease of hate crimes in the country.[131] In a report in 2018 published by Canada Statistics, Ontario had the greatest increase in police hate crime reports against Muslims of more than 207%.[132] In 2015,

[128] Kevin Draper and Ian Austen, "Don Cherry, a Hockey Institution in Canada, Is Fired After Divisive Comments," *The New York Times*, November 11, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/11/sports/don-cherry.html.
[129] "Don Cherry in Hot Water over Comments on Coach's Corner," *CBC*, 2019, https://www.cbc.ca/player/play/1639318083896.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Amy Minsky, "Hate Crimes against Muslims in Canada Increase 253% over Four Years," *Global News*, 2017, https://globalnews.ca/news/3523535/hate-crimes-canada-muslim/.
[132] "Police-Reported Hate Crime, 2017," 2018, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/181129/dq181129a-eng.htm.

Islamophobic attacks against Muslims rose up to 253%, increasing 59% more than it was in just one year in 2014.[133] And while, anti-Muslim hate crime declined in 2016, it soon spiked up in 2017 following the mass shooting in the Islamic Cultural Centre of Québec, [134] in which the shooter was influenced by Trump's Muslim ban.[135] The month following the shooting saw a peak of police reports of anti-Muslim hate crimes, amounting to 26% of Québec's annual reports on hate crimes against Muslims.[136] A study by Barbara Perry show that Muslim women are particularly most vulnerable to Islamophobic attacks.[137] All this indicates that otherizing and the fight for recognition is a transterritorial postmodernistic phenomenon, that is a symptomatic of a postnormal world shaken by sentiments of identity threats. It also indicates that the transition to transmodernity is a bumpy road because to challenge Eurocentric modernist structures is to challenge those privileged by it.

2.3 The Birth of Canada's Neoliberal Multiculturalism

It is important to note that multiculturalism in Canada came to be out of a mobilization of minorities who were hesitantly allowed in by early neoliberals. Based on David Harvey's definition of neoliberalism, neoliberalism is a "theory of political economic practices proposing that human well-being can best be advanced by the maximization of entrepreneurial freedoms within an institutional framework characterized by private property rights, individual liberty, unencumbered markets, and free trade."[138] Therefore, the neoliberal self is an identity that is fast, flexible, adaptable, and market oriented.[139] It not only created financial challenges for individuals but also "reshaped the structure of social relationships, including relationships in the family, workplace, neighborhood, and civil society. It may even have reshaped people's subjectivities – their sense of self, their sense of agency, and their identities and solidarities."[140]

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[133] Minsky, "Hate Crimes against Muslims in Canada Increase 253% over Four Years."
[134] "Police-Reported Hate Crime, 2017."
[135] Les Perreaux, "Quebec Mosque Shooter Told Police He Was Motivated by Canada's Immigration Policies," *The Globe and Mail*, 2018, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/article-mosque-shooter-told-police-he-was-motivated-by-canadas-immigration/.
[136] "Police-Reported Hate Crime, 2017."
[137] Barbara Perry, "Gendered Islamophobia: Hate Crime against Muslim Women," *Social Identities* 20, no. 1 (2014): 73.
[138] David Harvey, "Neoliberalism as Creative Destruction," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 610, no. 1 (2007): 145.
[139] Jim McGuigan, "The Neoliberal Self," *Culture Unbound: Journal of Current Cultural Research* 6, no. 1 (2014): 232.
[140] Will Kymlicka, "Neoliberal Multiculturalism," *Social Resilience in the Neoliberal Era*, 2013, 99.

Nevertheless, if neoliberalism has shaped social relations, the newly constructed social forms and relations have also shaped it. As a result, "blocking some neoliberal reforms entirely while pushing other reforms in unexpected directions, with unintended results. In the process, we can see social resilience at work as people contest, contain, subvert, or appropriate neoliberal ideas and policies to protect the social bonds and identities they value."[141] This will become evident in chapter's two section on occupational identity and chapter three's section on subtle activism as my participants showcase how they utilize their occupations and volunteerism to better serve a higher purpose. Ok explain that how you found this in the field and relate this theoretical approach and therefore conceptualize in this way.

Historically, there was neoliberal hostility in Canada towards the liberal notion of multiculturalism as manifested in the unfortunate incident of Komagata Maru in 1914. Early neoliberals "delegitimized multiculturalism by contrasting 'ordinary' hard-working tax-paying citizens against the 'special interests' represented by 'ethnic lobbies'".[142] Neoliberals opposed and feared the economic competition brought upon by immigrants and the demands for equal and fair labor as demanded through the employment equity laws that minorities mobilized for.[143] For early neoliberals, multiculturalism advocated for a welfare state that harms the dominance of the white man's economic market. Eventually, multiculturalism policies were introduced in the 1980s to strengthen equality rights, hate-speech laws, and employment equity legislation in the Canadian Charter of Human Rights and Freedom.[144] Particularly to lobby for historical violations of citizenship, such as for the internment of Japanese Canadians and for the violation of Indigenous rights. This illustrates minorities can turn multiculturalism into "a tool of civic voice for historically excluded and oppressed people," and "equality-seeking movements invoked the official commitment to multiculturalism to buttress their claims for inclusion and respect."

Neoliberalism quickly adopted to the demands and charms of multiculturalism. Minorities' attachment to cultural heritage and cultural identity through different languages and norms was seen as a hindrance to the white neoliberal market. Nonetheless, neoliberalism quickly came to view it as a defining asset to the market

[141] Ibid.
[142] Ibid., 107.
[143] Ibid.
[144] Ibid., 109.

(exploiting art, music, fashion, intellect) and thus supported by the majority white state. Race and ethnicity is a market asset because it is a source of "social capital" that markets developed to acquire.[145] Eventually postmodern neoliberalism changed, shifting multiculturalism away from its roots of social liberalism and nationalism to something much more fluid and unconfined by territoriality. It now "enhance[es] economic competitiveness and innovation, shifting responsibility from the state to civil society, promoting decentralization, deemphasizing national solidarity in favor of local bonds or transnational ties, viewing cultural diversity as an economic asset or commodity in a global market."[146] In a nutshell, Mitchell traces multiculturalism in Canada as follows:

> Multiculturalism [in its social liberal form] operated effectively as an instrument of state formation on a number of levels: as a national narrative of coherence in the face of British-French and then immigrant "difference," as a broad technology of state control of difference, and as one of many capillaries of disciplinary power/knowledge concerning the formation of the state subject. In all of this, but especially in the constitution of national citizens able and willing to work through difference for the nation, the socially liberal philosophy and practice of multiculturalism was a strategic partner in the growth and expansion of a Fordist capitalist regime of accumulation. However, with the rise of transnational lives, deterritorialized states, and neoliberal pressures in the past two decades, this type of state subject has been increasingly irrelevant.[147]

Mitchells describes what she once termed "liberal multiculturalism" has become neoliberal multiculturalism that is forming a Canadian culture of a "progressive process of planetary integration."[148] Which reflects a culture of pluralism on a global scale, and a strategically outward performativity of cosmopolitanism.[149]

Kymlicka develops Mitchell's theory of liberal multiculturalism into analyzing it in a postmodern neoliberal context adding that "The neoliberal vision of multiculturalism, by contrast, is largely indifferent to both the progressive equality-seeking component of multiculturalism and its national boundedness. The goal of neoliberal multiculturalism is not a tolerant national citizen who is concerned for the disadvantaged in her own society but a cosmopolitan market actor who can compete

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[145] Ibid.
[146] Ibid., 111.
[147] Katharyne Mitchell, *Crossing the Neoliberal Line: Pacific Rim Migration and the Metropolis* (Temple University Press, 2004), 123.
[148] Ibid., 124.
[149] Ibid.

effectively across state boundaries."[150] This is where I differ with Kymlicka. This ethnography shows that while it is true that postmodern immigrants can be indifferent to national boundness opening up to the possibilities across state territoriality, a transmodern global agent remains open to the territoriality of local civic engagement and the transterritoriality of better global opportunities.

Amina, Norhani, Eliza, and Sopiah are all parents in their 40s, 50s, and 60s, who moved to Canada for a better education and social environment for them and their children. Not necessarily for better economic opportunities but for a better quality of life. Fad explains that this quality of life for him includes being in a space where there is freedom of expression and feel safe, to have a community, a reasonable cost of living and the ability to spend time with his family. All of which are factors that he finds in Canada. Sopiah now a grandmother, wanted better educational opportunities for her children. Eliza, now a traveling professor and a single mother, found a more supportive Muslim community outside the scrutiny of some Malay members of the community back in Singapore and then in Canada and in the other Western countries she travelled and resided in. Norhani was an accountant in Malaysia, Amina was a full time business manager. Norhani now works as a senior caretaker and her husband as a factory worker, while Amina works now part time in a post office. Both expressed fulfillment in their life choices. Amina describes how she had no time to do house chores or spend more time with her children because she worked fulltime and her career demands were high. Now that she decided to work part-time in Canada, she can spend more time with her children and tend to herself more, which she finds to be a much healthier lifestyle.

"It was our choice to come here. We are not refugees, we came here by choice. I have no regrets. My only regret is that I didn't come earlier to bring my parents" Norhani asserts. She soon held my arm and messaged it gently while spiritedly describing how she cares for her clients and how proud she is of her current job, as a personal support worker, that is very different from her original job in Malaysia;

> When you work with vulnerable people, elderly and children, it humbles you. I read prayers and offer palliative care for my clients [predominantly non-Muslim]. When I first came here [Canada] I worked as a factory worker. I was an accountant but I had to start all over, and now I'm doing things I could never do back there [Malaysia]. I'm usually the only Muslim in my fieldwork. When I worked in Port Credit, Mississauga, I was the first visible Muslim working

[150] Kymlicka, "Neoliberal Multiculturalism," 112.

> there and my supervisor told me 'honey, you bring your people to a higher standard.' That made me feel good. I want to bring my Malayness my Muslimness to the highest standard. To break the stereotype that we're terrorists or lazy.

Norhani explains that back in Malaysia she had to hide her artistic hobbies from her parents, and her desire to have a more meaningful career such as a care supporter is frowned upon, because they are considered non-profitable low class jobs. "In Malaysia there are social pressures to do like everyone else. Why do you send your eight year old for extra tuition?" she exclaims. "The culture is too rigid. There is no room for the imagination. I wanted to give my children choices and here [in Canada] I can give my children choices" she said in relief. Norhani highlights the decision middle class families partake on moving for a better quality of life that a global civil society offers beyond national territoriality.

Fatin, for instance, a much younger parent in her 20s, does not mind leaving or staying if she has too. She is open to all possibilities, but currently she is satisfied with her life with her family in Canada. Fad, a parent in his 30s, upon his last visit to Singapore last summer, came to terms that Waterloo is his home and is enthusiastic to contribute in building Waterloo's Muslim community. All of these members participate in community activities and volunteer in social services for the homeless. To claim that the neoliberal multicultural agent is solely market driven with no interest in civic engagement and territorial boundness is an injustice and a limitation to the neoliberal self that fits within a transmodern global body *politique*. Henceforth, my participants are displaying their agency in movement and how to live and assert their recognition in a Canadian neoliberal multicultural society. By doing so, they are emphasizing another significant element for recognition, and that is the humanistic phenomenon of dignity.

2.4 The Right for Recognition is the Right for Self-dignity

In 2015, during Canada's 42nd federal elections, former Prime Minister Steven Harper vowed to set a police hotline to report what he described as "barbaric cultural practices."[151] The proposed policy came in retaliation to Zunera Ishaq's victory in a court case against the government preventing her, and *niqabi* [face-veiled] Muslim

[151] John Barber, "Canada's Conservatives Vow to Create 'Barbaric Cultural Practices' Hotline," *The Guardian*, October 2, 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/02/canada-conservatives-barbaric-cultural-practices-hotline.

women, from taking the naturalization oath of citizenship while covering their faces in niqab. Nonetheless, with every victory Ishaq won in the Supreme Court, polls in favor of the Tories went on the rise.[152] In support of the ceremonial veil ban, Canada's former Minister of Citizenship and Immigration was quoted stating, "We need to stand up for our values…We need to do that in citizenship ceremonies. We need to do that to protect women and girls from forced marriage and other barbaric practices."[153] The concept of the "barbaric" is often left vaguely defined yet abstractly targeting. Even in Canada's citizenship study guide booklet under "Becoming Canadian" it is stated that "Some Canadians emigrate from places where they have experienced warfare or conflicts. Such experiences do not justify bringing to Canada violent, extreme or hateful prejudices.

In becoming Canadian, newcomers are expected to embrace democratic principles such as the rule of law."[154] The problem with such a claim is putting immigrants on a pedestal expecting legal perfection. There is an assumption that violence mainly comes from the outside and the outsiders come in with it. As if all born Canadians are naturally law abiding citizens. Thus, eventually creating a double standard that will later be addressed as the paradox of the politics of universalism. Although the Conservative Party of Canada (CPC) did not win the 2015 and 2019 general elections, the anxieties of exclusion and recognition are not illuminated, nor significantly addressed, but rather glossed over with romanticized sentiments of coexistence and unity – characteristics the Canadian government has ever since been capitalizing on. We can certainly see a similarity in the two racial and cultural rhetoric of misrecognition or nonrecognition in both Malaysia and Canada. This othering that is often attributed as a Western characteristic, due to European colonial history, is in fact a global phenomenon, especially in multicultural, multi-religio-ethnic societies.

Similarly, Canada's Indigenous population and minorities, particularly its Muslim minority post 9/11, is all too well accustomed to such narratives of othering and fear mongering. While the multiculturalism of both Malaysia and Canada are the context

[152] John Barber, "Veil Debate Becomes Big Issue in Canada Election, Putting Conservatives into Lead," *The Guardian*, October 10, 2015, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/oct/01/zunera-ishaq-veil-canada-election-conservatives.
[153] Barber, "Canada's Conservatives Vow to Create 'Barbaric Cultural Practices' Hotline."
[154] Citizenship and Immigration Canada, "Discover Canada: The Rights and Responsibilities of Citizenship" (Minister of Public Works and Government Services Ottawa, 2009), 12, https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/ircc/migration/ircc/english/pdf/pub/discover.pdf.

of vastly different historical experiences of colonialism and territoriality, they share the modern demands of the politics of universalism that encompasses cosmopolitan qualities and challenges of equality, recognition, and identity. It is, as Charles Taylor argues, the modern demand for recognition on behalf of a minority or the subaltern that drives questions of identity and existence in cosmopolitan societies.[155] It is also the misrecognition of a certain group of people that inflict socio-psychological harm and a distorted sense of existence. Identity is a person's understanding of their fundamental characteristics of who they are and what they stand for.[156] It is not only a psychological process of self-assessment but also, a process of moral evaluation, an individualistic and collective venture of belonging, and for some, a historical reclamation of a lost or distorted heritage and ancestry. All of which manifest in the normative conduct of social civility that chapter two will shed light on how it is manifested through my participants experiences.

If we consider postmodernity as the management of the world to revolve around the Eurocenter as Dussell argues above, "then much of knowledge production of the self and others is actually knowledge of how to produce and reproduce locality under conditions of anxiety and entropy, social wear and flux, ecological uncertainty and cosmic volatility, and the always present quirkiness of kinsmen, enemies, spirits, and quarks of all sorts."[157] In the Canadian context, identity is characterized by a historic Eurocentric development of values. Taylor argues that the collapse of social hierarchies due to a shift away from the feudal system led to the collapse of honor in the *ancien régime* meaning of the term, which is linked to inequality. The honor of an *ancien régime* included a societal structure based on nobility and continuous recognition of ranks and a showcase of public awards that strengthened the rigidity of social ranks. That is not to say that this morale of honor does not exist anymore, but Taylor argues it has become more replaced with the modern notion of dignity. Consider the following in the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights:

(a) Whereas recognition of the inherent ***dignity*** and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world.
(b) Whereas the peoples of the United Nations have in the Charter reaffirmed their faith in fundamental human rights, in the ***dignity*** and worth of the human

[155] Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*., 25.
[156] Ibid.
[157] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, 1:181.

person and in the equal rights of men and women and have determined to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom.

(c) Article 1: All human beings are born free and equal in ***dignity*** and rights.

(d) Article 22: Everyone, as a member of society, has the right to social security and is entitled to realization, through national effort and international co-operation and in accordance with the organization and resources of each State, of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his ***dignity*** and the free development of his personality.

(e) Article 23: (3) Everyone who works has the right to just and favourable remuneration ensuring for himself and his family an existence worthy of human ***dignity***, and supplemented, if necessary, by other means of social protection.[158]

Dignity became the powerful force behind the universalization of egalitarian shared notions of equality that seems to be only compatible with a particular kind of democracy.[159] The underlying premise here is that it is now a shared notion of identity formation – a universal expectation for the self to uphold. Dignity is the universal notion that demands for an equal status of recognition regardless of human differences. Nonetheless, eighteenth century Europe intensified another notion of understanding the self which is an ideal of "being true to myself and my own particular way of being." A heightened sense of self awareness and individualism is developing. Particularly given the over sweeping wave of secularism that spread throughout the West, replacing the previous dominance of divine connection of religious ethics that dictated how individuals see themselves. Modernity focused on the individuals' exploration of the self, disconnecting them from the collective. This need for self-exploration now stems from what seems to be the "danger of being lost, partly through the pressures toward outward conformity, but also because in taking an instrumental stance toward myself, I may have lost the capacity to listen to this inner voice. It greatly increases the importance of this self-contact by introducing the principle of originality: each of our voices has something unique to say."[160] Therefore, identity is not only a collective construct influenced by groups and communities or nations and religions, but is so much so a personal social position as well. This provides a good transition into chapter two of how my participants make sense of all the layered ideologies and values that

[158] United Nations, "Universal Declaration of Human Rights," n.d., https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/.
[159] Taylor, *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition*., 27.
[160] Ibid., 30.

shape who they are, including the institutions and groups that influence their agency as local and global civil actors.

To conclude, Taylor argues that our identities are partly shaped by recognition or the absence of recognition. Misrecognition can inflict serious harm on individuals and their communities, distorting their history, experiences, and heritage. Taylor asserts that, "Within these perspectives, misrecognition shows not just a lack of due respect. It can inflict a grievous wound, saddling its victims with a crippling self-hatred. Due recognition is not just a courtesy we owe people. It is a vital human need."[161] Identity is a delicate process of self-discovery, but also a force that constructs societal norms and shapes and reshapes civil society. The challenge is when multiple identities exist in society and within the individual, how do institutions and people recognize these identities without misrecognition. Dussel proposes a transmodernistic alternative that requires rigorous reintroduction of people's value systems beyond the Eurocenter. This chapter provides an analysis of the modern identity, that which to the historical reshaping of the world order since 1492 developed to become Eurocentric, extending Eurocentric knowledge production and experiences worldwide. This universalist experience has universalized the postmodern self. Therefore, Dussel proposes an alternative –the transmodern self. Which is a framework I can see my participants manifesting in their thoughts about identity and homemaking. Given its multiplicity, flexibility, and global interconnectedness I find that it helps explain why the participants of this research act as global and local civil agents utilizing neoliberal multiculturalism in ways that best fits their interests.

[161] Ibid., 26.

CHAPTER III

HOW GLOBAL CIVIL SOCIETY INFLUENCES THE MAKING OF A MALAY MUSLIM TRANSMODERN IDENTITY

3.1 Introduction

As I write this chapter on the topic of identity and traveling epistemologies in a postcolonial era, I cannot help but reflect on how COVID-19 could not have come at a timelier manner. Since the announcement of COVID-19 as a global pandemic on March 11, theorists of global civil society have been on the watch on what a post COVID-19 world would entail. The remarkable speedy mobility of the virus is one of the visible examples of how globalization has strongly interconnected the world. More interestingly, the response to the virus has highlighted unwavering border control, as more states have closed their borders, and the differences of how different state governments respond to the pandemic politically and culturally. This points out two major global trends: the influence territorial nationalism (methodological nationalism) still has on space and territoriality, despite how modern cosmopolitanism continues to contest a high sense of transterritoriality, and how postcolonial cultural identities still differ, as seen in how South Korea deals with the virus in comparison to how Canada does for instance. The reality the world is experiencing with COVID-19 highlights how different entities such as disease, finance, ideas and experiences travel borderlessly and often influence each other. Forming individual and social values, norms, and culture within an intertwined power dynamic that influences the formation of individual and collective identities. The global civil society of a postcolonial world is an interconnected social space of differences and similarities, and identity that is sometimes left as an open question.[162]

[162] Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," *Cultural Anthropology* 7, no. 1 (1992): 13.

On that note, I would like to explain the purpose of this chapter. This chapter explores the different epistemologies and modes of knowledge production that shape the identity of the Malay Muslim diaspora in the GTA. I mean to explore the various value systems that consciously or subconsciously influence their thoughts and sense of self. Given that there is a multiplicity of identity factors, I find it important to analyze how my participants make sense of this multiplicity, in which some identities are more recognized than others. By looking at the broad themes of identifications such as Malayness, Muslimness, Asianness (given that Malaysia is predominantly racially Malay, religiously Muslim, and geographically Asian), I explore the challenges of reconciling these ideologies and how they came to be within the framework of a global civil society. In other words, I analyze the different ways my participants localize and globalize these ideas, and more so how these ideas and value systems are influenced by global and local political trends of neoliberalism, Westernization, and Arabization. A breakdown of how these epistemologies came to be will help in understanding how they shape the civil behavior of my participant's subjective performativity, which will be further explored through the Canadian experience of immigration and identity preservation in Chapter three. This chapter focuses on the travel and formation of thoughts while the following chapter is on active performativity and agency.

I will start off by explaining the neoliberalistic influence of global civil society actors, particularly through Armando Salvatore's Foucauldian theory of the meta-institutional matrix which explains the relationship between power, knowledge, and civility to analyze how occupational identity, Malayness, Muslimness, Asianness and how the participants' sense of identity is affected by the meta-institutional matrix. Including how global ideologies contribute to their making. Therefore, looking at how members of global civil society express and critically engage as agents with what makes them who they are. This chapter is an exploration of internalized and reassessed socio-political historical dimensions of identity-making. The following sections are a dissection of the identifications in action. I first explore the one identity source that most of my participants often started introducing themselves with, which is their occupation. I look at it as a neoliberal phenomenon that emphasizes the individualism and autonomy of self-assessment and self-identification. I rely on Engin Isin's and David Harvey's work of the occupational citizen and neoliberal identity. I then, look into the superiority inferiority complex of the Malay dilemma, which has been

inherited from the British colonial experience in the name of cosmopolitanism, bidding ethnic tension between the Malays and Strait Chinese in particular.

Accordingly, explaining the natural outcome of the colonial mentality through Walter Mignolo's work of the colonial matrix. The third identity I explore is Malay Muslimness and how religion is heavily intertwined with race as dictated by the Malaysian constitution in particular. Also, I look into the Saudi funding of educational institutions and *Da'wa* initiatives that are threatening Malaysia's Islamic identity through the propagation of certain stringent *Fiqhi* interpretations of the female role, including the overshadowing of Malay traditional dress wear such as the *Baju Melayu* for men *and Baju Kurung* for women by black *Abayas* and *Jilbabs,* including the homogenization of masjid architectural designs. Accordingly, I explore the growing theory of Arabization and its problems. Finally, I discuss the Asianness side of the Malay identity which is also heavily influenced by the Pan-Asian movement of Asian values contesting it with Western values. Thus, forcing people sometimes to choose sides, but my participants find a way to reconcile between the two, as they try to make sense of all these historically formed ideologies of themselves and consciously engage with what best fits who they are as individuals and their families as a collective.

3.2 The Social Power Dynamic of Global Civil Society

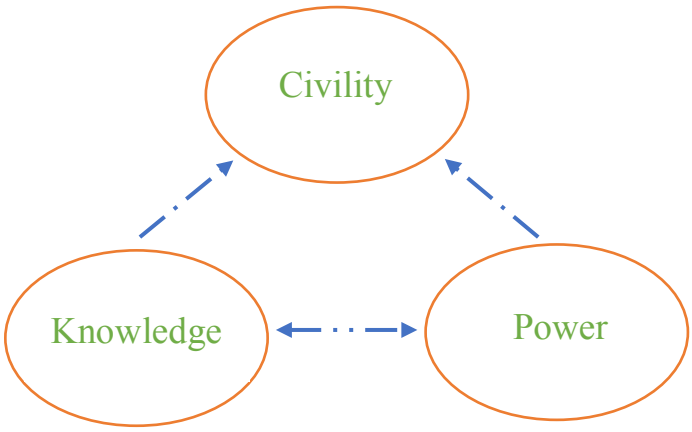

Figure 3. 1: The Meta Institutional Matrix Diagram

In order to witness civil social action on the ground, there has to be systems of sovereign power such as economic, anthropological, religious, political, and social frameworks that produces systems of civility. Armando Salvatore explains that

cultural traditions as a product of civility come through a power enforcement of legitimizing certain ideas and action. He states

> A civilization transcends the closed boundary of a specific, national society and articulates across time (epochs) and space (geo-cultural units) the spectrum of possibilities of societal organization allowed within culturally specific definitions of power and within power-determined configurations of cultural traditions. The way power is exercised and legitimized is in turn dependent on such traditions: i.e. on the codes of legitimacy elaborated by cultural elites, but also on the concrete, everyday judgment of the citizens.[163]

This will be clear in the section of the Malay dilemma in how the Malaysian constitution dictates who is Malay and how in the section on Muslimness, Saudi Arabia influences a particular version of Islam in the Archipelago. Therefore, "The macro-sociological dimension of tradition becomes the cultural kernel of a specific civilization or…of a discrete form of civility. Traditions are not power-neutral or blind, since they also provide orientation to the shaping of patterns of power and the legitimacy of power holders."[164] In other words, civility produces a traditional set of conduct based on knowledge production as exercised by power forces. It is a moderator of the tensions between knowledge and power without always routinizing or rigidifying behavior since it strives, as mentioned earlier, on its actors finding some common ground.[165] This matrix is significant because it brings together all aspects of global civil society by explaining how it comes to be. Ultimately, elucidating how, for the purpose of this case study, Muslim Malays in Canada not only process what makes them who they are but also, the forces influencing their actions.

3.3 Occupational Identity: Neoliberalism and the Adopted Identity of the City

When I started my interviews asking my participants to introduce themselves, I noticed that usually within two minutes in the conversation, occupational identity is addressed as part of how they see themselves as. Students would state that they are, their major of discipline, and which university they are graduating from. Others would state they are fulltime workers in that firm or part time workers in that company. Only four of my interlocutors stated otherwise. Amina for instance states "I am a mother. I also work part-time at a shop, and I have an organization. So I spend my time between work

[163] Armando Salvatore, *The Sociology of Islam: Knowledge, Power and Civility* (John Wiley & Sons, 2016), 23–24.
[164] Ibid., 24.
[165] Ibid., 25.

and being a mother and also do some community work but I always think I am a mother first and the rest is all second." Similarly, Sopiah, another mother introduces herself as follows, "My name is Sopiah Juhari. Born in Singapore. Been here since 1993. I have three kids. Two boys and one girl, and three grandchildren." Nor was the only participant who questioned what it is that I wanted to know about her. Is it her personality? Her religion and cultural background? As I insisted to keep the question open-ended she preferred to introduce herself describing her personality and her personal and social preferences.

Mikhail first introduced himself in association with his family; describing how proud he is to come from a large family of nine. Similar to Nor, it was not until late in the conversation that his studies and career life entered our discussion. This pattern led me to further observe how it is indeed a social habit to introduce ourselves in relation to our job titles. It is in no doubt that occupational identity is a modern arguably neoliberal phenomenon. I could not help but question what the importance of occupational identity is and how it made its way to become a crucial form of postmodern identity. Fatin best captures the emotional depth behind work as she lit up excitedly describing how she yearns to return back to work after her maternity leave, "For 90% of the people I think in this part of the world, in the West, the pressure [for] working is really there. But I like to work. I just like to do something. Obviously not overwork but to be in the office is just – I like to be [me], you know." Thus, indicating a close personal relationship with work and the self.

Isin states that since the 1940s a rise of new modern occupations has emerged. Job titles such as writer, engineer, research assistant, journalist, customer service representative, care-taker, etc. became new means of wealth accumulation, social status and power attainment.[166] It is through occupations that modern subjects are capable of imposing their vision of where they position themselves in society and the position of other members of society accordingly. It is also a means for group membership and the formation of group identity through affiliations. Modern group identity is formed through the power of institutions to mobilize, to represent and to create "more durable, recognizable and visible group boundaries. [Since] The individual struggles of everyday life become political struggles through a presentation

[166] Isin, "Citizenship, Class and the Global City," 272.

of self in imposing a particular representation through permanent organizations."[167] In order for institutions to mobilize, there is a need for symbolic power to establish an objective and group norms for its members; "this happens only when the group is named, designated or selected as such."[168] Naming, organizing, group-naming, logo-designing, struggling, are all part of the art and politics of group making.[169] The power to name and symbolize a group usually comes with the power of representing, since there must be group leaders and public representatives to represent the group.[170] Bourdieu argues that for a class or a group, be it social, sexual, ethnic, or in this case occupational,

> exists when there are agents capable of imposing themselves, as authorized to speak and to act officially in its place and in its name, upon those who, by recognizing themselves in these plenipotentiaries, by recognizing them as endowed with full power to speak and act in their name, recognize themselves as members of the class, and in doing so, confer upon it the only form of existence a group can possess.[171]

It is however in this collective performativity that there is a paradox in subjective agency. Groups and classes are not just objective technicalities of work procedures and objectives. They have a crucial subjective element to them and that they cannot exist without the identity, belief systems, values and loyalties of its members.[172] Both objectivism and subjectivism are essential components of occupational class formation. It is because of the subjectivity of individuals that a paradox exists.

Bourdieu elaborates that the paradox is in the sacrifice given up by individual agents singularity to form a *collectio personarium plurium* – a collective of multiple individuals – which strips away the agency and independence of the member.[173] The member now has to think within the norms of the collective. The Malaysian Student Association (MASAT), is an example of a group formed for the benefit of serving particularly Malaysian, but also aids Malay, students in universities abroad. Having interviewed Adam, Aqil, and Syafiq, present and past members of MASAT, the group is a good example of a collective formed to represent the needs of Malay students

[167] Ibid., 274.
[168] Ibid.
[169] Ibid., 272.
[170] Ibid., 274.
[171] Pierre Bourdieu, "What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups," *Berkeley Journal of Sociology* 32 (1987): 15.
[172] Isin, "Citizenship, Class and the Global City," 273.
[173] Bourdieu, "What Makes a Social Class? On the Theoretical and Practical Existence of Groups," 15.

abroad, from finding them housing before even arriving to Canada, to facilitating social gatherings, and hosting cultural festivals (ASEAN Festival) and various governmental representatives from Malaysia. The group continues to provide immense support to Malaysian students allowing them to form solidarities and as Zara expresses, "having that connection keeps us grounded and whenever we have problems in Canada or somewhere else, we always have someone, we have a place to go back to I mean to reach out for help." Nevertheless, groups can be spaces of judgment and shunned isolation once the norms are questioned by a member's agency to behave and think independently. Jehan for instance, a visible Muslim Malay, describes the constant cautioning she received from fellow MASAT members when she decided to move to a co-ed house. This resulted in rumors spread about her as her behavior questioned the cultural and religious norms of gender segregation and interaction. Something I will further discuss in the next chapter on cultural and identity preservation referring to Bourdieu's work in *The Forms of Capital* that explores the various kinds of capital that exceed economic capital, such as reputation and prestige.

MASAT and DMDI can also be seen as examples of what Isin classifies as 'professional assemblages.' Modern occupations are modes of knowledge production. They exercise power through "the production and dissemination of knowledge designed to persuade the public"[174] with its needs – it profits off of service production. These assemblages often take place in cities where new advanced business and modern occupations are created. Therefore, the city is a significant space where professions are produced and reproduced through a market of skills and expertise through gatherings and institutions that have sub-associations. For example, DMDI has often hosted events, gathering members of the Malay Canadian community, over speakers of different professions addressing Islamophobia, religious reflections, education, or performing Malay traditional dances.[175] Speakers and performers are from diverse professional backgrounds. There are graduate and undergraduate students, community engagement officers, director of religious affairs, youth councelors etc. Amina also explained how it also connects, particularly the older first generation with other Malays who have immigrated in other Western states through social media, to share their experiences.

[174] Isin, "Citizenship, Class and the Global City," 272.
[175] DMCC: Dunia Melayu Canada Community, "Activities," n.d.

Likewise, MASAT is an association in university institutions (where universities are generally an object of city architecture), or hospitals that have nursing associations, labor right groups in factories, etc. Accordingly Durkhiem argues that this fight over power and status in the city has disseminated state and national loyalty. What he calls 'regional groups' no longer have ties to their territories such as villages or towns they were brought up in or even their home countries. Since the modern global world has become so mobile, citizens move where better opportunities and preferable lifestyles are. Such as the example of the Malay students who moved to Canada for a better education and some who are even considering staying. Durkheim argues that

> It is quite certain the regional districts have not the same importance as they once had, nor do they any longer play the same vital role. The ties which unite members of the same commune or the same departement are fairly external. They are made and unmade with the greatest ease since the population has become so mobile. There is therefore something rather exterior and artificial about such groups. The permanent groups, those to which the individual devotes his whole life, those for which he has the strongest attachment, are the professional groups. It therefore seems indeed that it is they which may be called upon to become the basis of our political representation as well as of our social structure in the future.[176]

And so, Durkeheim believes that the permanent group that will have substantial impact on state representation and political power is the professional citizen. That said, I would like to differ, as it seems absurd to me to delegate full agency to professional citizens as if their subjectivity does not transcend the materialism of the *Entzauberung der Welt*. Durkheim's assumption lies in the misconception that transtreritoriality dissolves ideological loyalties to certain values or even memories of a particular space, solely focusing on wealth and power accumulation. A notion that is clearly challenged by the participants of this research.

On October 3rd, 2019 I was invited over to Sopiah's house for our interview. I travelled from Mississauga to Brampton, where she resided. At the closest intersection to her household there was a new mosque built, which caught my attention of how visible it was to the sideway of the traffic. I entered Sopiah's place only to start helping her a few minutes later with her cooking delivery for a Singaporean wedding. We were frying *Pisang Goreng* [friend banana/plantain fritters] as we were conversing over where she buys her ingredients from an Asian store and others she stocks up on from

[176] Emile Durkheim, *Professional Ethics and Civic Morals* (Routledge, 2013), 96–97.

every visit she goes to in Singapore. During the duration of the four to five hour interviews she has been receiving calls from her daughters, texts from her friends and family, and a total of three or four visits. As we packaged the food delivery for her customer to pick up we sat to continue our conversation only to hear another doorbell from an energetic black Canadian health care handy worker who came to fix side aid wall handles in her washroom for her bedridden husband. It did not take her much till she dragged the man into the kitchen to proudly show him pictures of her half black half Asian grandchildren to which they both instantly connected over this encounter. Soon after another Singaporean friend dropped by and joined our conversation as we snacked on vibrantly colored red and green *Kueh Lapis* [steamed rice cake], while Malay TV shows and dramas have been playing on her television screen behind us all along.

As we ended our interview, Sopiah ran with her headscarf on to fetch her umbrella and walked me half way through the street as we departed ways, I to my bus stop and she to pick up her grandchild from school. This entire interview is a demonstration of how a private space is colorfully intermingled with the public – reflecting how as a member of a permanent group [in her case working as a cook from home] still remains regional with all the cultural symbolism in her house. The Malay language spoken on TV and on the phone, cooking regional Malay cuisine, designing her house to have Malay décor, etc. are all examples of such regional territoriality that travelled from Singapore and infiltrated Canadian public space. Similarly, Amina invited me into her house in Mississauga, and throughout most of the duration of the interview, her children were in and out of the house with their Malay friends conversing in Malay, while carrying McDonald soda cups and donuts that they have just bought. Meanwhile, the Meccan *Azhan* [Islamic call for prayer) was echoed in the background for prayer which is just another example of where the Americanization of fast food, Malay culture, and Islamic ritual intermix.

Therefore, while the majority of my interlocutors highlight the importance of occupation to their identity process, I believe it is because occupations as a modern phenomenon provide the most straightforward technical process of identity building. An occupation is less clouded with ideological beliefs (that is not to say they do not exist). It lays a clear path for wealth accumulation and provides means to attain power and climb into a particular social status. All these are attributes that make it more

appealing to start off with in times of self-introduction and provide a grounding in the face of postnormalist fears of choas nd contradictions. It is a reflection of what individuals are proud of what they have accomplished thus far, which associates a very personal trait in its performativity. Nonetheless, it is in no way dissociated from other identities that shape the subject. In the case of this research, occupation is as important and complex as how Malayness, Muslimness, and Canadianness are important and complex identity processes of attaining social status and power.

3.4 Postcolonial Cosmopolitanism and the Making of a Postmodern Malay Identity

> Whatever the cause, the Malay of the Peninsula was, and is, unquestionably opposed to steady continuous work [*lazy*]. And yet, if you can only give him an interest in the job, he will perform prodigies; he will strive, and endure, and be cheerful and courageous with the best. Take him on the war-path or any kind of chase, or even on some prosaic expedition which involves travel by river, or sea, or jungle, something therefore which has a risk; then the Malay is thoroughly awake, and you will wish for no better servant, no more pleasant or cheery companion [*reckless and a sacrifice*]. The Malay is loyal, for loyalty is part of his creed. He is hospitable, generous, extravagant, a gambler, a coxcomb. He is of fair and quick intelligence, a ready imitator, good at most games and likes to excel, but more inclined to admire the greater skill of a rival than to be jealous of it [*Uncompetitive*]. He is reserved with strangers, cordial and sympathetic to his friends; he has a strong sense of humour, and makes an excellent companion, equally ready to talk or be silent [*submissive*]. As a casual acquaintance he is politely uncommunicative; he will ask a few questions: but seldom give direct answers. Once you have gained his confidence he will probably make no concealments, taking a pleasure in telling you all he can. If he knows you well, he will be almost sure to borrow money from you, and he will seldom find it possible to repay the debt; but he will hold himself ready to undertake any service on your behalf, and you will probably realize in time that the obligation is rather on your side. Privacy, as we understand it, is unknown in Malaya; therefore, secrets which mean life and death and dishonour are never confined to one or two people;[177]

In a beautifully glazed antique golden book of roughly 500 pages, colonial administrator Sir Frank Swettenham describes the Malay subject as such in his publication of the *British Malaya: An Account of the Origin and Progress of British Influence in Malaya*. His book is one of the influential books in Malay imperial studies. On a contrasting note, British colonial administrator John Crawfurd wrote, “The

[177] Frank Athelstane Swettenham, *British Malaya: An Account of the Origin and Progress of British Influence in Malaya* (j. Lane, 1906), 139–40.

islanders are found to be industrious like other peoples… they have no constitutional listlessness nor apathy, and whenever there exists a reasonable prospect of advantage, they are found to labour with vigour and perseverance."[178] It is in these descriptions, lies the Malay dilemma as Mahtir Muhamed, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, discusses in his controversial publication (*The Malay Dilemma*) back in 1970. By the time Malaya, now Malaysia, gained independence in 1958, the Malay identity has already been shaped and indoctrinated in upholding certain characteristics and performative subjectivities about themselves and their occupational position in the newly formed state.

As people, Malays were observed in a mixture of positive and negative characteristics that describes them as naïve, friendly, hospitable, lazy, crafty, reckless, cheerful, modest, unassertive, fond of sports, submissive and deferential. Attributes that were alarmingly brought to my attentions when my participants characterized similar traits to what defines a Malay person – internalizing the colonially shaped and enforced charcateristics. The labels of subjectification attached to the Malays always referred to them – as "'nature's gentlemen' and spoke of them as farmers and fishermen, essentially rural people, content with the simple pleasures of life and unfitted for competitive struggle in a modem world."[179] Thus, justifying the white man's burden[180] of the British being the educating father to the Malay child, who saw it necessary to colonize innocent Malays who can be easily taken advantage of. Subsequently, the occupational domains attached to the Malay were that of the soil – agricultural territory. Civil service and agriculture were the two most suited professions for the Malays who have the birthright to land, justifying their designated label of the *Bumiputra* (sons of the land/soil).[181] Accordingly, additional reserved land was allocated to them. Jobs of commerce and politics was left reserved to other members of British Malaya, mainly Chinese and British administrators, and it is in these divisions of characteristics and occupations that the Malay mentality and sense of identity continues to perceive itself in terms of flaws and accomplishments.

[178] Noorainn Binte Aziz, "Malay Stereotypes: Acceptance and Rejection in the Malay Community," 2009, 16.
[179] Charles W Watson, "Reconstructing Malay Identity," *Anthropology Today* 12, no. 5 (1996): 10.
[180] Anthony J Stockwell, "The White Man's Burden and Brown Humanity: Colonialism and Ethnicity in British Malaya," *Asian Journal of Social Science* 10, no. 1 (1982): 44–68.
[181] Watson, "Reconstructing Malay Identity," 10.

3.5 The Racial Construct of Malayness

Scholars have it that in the early twentieth century, Southeast Asia and the Dutch Indies were turned into newly formed colonial projects of strategic plural society structured and administered by the British.[182] In the case of Malaysia, the new ethnic groups that were forcefully introduced into its society were the Chinese, the Indians and the British. Each plays a "separate but complementary role" in service of the economy[183] - paving way to Malaysia's neoliberal identity. Watson states that, "The British would perform the role of government assisted by the Malay aristocratic elite, the Malay commoners would be peasant farmers confined to rural areas, the Chinese would oil the wheels of the economy by controlling the market place and the Indians would run many of the essential services besides working in the plantations from which British investors would derive handsome profits."[184] Watson accordingly argues that for such a system to operate smoothly each ethnic group has to be content with their occupationally and culturally assigned position and in what later would become a central pillar of the postmodern postcolonial nation-state – cosmopolitan multiculturalism. At the crux of it, postmodern cosmopolitanism is rooted in its colonial introduction of pluralism, from a Eurocentric lens, to the modern world. Goh states that,

> Based on the pluralist worldview, the British colonial state resolutely separated the Chinese and the Malays, institutionally confining the former to the modern economic realm as free labor and compradors of imperial capital and the latter to the political realm and the rural economy, while the Indians were tied down as cheap semifree plantation and infrastructure labor. This pluralism set the stage for the ethnic management and multiracialism policies of the two successor states, Malaysia and Singapore.[185]

Ultimately resulting in Malaysia's and Singapore's shaky postmodern cosmopolitanism.

"'*Apakah kamu Melayu?* [Are you Malay?]' Apparently it sounds awkward: the men are clearly puzzled and it takes some time before one of them, a smile on his face, reacts: '*Kita ini orang* [We are people]'"; the following was an archived conversation

[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid.
[184] Ibid.
[185] Daniel P S Goh, "From Colonial Pluralism to Postcolonial Multiculturalism: Race, State Formation and the Question of Cultural Diversity in Malaysia and Singapore," *Sociology Compass* 2, no. 1 (2008): 238.

between a Dutch officer and Malay residences in East Coast Sumatra.[186] Despite the puzzled reaction on the Malay residents, the Dutch rebranded the 'Malay' as a 'Malay' with enforced cultural essentialist characteristics. To which Nooranin Aziz and Bernard[187] argue that although the broader Malaya population with all its varied ethnicities wrote in Malay and dressed in similar *Jawi* style, they did not quite see themselves as Malay. Aziz argues that

> The Malays did not, for a long time, refer to themselves as 'Malays' as an ethnic identity until the arrival of the colonials. This is evidenced from the lack of the term 'Malay' in Malay chronicles and court writings. 'Malay' as an identity of peoples in the East Coast of Sumatra was widely used by Dutch officials in Batavia and Palembang and later by British colonials, but not by 'Malays' themselves. Largely unchallenged, the Malay identity notion depicted by colonials like William Marsden gained popularity and was widely used in maps by administrators and merchants alike. It would be reasonable to speculate that the Malays before colonisation could have identified themselves with reference to their locality (e.g. Bentan, siak etc.) and/or loyalty to a royal patron (e.g. Riau-Lingga court) as the Malay states were defined territorially by a centre (court), unlike today's modern states" territorial demarcation method. The Malays would have vowed allegiance to a royal court.[188]

The colonial invention of the Malay as a constructed ethno-racial identity, a sign of the making of identity as a modern invention, paved way to the later enforced colonial cosmopolitan multiculturalism as a colonial tactic of imperialism, labor management, and an outcome of initiated projects of nationhood. Thus, allowing the British to bring in the Chinese and the Indian, simultaneously constructing their ethno-racial identity with assigned labor, molding normative norms and hierarchical favoritism that have created racial tensions to this day. That means that each group has to be internally convinced of their positioning in a particular niche within the political economy as "the natural outcome of their own particular cultural characteristics and traditions."[189] In short, an appropriate ideology had to be manufactured to supposedly satisfy each group. This then became the British burden – the white man's burden - in figuring out a way to create and administer the most efficient economically profitable cycle by stereotypes and myths such as the infamous, yet unfortunately internalized 'myth of the lazy native'.

[186] Aziz, "Malay Stereotypes: Acceptance and Rejection in the Malay Community," 45.
[187] Frederik Holst, *Ethnicization and Identity Construction in Malaysia*, vol. 12 (Routledge, 2012), 33.
[188] Aziz, "Malay Stereotypes: Acceptance and Rejection in the Malay Community," 46.
[189] Watson, "Reconstructing Malay Identity," 10.

Eventually, the decolonial period resulted in the separation of what now became Singapore, including the management of the enforced colonial pluralism in a way the preserves the rights of indigeneity in Malaysia. Ultimately, leading to serious politically institutionalized ramifications that have rigidified race and the sociological perception of the Other in both Malaysia and Singapore. For instance, a few of my participants have defined what a Malay is in reference to Article 160 in the Malaysian constitution that defines who is a Malay:

> "Malay" means a person who professes the religion of Islam, habitually speaks the Malay language, conforms to Malay custom and—
> (a) was before Merdeka Day born in the Federation or in Singapore or born of parents one of whom was born in the Federation or in Singapore, or is on that day domiciled in the Federation or in Singapore; or (b) is the issue of such a person;[190]

The article is seen as a simplified standardization of the Malay identity on a political scale. Which has made it easier for some of my participants to define their Malayness accordingly after giving some thought into my question of who is a Malay. The fact that some participants referred to the Malaysian constitution for an answer, is telling. It seems to indicate that there is still a need for some standardizations despite the fluidity of the self in a global civil society. Nonetheless, the constitutional definition maintains elements of strategic broad categorization and is controversial in its racialization of Islam. Continuously, it grants privileges to the Bumiputra over other races in Malaysia as constituted in Clause 2 of Article 153,

> (2) Notwithstanding anything in this Constitution, but subject to the provisions of Article 40 and of this Article, the *Yang di-Pertuan Agong* [King of Malaysia] shall exercise his functions under this Constitution and federal law in such manner as may be necessary to safeguard the special position of the Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak and to ensure the reservation for Malays and natives of any of the States of Sabah and Sarawak of such proportion as he may deem reasonable of positions in the public service (other than the public service of a State) and of scholarships, exhibitions and other similar educational or training privileges or special facilities given or accorded by the Federal Government and, when any permit or licence for the operation of any trade or business is required by federal law, then, subject to the provisions of that law and this Article, of such permits and licences.[191]

[190] "Federal Constitution of Malaysia" (n.d.), 153, http://www.agc.gov.my/agcportal/uploads/files/Publications/FC/Federal Consti (BI text).pdf.
[191] Ibid., 146.

More so, it homogenizes Malayness when in reality the Bumiputra are much more diverse than being just Muslim and Malay as educated and propagated in Malay politics. Clive Kessler describes how there are Muslims in Malaya who

> neither Malays nor bumiputera (Indians, Arabs, Chinese, Burmese, etc.); Muslim Malays who are not bumiputera (Acehnese immigrants, for example); Malay bumiputera who are not Muslims (including certain *asli* groups [literally 'original people'], and at least recent convert[s] from Islam to Christianity); bumiputera Muslims who are not Malays (such as the *Melanau* and similar peoples in the east Malaysian states); bumiputera who are neither Malays nor Muslims (which includes both ethnic Thais and also various *asli* groups on the peninsula as well as some tribal populations in the eastern states); and Malays who are neither bumiputera nor Muslims (including various Javanese and Batak Christian immigrants).[192]

As a result, the homogenization of the Bumiputra through a colonial racial construct has created racial and ethnic tensions, particularly with the introduction of the Strait Chinese and Indian groups as economic competitors to the land.

This also created current systematic discriminatory limitations, charged with heavy emotions towards land claims and the right for recognition, towards both ethno-racial groups in Malaysia and Singapore. The question of whether they are racist policies or postcolonial consequences of strategic demographic state management, remains a highly contested debate in academic circles. In Malaysia, the predominant group is the Bumiputra (67.4%), then the second largest population is Chinese (24.6%), then Indians (7.3%) and Others (0.7%).[193] Educational policies favor the Bumiputras, granting them a variety of domestic and international educational scholarships and accepting a higher quota of Malay students for postsecondary education.[194] Social policies have been passed to increase Malay investment through a government allocation national unit trust funding that goes only to Bumiputras and is increasing and easing Bumiputra property ownership.[195] On the other hand, according to the 2010

[192] Holst, *Ethnicization and Identity Construction in Malaysia*, 12:33.
[193] "Population Distribution and Basic Demographic Characteristic Report 2010," 2010, https://www.dosm.gov.my/v1/index.php?r=column/ctheme&menu_id=L0pheU43NWJwRWVSZklWdzQ4TlhUUT09&bul_id=MDMxdHZjWTk1SjFzTzNkRXYzcVZjdz09.
[194] Thomas B Pepinsky, "Malaysia: Turnover without Change," *Journal of Democracy* 18, no. 1 (2007): 122.
[195] Ibid.

Singaporean census, the majority is Chinese (74.1%) followed by Malays (13.4%), Indians (9.2%) and 'Others' (3.3%).[196]

Similarly, Singapore imposes systematic educational policies that intentionally make it challenging for a Malay to pursue higher education or to climb up the academic ladder.[197] Hence, limiting future career opportunities. In the name of national security, the question of Malay loyalty has been most problematic in Singapore, propagating continuous images of Malay national disloyality. Accordingly, Malays have been denied military positions. Including a constant propagated rhetoric, rooted in orientalism, of the Malay as "'lagging behind' and 'socially and economically underachieving' as a racial group compared to the Chinese and Indians."[198] In a long research report published in 2019 by the Institute of Policy Studies (IPS) in Singapore, they found that out of the 1800 participants they surveyed, 15.6% have found Muslims the most threatening of all religions.[199] The report highlights the growing Islamophobia associated with Malays in Singapore, that were also pointed out by the Centre for Research on Islamic and Malay Affairs.[200]

All of which are ultimately enhanced by triggering speculations and systematic fearmongering towards the Muslim Malay minority. Racial identity then is not just a concept that needs deconstructing, it is a socio-anthropological fact that requires a thorough examination of its historical roots, links to socio-political institutions, and produced epistemologies.[201] Such narratives have been brought up in most conversations with my participants showing how these sociological ethno-racial constructs have deep lasting impacts on their views and for some even decision to immigrate or seek education elsewhere. When I inquired about what Asian values are (discussed in the final section of the chapter) Amina responded that in comparison to Asian values,

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[196] Selvaraj Velayutham, "Races without Racism?: Everyday Race Relations in Singapore," *Identities* 24, no. 4 (2017): 455.
[197] Ibid., 438.
[198] Ibid., 439.
[199] Mathew Mathews, Leonard Lim, and Shanthini Selvarajan, "Religion in Singapore: The Private and Public Spheres," 2019.
[200] Tee Zhuo, "Home Front: Probe Ripples under Surface Calm of 'Racial Harmony': Issues like Islamophobia in Singapore Require Us to Confront Uncomfortable Truths about Ourselves and Have Honest Dialogues," *Straits Times (Singapore : Daily)* (Singapore: Singapore Press Holdings Limited, 2019).
[201] Goh, "From Colonial Pluralism to Postcolonial Multiculturalism: Race, State Formation and the Question of Cultural Diversity in Malaysia and Singapore," 235.

> Chinese values are different. Because I think, this is what I think, the Chinese are very hardworking and they work for money, but not like the Malays. The Malays are not as hardworking and I would say laid back…Malays own the land. They are landlords and so that's why they are laid back. They don't have to work hard. They are landlords. The Chinese on the other hand, they are immigrants [previous generations] and they work very hard. Most of them are successful in business. And it passes on to generations so they are successful in everything they do. I mean mostly. Not everybody. They strive in business and now they *are* the landlords.

She ends with a disappointed laughter. Zara echoed similar sentiments speculating, "You have to look at the historical context behind these tensions [referring to how the colonial forces allocated the Chinese in better economic positions than the Bumiputra leading to their perceived better financial status]. Even though we have more rights to certain things [services] then why is our [Malay] social economy still bad?" Nonetheless, she is also sympathetic to how the Strait Chinese and Indian demographics do not feel like citizens, but feel more like outsiders. Accordingly, she does not believe that the Western neoliberal model of multiculturalism is applicable in Malaysia given its history but she understands that the social ramifications require attention. She describes how the system has created a superficiality between how groups interact with each other; "I feel like our nice interactions are only surface value. On a surface level you may seem jolly and friendly but underneath that sentiment you feel that you have more privilege to rights that I [a Strait Chinese] don't get [a general argument a Chinese directs towards a Malay]."

In another interview with Aqil he explains how this mentality became embedded in Malay thought, stating that the problem stems from Malaysia's colonial history: "The Malay people are strong in number – So they [British administration] have to give it [assuming administrative and financial jobs] to someone who can do the job. The Chinese people can do the job, they are hardworking" he ends echoing Amina's thoughts. When I asked him does that mean that Malays are not hardworking, he clarified, "I wouldn't say the Malay people are not [hardworking]. It's just you cannot give the majority the power…One of the other things is that the Malay people are Muslim, they don't drink alcohol, they have a whole different work ethic…so like, I think British people have to have someone who can really work with them and can really mingle to be a part of them and I'm not gonna lie, the Malay people generally wouldn't be." Such tensions have manifested into epistemological perceptions of one another that are politically exploitative, eventually reflecting a sense of defeat, grief,

revenge and resentment from both groups towards each other.[202] Also manifesting a power struggle between the Malays and Strait Chinese that is the result of a long colonial history in the region. Which is also continuously reiterated and self-internalized through popular Malay literature and scholarship and in the examples of Mahatir's work.[203]

3.5.1 Coloniality of Knowledge and the Colonized Intellectual

Arief shared with me that he believes that there is a colonial mentality shared amongst Malays that can be defeating; "If you are treated as a slave for a long time and the owner leaves, you still carry that mentality with you. I think this can be applied to express our nation." Decolonial theorist Walter Mignolo describes such mentality as "an invisible structure – [which] has been described as 'the colonial matrix of power'".[204]The 'colonial matrix of power' or in short what he also refers to as coloniality, is an imperial process that not only grants authority to imperialists to classify the Other the they perceive them and they way they wish them to be, but to also to transform this authority to a power that can legitimize racialization, dehumanization, inferiorization and ownership of the will of its subjects (colonialism).[205] Additionally colonialism, as seen in the case of Malaysia, establishes a hierarchical structure racial favouritism, bidding races against each other as the colonial administration leaves. Leaving behind a long carried mentality and racial tension that requires major epistemological decolonization. Orientalism and what Mignolo refers to as the *coloniality of knowledge,* which can only exist with the *coloniality of being* – as in living the colonially dictated idea of the self – come hand in hand. Coloniality of being is the outcome of the coloniality of knowledge. "You have to have the power of decision and action to be able to extract people from their community and sell them as a piece of furniture and/or to expel them from your community even if they were, like you" and you cannot have this power if you do not have the authority "to make human beings feel that they are not quite human like you". This applies more so as referring to the Malay as a 'loyal servant' in Swettenham's

[202] See further work by Kee Howe Yong and Thomas B Pepinsky.
[203] Aziz, "Malay Stereotypes: Acceptance and Rejection in the Malay Community."
[204] Christopher Mattison, "Delinking, Decoloniality & Dewesternization: Interview with Walter Mignolo (Part II)," *Critical Legal Thinking. Available at Http://Criticallegalthinking. Com/2012/05/02/Delinking-Decoloniality-Dewesternizationinterview-with-Walter-Mignolo-Part-Ii/.[Accessed May 2]*, 2012.
[205] Ibid.

quote above. The power behind the knowledge production of this idea of the self seems to continue shackling the Malay into conformity.

Much of the perceptions of the Malay deficiencies have also been propagated by Malay scholars during the decolonial period – the *intelligentsia* of whom Fanon refers to as the colonized intellectuals.[206] Such *intelligentsia* often romanticized the early decolonial modernization period. Syed Hussein Alatas points out that the Malays were not aware of the inferiorization held by colonials and some of the decolonial intelligentsia against them mainly due to their early illiteracy. [207] Hence, arguing that the 'deficient Malay culture' disseminated by the likes of colonized intellectuals such as Zainal Abidin bin Ahmad in Malaysia, also known as Za'ba and the founder of the current modernized Malay language, and intellectual magazines like *Al-Imam* had greater impact among the Malays than did the colonials.[208] In accordance to that, Alatas in 1979 introduced the *Melayu Baru* as "Malays with a new consciousness and who 'will be selective of positive and negative influences that have been left by the past'".[209] He emphasized the need for a decolonization of thought through identifying new Malay characteristics that are crucial in the formation of an independent Malay free from its colonial shackles of racial division and self-sabotage. He emphasized rationale (a Kantian attribute of the stoics), morality and selectivity.[210]

The other challenge facing the Bumiputra is the reality of transterritoriality. Privileges are based on preserving the rights of the people of the land, but Malaysia's methodological nationalism is constantly challenged by neoliberal connectivities of economy, politics, and the cultural exchange of its global civil society. Citizens are constantly migrating locally and globally for better jobs and livelihoods. One can argue that the separation of what is now Singapore is an extreme example of turning tables, where the Chinese became the majority with privileges and the Malay a minority discriminated against. All a result of a methodological nationalism that is constantly challenged by global trends of borderlessness that is also igniting racial tension. Additionally, while the political definition of who is Malay standardizes a homogenous perception of the Malay identity, participants have shown through a conscious

[206] Refer to chapter one.
[207] Aziz, "Malay Stereotypes: Acceptance and Rejection in the Malay Community," 23.
[208] Ibid.
[209] Ibid., 94.
[210] Ibid., 94–95.

assessment of their past and present, that they still have the agency and freedom to make individualistic indicators of Malayness from the *ethnie* collective.

There have been efforts or conscious acknowledgements from my participants on the growing concerns of ethnocentrism. For instance, Aqil often asserted, in reference to the Canadian multicultural model, how more Malays in Malaysia are trying to be similarly liberal in their multicultural norms,

> **Aqil:** There has to be more compromisations from both sides. I want to be part of a society that wants to be open. A society that does not label itself as Malay, Chinese, or Indian. Yea, I am technically Malay, but I want to be part of something larger. I just see there is a now a group of people who are trying not to be part of a fabric that is more racial based, but they try to be more in a group that is just Malaysian.
> **Me:** Like, nationalistically Malaysian?
> **Aqil:** No. They are open to the idea that we are right now multicultural – they aim to be more open and encouraging towards that.

There are elements of a growing normative model of a global civil society in Aqil's claims, highlighting the influence of the space he currently lives in [Canada] and the notions of tolerance, compromisation, and liberalism aspired in Canada and globally. Multiple other participants have expressed similar sentiments, as Sopiah often referred to how she has Strait Chinese friends whom she likes to exchange conversations about food and life with. She is also proud that her daughters married interracially, one of who married a black man, believing this is a statement against the black racial prejudice in the Archipelago. Fatin has mentioned how she does not like it when she hears of the mistreatment of Strait Chinese in Malaysia. Others have expressed how travel and moving to Canada has broadened their understanding of cosmopolitanism and how now that they switched roles from being a majority in Malaysia to a minority in Canada, they have become more conscious of the socio-political layers of possible systematic discrimination. Thus, sympathizing more with the other non-Indigenous groups in Malaysia.

Jehan expressed how her experiences of discrimination as a visible Muslim and international student in university made her more aware of the possible discrimination that non-Indigenous Malaysians face. She states, "I am not traumatized by it [her incidents of discrimination], I learnt from it. I felt that whatever my professor did or she [her TA] did, I felt like I could have done it too. I always tell myself that next time I'm in Malaysia and I see something like this [discrimination], I'm gonna tell them

that it is wrong, because people are ignorant. We are the majority, we don't really have to worry. But then I feel like I need to be more fair and kinder as a human being and look beyond their religious and racial backgrounds." Further suggesting that change starts with how people speak of each other and the terms they use to describe one another. Particularly referring to the ongoing ignorant usage of derogatory terms such as *kuling* [towards the Indian] or the n-word towards the black. A sentiment that Mohamed elaborates on, remarking,

> I feel like where we are from [land of origins] there is much larger hint of racism and I think racism is more accepted where we are from. Over here [Canada] it's such a big deal even if you say something slightly derogatory. If you say 'I like the color of your skin' that can come off across as really derogatory and racist. But if you say that like in India, it's such a joke. Like oh you have dark skin yo! It can be taken as a joke.

The work of the late director Yasmin Ahmed, albeit controversial to some, has been one of the most discussed artistic cinematography in addressing the racial misconceptions engraved in the various ethno-racial groups in Malaysia and Singapore. And so, many participants have showcased awareness of the reflected social manifestations of ethnocentrism.

Although some of the international students are unsure whether they want to return back to Malaysia, all of them have agreed, however, that if they return they will utilize the skills they learnt to better improve the social structures put in place. Reflecting once again traits of a global civil society of active agency. Furthermore, the historical colonial experience and modern creation of multiculturalism in Malaysia, positions my Malay partcipants at an interesting focal point in Canada's separate colonial experience and modern multiculturalism. They are more analytical and aware of the challenges of multiculturalism and the unspoken layers of ethno-racial interactions entrenched in histories of internalized conflict.

3.6 Muslimness and the Arabized Threatening Patterns of a Malay Islam

The first time I heard of the term 'Arabization' was in 2016 from one of my professors who was conducting a research on Islam in China. Two years later, the term was revisited when one of my Japanese friends who embraced Islam about seven years ago shared his conversion story with me. He expressed that in his journey towards becoming a Muslim, like many new Muslim converts, he leaned more towards a modernist salafist understanding of Islam. As he grew distanced from the movement

he noticed the growing trend of Arabized Japanese Muslim converts in Japan, who are more influenced by a generalized interpretation of "Arabic" culture (stemming more so from the Arabian Peninsula). The embracing of this Arabic culture has overshadowed the Muslim cultural identification in the process. An act, my friend, found quite disturbing as he started questioning how can he be a Muslim and Japanese without adopting Islamic *Fiqhi* interpretations influenced by Arabic culture of gender roles, etiquette, lifestyle or even dresscode and food. He then alarmed me to how this phenomenon of Arabization has been finding its way in East and Southeast Asian societies. Being a predominantly ethnic Arab, Arabization never struck me as a notion that could have an impact on non-Arab Muslims. As I spoke more to my non-Arab Muslim friends, there has been a shared concern and anxiety behind the implications that this notion has been having on their culture. Arabian supremacy was a frequent visitor in the conversation, where they would point out, generally, that Arabs think that because the Quran was revealed in Arabic, then they are the ultimate contributors and conveyors of the Islamic faith. Not to mention the manifested faces of discrimination and racism that is based on Arab supremacy, especially surrounding the cases of modern enslavement of South Asian, Southeast Asian, and African labour workers and domestic maids in the Arabian Peninsula.

Accordingly, I was intrigued in exploring if this notion has an impact on my fellow Malay participants. That said, I suppose a part of me was not expecting to discover this overwhelming reaction to the phenomenon, as almost most participants in the study felt the impact of the notion one way or the other. Not particularly in discriminatory behavior, but mainly they admitted that they have been touched by Arabian culture one way or the other. Amina for instance says that she originates from Scottish and Arabian roots from Hadramut, Yemen. Technically making her an Arab as passed on by her great grandfather, but she says her grandparents gave in to a more Malay culture of language, food and customs. That said, she finds that now the situation is different as more Malays are giving in to a more Arabized understanding of Islam and dress code. More Malays are dressing in *Abayas* than in *Baju Kurung*, which is something she finds concerning. A notion Norani also finds disturbing stating, as she playfully posed as a teenage girl covering her lower face with a towel highlighting her eyes while slightly shaking her hips, "Now in Malaysia, there are those girls who go to Mecca and Madina and when they are there they wear the *niqab*

[not necessarily wearing it before] and take those pictures that show them as fashionable." When I asked why, she responded, "The idea is in the eyes. Highlighting the eyes is considered sexy" referring to the smoky eye makeup style behind the classic *niqab* and other face veils that became popular in Arabia and other parts of the Middle East.

This notion of Arabization, however is not coincidental and is often convoluted with Islamicization. Consequently, making it harder for Muslim minorities in other countries to practice their faith. For example, China is cracking down on its Hui Muslim population, removing domes and minarets from their mosques in the name of 'de-Arabization.'[211] Arabization is a deeply strategic process of exploitation that takes advantage of Malaysia's history with Arabia bringing Islam into the Archipelago, through business transactions with Saudi Arabia, particularly targeting Malaysian educational and religious institutions. And so, before exploring this topic much further I find it important to define some terms. In my opinion, Arabization is a term still not well defined in academia. That said Baladas Ghosal defines it as the homogenization of Islam through a puritanical politically distorted Wahabbi legal interpretation of Islam, influencing the normative ideals of other Muslim societies, as exported from and subsidized by the government of Saudi Arabia.[212] But then what is Wahabbism and what is Salafism and what is their relationship with Arabization?

It is necessary to understand that modern Salafism is a complex and layered identity of its own. Bernanrd Heykal defines Salafis as people who "claim to be engaged in a process of purifying Muslim society in accordance with their teachings, and that the designation Salafi is prestigious among Muslims, because it denotes *the* earliest and therefore authentic version of Islam."[213] For the sake of this research I will not be able to explore the notion in depth, but I would like to highlight the following:

(1) Some scholars and popular figures would have us believe that salafists are fascists and endorsers of totalitarianism. Contrary to popular opinion, most salafis are nonpolitical actors and Bernanrd Haykel divides them into three

[211] Steven Lee Myers, "A Crackdown on Islam Is Spreading Across China," *The New York Times*, 2019, https://www.nytimes.com/2019/09/21/world/asia/china-islam-crackdown.html.
[212] Baladas Ghoshal, "Arabization: The Changing Face of Islam in Asia," *India Quarterly* 66, no. 1 (2010): 72.
[213] Bernard Haykel, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action," *Global Salafism: Islam's New Religious Movement*, 2009, 33.

groups: the most notorious in their militancy such as Al Qaeda and ISIS; non-violent political activists; and scholastic salafis who refuse any political participation and believe that Islam can only re-emerge after a rigorous journey of purification and traditional scholastic education;[214]

(2) A Salafi is usually recognized through a shared set of distinct "social and religious habits, prayer postures, and the content and form of his speech. The importance of the Arabic language cannot be overstated for members of this movement."[215]

(3) In the late nineteenth century, Salafism was originally a modernizing and a scholarly religiously reformist movement (such as the work of Muhamed Abdu or Al Afghani).[216] Modern salafis are now divided amongst themselves in their approach to the four Islamic schools of law/thought on matter of Islamic jurisprudence;[217]

(4) This explains the association with Wahabbism that has to do with the Hanbali followers of salafism in Saudi Arabia who adopt a less interpretive, more literalist and puritanical outlook on Islamic orthodoxy.[218] Ultimately, forming modern norms that are often influenced and inspired by the sociocultural experience of the people of Arabia given it's the place of the birth of the Wahabbi movement.

If we consider the latter point in association with Ghoasal's definition of Arabization we can see that it fits within the meta-institutional matrix, where political economic power dictates the knowledge production of a certain civility, globally and locally.

3.6.1 Efforts in Arabizing Malay Civility

Saudi money can be seen in the establishment of major educational institutions in Malaysia, such as in the International Islamic University of Malaysia (IIUM) founded in 1983. Historically, Saudi Arabia has been well involved financially and administratively in the establishment IIUM.[219] Additionally, the university was

[214] Ibid., 48–49.
[215] Ibid., 35.
[216] Ibid., 34.
[217] Ibid., 42.
[218] Ibid.
[219] Mohd Faizal Musa, "The Riyal and Ringgit of Petro-Islam: Investing Salafism in Education," *Islam in Southeast Asia: Negotiating Modernity*, 2018, 65.

supported by the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC).[220] Saudi Arabia regularly donates money to IIUM, with the largest donation amounting to RM2 million in 2000.[221] For about 10 years, from 1988 to 1999, Abdel Hameed Abu Sulayman, a Saudi citizen, was the Dean of IIUM.[222] Additionally, since the university's establishment, the Saudi ambassador in Malaysia has been a permanent member of the IIUM's governing board.[223] Saudi Arabia has also funded organizations such as PERKIM (Muslim Welfare Organization of Malaysia) and the Regional Islamic Dakwah Council for Southeast Asia and the Pacific which received $781,907 and RM593,109 in the 1970s.[224]

In addition to that, "Saudi oil money is also allocated for National University of Malaysia (UKM), with a RM180 million loan in 1974, RM183 million from Saudi Fund for Development for development projects in 1976, RM400 million for Malaysia's fourth five-year plan in 1982, and RM132 million for Penang port and the East West Highway in 1986."[225] In 2013, Saudi Arabia ranked as Malaysia's 19th largest commercial trade partner and its 16th largest importer.[226] That year, Malaysian exports to Saudi Arabia amounted to US$1.086 billion.[227] In July 2017, former PM Najib Razak announced the launch of the King Salman Center for International Peace (KSCIP), a centre for anti-terrorism research and "to promote Islam as a religion of peace and moderation."[228] The centre would be built in Putrajaya, Malaysia's administrative capital, on a 16-hectare piece of land in Putrajaya.[229] While Malaysia's former defense minister, Hishammuddin Hussein, defended the centre when it launched saying "it was crucial to curb the spread of "violent extremism" by armed groups, including the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL, also known as ISIS)"[230], the centre was ordered to shut down in 2018 due to Razak's infamous

[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid.
[222] Ibid.
[223] Ibid.
[224] Ibid., 66.
[225] Ibid.
[226] Ibid.
[227] Ibid.
[228] Nile Bowie, "Malaysia's 'Arabization' Owes to Saudi Ties," *Asia Times*, November 25, 2017, https://asiatimes.com/2017/11/malaysias-arabization-owes-ties-saudi-regime/.
[229] Ibid.
[230] "Malaysia Shuts Down Saudi-Backed Anti-Terrorism Centre," *Al Jazeera*, August 7, 2018, https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2018/08/malaysia-shuts-saudi-backed-anti-terrorism-centre-180807085850321.html.

political scandal with 1Malaysia Development Berhad (1MDB) over 21 counts of money laundering and four accounts of abuse of power,[231] having embezzled US$681mn from 1MDB, whom Saudi Arabia defends as an offered donation from the royal family.[232]

Lebanese American scholar, Fouad Ajami, coined the term "Petro-Islam" referring to the expansion of Saudi Wahabbism in other states through financial investments from Saudi oil money.[233] For even much clearer picture of oil investments in Malaysia, in 2018, Saudi Arabia's state oil company, Saudi Aramco, invested US$7 billion into Malaysia's state oil company Petronas, for the purpose of developing an oil refinery and naphtha cracker project, valued at $27 billion, making Aramco the largest financial investor in Malaysia.[234] These financial investments have direct influence over Malaysia's educational system, ultimately influencing the production of Islamic socio-cultural epistemology in the region.

Arabization has even gone as far as homogenizing the architecture of mosques to resemble that of some of Arabia's luxurious mosque designs. Political scientist Farish A. Noor explains,

> But what irks me the most, and pains me considerably, is the loss of what used to be referred to as the Indonesian-Malay mosque. The Indonesian-Malay mosque – examples of which include the Masjid Kampung Laut in Kelantan and the mosques of Malacca – was once the norm for all the mosques of Southeast Asia. Furthermore they demonstrate their transnational character when we compare them to the Sinhalese Buddhist image houses (known there as Davatages) that are almost exact copies of the mosques of Malacca, Demak, Palembang etc. Yet today the traditional mosques are being levelled to the ground, to be replaced by Arab and Persian-styled mosques, or worse still the huge (and ugly) 'Petrodollar' mosques that we see all over the non-Arab world as well.[235]

The notion of the Petrodollar and Saudi Arabia's heavy involvement in Malaysian and Indonesian institutions indicate the abuse of power that uses transterritorial neoliberalistic means in knowledge production, to create a politically strategic brand

[231] "Najib Razak 1MDB: Malaysia's Former PM Faces Biggest Trial Yet," *BBC*, August 29, 2019, https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-49492707.
[232] Prashant Waikar, Mohamed Nawab Mohamed Osman, and Rashaad Ali, "Dancing with the Ummah: Islam in Malaysia's Foreign Policy under Najib Razak," *The Pacific Review*, 2019, 23.
[233] Musa, "The Riyal and Ringgit of Petro-Islam: Investing Salafism in Education," 67.
[234] Nile Bowie, "Malaysia's 'Arabization' Owes to Saudi Ties."
[235] Farish A. Noor, "Malaysia: Still Looking For An Islam To Call Our Own?," 2008, https://www.malaysia-today.net/2008/02/21/malaysia-still-looking-for-an-islam-to-call-our-own/.

of civility, influencing the knowledge production and the knowledge consumption of Islam in the Malay Archipelago.

On an educational level, there have been investments in the Department of Islamic Development Malaysia (JAKIM) has acknowledged Al Madinah International University (MEDIU), one of Malaysia's central universities for Islamic studies, accredited by the Islamic Development Bank (IDB) of Jeddah as one of its member universities as an Islamic university.[236] MEDIU based in Shah Alam, Malaysia, has been recruiting scholars and teachers, with strong ties to Saudi Arabia's modern Salafist ideology. MEDIU's dean, Professor Dr. Mohammad Khalifa Al-Tamimi, established close cooperation between MEDIU and Umm al-Qura University in Mecca, Saudi Arabia.[237] For the study of *Aqeeda* [Islamic creed] and *Tafsir* [Islamic Exegesis] in MEDIU, the scholarships of Saudis Muhammad bin Solih al-Uthaimin and Abu Bakr al Jazairi (a highly controversial Saudi figure) are taught.[238] The university also welcomed visits from Saudi Arabia's religious or moral police.[239] Prior to his arrest, Razak praised especially international Malaysian students studying in Saudi stating that "When you return to Malaysia, you will be able to widen and strengthen Islam, including the Islamic institutions. This is the government's and my fervent wish."[240] Islamic Scholarship imported from Saudi Arabia tends to be full of Wahabbist interpretations.

In 2004 in Indonesia for instance, the Ministry of Religious Affairs introduced a legislation promoting gender equality.[241] The legislation faced major retaliation from right wing conservative groups such as the Majelis Mujahidin Indonesia (MMI), founded in 2002. MMI responded in opposition declaring that women are "'the queens who manage the household', and therefore should participate in society building from closed doors. Careers and degrees should not be pursued over responsibilities as mothers and wives, and modernity and socializing between genders would certainly cause instability in society."[242] MMI relies heavily on the scholarship of Saudi Wahabbi cleric Solih bin Fauzan al-Fauzan. Musa investigated that al-Fauzan once

[236] Musa, "The Riyal and Ringgit of Petro-Islam: Investing Salafism in Education," 67.
[237] Ibid., 68.
[238] Ibid., 72–73.
[239] Ibid., 68.
[240] Ibid., 65.
[241] Ibid., 71.
[242] Ibid., 72.

mentioned in one of his written texts that "'only sick Westernized Muslims' let their women leave homes to be 'partners in business' with men."[243] My research participant Jehan and I sat in her room sharing our experiences with similar Saudi influenced interpretations of Salafism. When I lived in Saudi Arabia in my elementary school years, I remember narratives of how women should conduct themselves, experiences that Jehan has similarly experienced.

3.6.2 Production of Female Piety

Jehan opened up about her family relations; she shared that her father forbad her and her sisters from wearing pants and from cutting their hair short. He also used to beat her and her mother in the name of religion, although not anymore. She expressed, "He [her father] spends a lot of time in the mosque. That's the thing. I don't like him spending time in the mosque to be honest. Because that's where he meets with all his men friends…To me he needs to talk more to women to understand our point of view." The example of Jehan's father provides a striking difference to that of Saba Mahmod's argument in her work *The Politics of Piety*. Instead of the mosque being a space for female empowerment and an opportunity for women to enforce their religious rights, they can also be a space of female disempowerment once deprived from female involvement in the shared spaces of the mosque. Including the circulation of limited juristic epistemological opinions that are "overly stringent and considered narrow interpretations of the Quran and the hadith, particularly pertaining to female conduct." When I asked her if Malaysian dramas perpetuate such sentiments, she responded, "I am not sure, because my dad didn't allow me to watch TV." I then questioned why all the strict rules, she elaborated, "He once told me that you live to serve God, so if you want entertainment, for example, is distracting you from your purpose. The pants, is because religion says men should not be women and women should not be men."

Subsequently, I questioned the narrative, since men in Saudi Arabia wear a *jilbab* or a *thawub* which are long male 'dresses' for the lack of a better description. To which she responded, "Actually I asked him that, he didn't answer me. He just said men wear pants." She added another experience saying:

> I can't cut my hair because my dad won't let me, but I still cut it. I always video call my parents so my parents will see my hair. Sometimes I cut my hair

[243] Ibid.

> because I want to cut my hair. I remember cutting it very short, you know like a Madeline hair, and my dad sees it and my brother and they question me because I cut my hair. You know that pixie hair cut? I really wanted to have that haircut but I know that my dad and my second brother, I mean having the short haircut they questioned me, have a pixie haircut they might not want to talk to me or look at me again, so it's ok I won't do that.

Amina went to perform *Ummra* with her daughter last summer. She noticed that the manuals and brochures handed out in the streets or around the holy site, indicating women's conduct and how they should behave and emphasizing that they should cover up completely in black. This reminded me of a similar experience I had growing up in Saudi Arabia when I was younger. I remember being publicly scolded in a mosque by an old Saudi woman for wearing jeans underneath my *abaya*. The woman was yelling publically about how I should be ashamed of imitating the West and wanting to be a man (assuming that she is basing her argument on upholding pants and shorts only permissible for me). This was in 2001, sometime before or after 9/11. I was eight years old. Jehan introduced me to a Malay concept shared in Malaysia called *Budaya Kuning* or Yellow Culture. *Budaya Kuning* refers to this strictly critical notion that stems from a politically charged anti-Western rhetoric that started in the 1990s.[244]

Budaya Kuning is not a unique term in its context. It stems from a similar concern to the Arabic words of *al ghazwul fikri* [ideological invasion][245] or *taghrib* [Westernization]. Referencing once again the problematic internalizations of broad imageries of what is 'Western.' Nagat El Sanabary argues that female education in Saudi Arabia is similarly designed upon specific religious and moralistic interpretations that govern their normative conduct.[246] Accordingly, emphasizing gender segregation in fear of premarital relations, protection of female chastity, and preservation of femininity and gender roles.[247] Subsequently, Joas Wagemakers argues that "Salafi views on gender relations are sometimes partly informed by conspiratorial ideas about 'Westernisation' (*taghrīb*) caused by supposed 'enemies of Islam' who try to corrupt the religion in general and the chastity of Muslim women in particular. Such

[244] Yeoh Seng Guan, *Media, Culture and Society in Malaysia* (London, UNITED KINGDOM: Taylor & Francis Group, 2010), 179.
[245] Martin Van Bruinessen, "Ghazwul Fikri or Arabization? Indonesian Muslim Responses to Globalization," in *Southeast Asian Muslims in the Era of Globalization* (Springer, 2015), 61–85.
[246] Nagat El-Sanabary, "Female Education in Saudi Arabia and the Reproduction of Gender Division," *Gender and Education* 6, no. 2 (1994): 141–50.
[247] Ibid.

views are often portrayed as part of a wider 'war on Islam' and are by no means limited to Salafism." [248]

Despite such substantial evidence of the sculpting of soft power Arabizing influence from Saudi Arabia through economic investment, not all scholars find that the spread of Salafism and Wahabbism is due to such promotions. Haykel finds this argument rather simplistic since not all recipients of Saudi largesse adhered to the movements teachings, such as the Nadwat al Ulama' Seminary in Lucknow, India.[249] Other scholars such as Oliver Roy have argued that the appeal of Salafism in all its forms and cultural influences is due to the transterritorialization of Muslims and its adoptability to globalization.[250] Ironically, however, Haykel argues that the appeal is in its exploitation of the fluidity of global civil society and the uncertainty of globalization, emphasizing religious certainty and a standardization and ability to theologically cite scripture. All of which I find are crucial debates to the consequences of the fluidity of global civil society. Salafism (religiously) and Arabization (culturally) consume the notions of global civility, travelling transterritorially, promoting standardizations that ironically and simultaneously defy some of its elements of pluralization, yet flourish because of its pluralism and fluid dynamicity. Arabization has often been addressed in weary and uncomfortable tones from my participants, whom have all expressed in concern on how it takes away from the Malayness. Including how their unique positionality as Asian Muslims with a distinct culture and history that should also be put into consideration in Islamic performativity.

3.7 Asian Values and Westernization of Easternization

Since global civil society feeds off of the work of celebrities of popular figures,[251] in this case, the concept of Asian values has survived on the propagated provocations and adamant support of Mahathir Muhamed and Lee Kuan Yew the former Prime Ministers of Malaysia and Singapore.[252] In hopes of highlighting an Asian strategic alternative of modernity to Eurocentric notions of modernity. In one of my interviews

[248] Joas Wagemakers, "Salafi Scholarly Views on Gender-Mixing (Ikhtilat) in Saudi Arabia," *Orient. Zeitschrift Des Deutschen Orient-Instituts* 57, no. 2 (2016): 40.
[249] Haykel, "On the Nature of Salafi Thought and Action," 37.
[250] Ibid., 38.
[251] Keane, 8.
[252] Terence Chong and Yuko Kawai, "Asian Values and Confucian Ethics: Malay Singaporeans' Dilemma," *The Howard Journal of Communications* 16, no. 3 (2002): 398.

I noticed and intermixing of Malay and Asian values, so I asked Arief "You kind of intermixed Malay with Asian values here, so?" "Just because it is part of it. I would say [the] Malay is in the same area with Asia, similar languages. I mean we have, what is the word?…Practice, we share similar cultural practices. I don't know. Actually, I don't know. Hmmm….I don't know." Arief expresses in self-realization with a slight wondering and concerned voice near the end of his answer as he was not able to exactly pin point the similarities. Unlike Arief, who is in his 20s, Norani, in her 50s, was quick to answer; "My way of parenting is Asian. No need to talk, just give the look and the child will get it. It's the discipline. Sharing food with neighbors I think is an Asian value. I don't like when neighbors don't know each other and close off. Privacy is good but individualization isn't. I like having a close net neighborhood." She soon asserted how these values overlap with Islamic values of respect that she also sees in Western values and Malay values, "We are extra polite [referring to Canadian values]. Those can be seen as Islamic values. We say *salam* but instead hello to everyone. We can spice Western Canadian values with Islamic values" she concludes laughing. In another encounter, "Asians are…they are not supposed to talk back to parents, are expected to be obedient…Asian Values. I think Malay and Asian values are almost the same", Amina similarly echoes Arief's thoughts.

Theoretically speaking, Asian values as a term is a disastrous sweeping generalization of Asia, assuming a homogeneous identity of indigenous cultures from India to Indonesia to Korea to China. All of which are states full of even more ethno-cultural identities. It is assumed that from the early 1970s, 'Asian values' has been used to explain the rapid industrial growth of East and Southeast Asia.[253] It is heavily associated with Pan-Asianism and Japanese imperialist history in Southeast Asia. It claims a common 'Asian' culture "with a spiritual-based sense of loyalty to the community."[254] In the spirit of Pan-Asianism, Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir has co-authored a book with Japanese nationalist Shintaro Ishihara titled *The Voice of Asia: Two Leaders Discuss the Coming Century*.[255]

[253] Michael Hill, "'Asian Values' as Reverse Orientalism: Singapore," *Asia Pacific Viewpoint* 41, no. 2 (2000): 177.
[254] Mark R Thompson, "The Survival of" Asian Values" as" Zivilisationskritik"," *Theory and Society* 29, no. 5 (2000): 658.
[255] Ibid.

Thompson argues that the translation of the Japanese title is even more defensive as it translates to *The Asia that Can Say No: A Policy to Combat Europe and America*.[256] The book has inspired similar sentiments in China that a similarly themed book titled *China Can Say No* was also published there. Asian values is a general notion that advocates collectivism, resistance towards individualism, pragmatic economic industrialization, and respect to top-down authority.[257] Unlike the case with Arabization, however, this is a political case where the government utilizes the ambiguity of global civil society to its advantage. This sense of collectivism that is held against the perceived individualization of the West strives on the ambiguity of a collective consciousness of what an imagined Asian society stands for. Which also has a neoliberal aspect to it. Chong states that

> the popular *raison d'etre* of Asian values discourse, at least within Southeast Asia, lies in the overlap of histories, cultures vis-a-vis migration and the experience of industrialisation. Individuals envisage an image of others in this society not as participants of common ancestry but of common present predicated on the conjunction of experiences such as the colonial heritage of imposed ethnic-identity formations, the confidence from relative economic success throughout the sixties, seventies and eighties in which direct foreign investment grew, and the self-belief encouraged by a postmodern age.[258]

Through establishing a shared sense of responsibility for boosting the Asian economy, particularly that of the Asian Tigers, Asian values perceives itself as a more productive force for the economy. In contrast to Western individualization that is more concerned with the self, collectivism and respect to authority quickens the cycle of economic production and attracts foreign investment. Additionally, just as sweeping attributes of collectivism to Asia is problematic so is a sweeping generalization of individualism to the West is problematic. I argue that the neoliberal power behind global civil society utilizes these generalizations to its benefit.

Despite the upheld differentiation of civil conduct between an intentionally politically generalized Asian Easternization of civility to that of a Eurocentric Westernized civility, there is an appeal of Asian values in the West. Mainly because it is appropriated in a way to fit its secular habitus. Andrew Dawson refers to Bourdieu's argument that "…Eastern themes have been identified and appropriated by successive

[256] Ibid.
[257] Chong and Kawai, "Asian Values and Confucian Ethics: Malay Singaporeans' Dilemma," 395 & 399.
[258] Ibid., 398.

generations in the West not because they have offered much by way of novelty or challenge, but rather because they have been and are 'recognized' as comprising elements already in correspondence with the "cultural competence" of the modern Western 'aesthetic'".[259] In order for the West to decide to appropriate a certain culture, Bourdieu argues that it has to be worthy of appropriation to begin with.[260] In other words, its aesthetics and themes have to be of benefit in the mold of the Western habitus:

> In effect, Eastern themes are valued to the extent that they resonate with the already well-established aesthetics of the Western "gaze", characterized by the technologized self [arguably a neoliberal self], depersonalized cosmos, and metaphorized religio-cultural field. For example, practices such as yoga and transcendental meditation are appropriated as complementary techniques to the well-established repertoires of the technologized self, just as the self-regulating concepts of karma and reincarnation are dovetailed with the routinized and ameliorative worldview of an already depersonalized cosmos [secularism].[261]

Therefore, Eastern themes are not shared on the basis of exchange of civil normative values of novelty or substantive personal enlightenment, "but because they are held to correspond with, and thereby tacitly affirm, what is already present within the Western habitus."[262] This also has very much to do with knowledge production and the power to develop this production into being (coloniality of knowledge and coloniality of being).

There are two important points to conclude with. First, 'Asian' here does not usually include Muslim Asian normative ideals. Muslim Asian and their cultural civil norms do not generally fall under the rhetoric of Asian values. One is often likely to observe an appropriation of *Yoga* or *Tai Chi* but not of Malay *Pencak Silat* for example. Which indicates a hierarchization of principles as coined by Bourdieu. This points out to the deep rooted tensions between the West and Islamic norms, symbolisms, and influences making them unworthy of neoliberal exploitation or appropriation in the West. I argue that it is what fits within the notion of a secular Western that can be appropriated. Secondly, Asian values have been exploited globally and locally to fit the mold of political aims, as in the case of Malaysia and Singapore, and a public aim as in the

[259] Andrew Dawson, "East Is East, Except When It's West: The Easternization Thesis and the Western Habitus," 2006, 3.
[260] Ibid., 8.
[261] Ibid.
[262] Ibid.

Westernization of Easternization. This is an interesting challenge to conscious members of global civil society because this is a case that highlights how state involvement in knowledge production is inevitable. Creating a cycle of produced knowledge that is consumed and reproduced by members of global civil society, contributing to the cycle of neoliberal capitalist production.

In this chapter, I explained how global civil society is reflected in deep-rooted intertwined layered historical and socio-religious complexities and political implications within various identities of the Muslim Malay based on occupation (neoliberalism), ethno-race (Malayness), religion (Muslimness) and geography (Asianness). Manifested in how the research participants try to make sense of these conflicting yet shared notions of parts of who they are. Pointing to the fluidity and rigidity of certain identities which fits within the niche of global civil society actors. The knowledge productions of identities is enforced by power dynamics that shape the civil conduct of global civil society actors, and so I refer to Salvatore's theory of the metal-institutional matrix. Through this theory, I explore how my participants take matters in their own hands and critically assess the political and social dimensions of the various identities and decide not to box themselves under specific categories and sweeping political generalizations with a critical understanding of the tensions of multiculturalism. Therefore, giving a stance on two factors; (1) a refusal to accept the East versus West argument and finding ways to reconcile and utilize cultural differences by seeing a humane common ground, and (2) by claiming their agency in addressing the politically charged factors of certain identities such as Asianness and Arabization in retaliation to the top-down domination of knowledge production. Both factors indicate how global civil society fits within the mold of the trends of a postcolonial society of self-autonomy and a collective habitus – needing both the space for self-discovery and social interaction.

CHAPTER III

THE MUSLIM MALAY CANADIAN DIASPORA

4.1 Introduction

Chapter two has established that identity and subjectivity are always a hybrid achievement that emerge out of a diverse range of interconnectivities registered throughout a linked series of events in time and space, particularly through long historical and spatial experiences of time and space. This chapter explores what it means to perform experiences of cultural production and identity making on a new land with its own unique historical and spatial experience. I delve into how my participants reconcile their Canadian multicultural identity with their Malay ethno-racial identity and their Muslim religious identity as performative agents translocally and transterritorially.

I first off define the changing definition of what constitutes a diaspora and how globalization has led to a wave of constant Muslim migration which influences their performativity, sense of belonging between and old homeland and a new homeland, and civility. Which leads me to explore, in a transmodern theoretical framework, the scholarly debate behind the utilization of an *ummah* as a transterritorial vision of global civil society for the Muslim diaspora, and how faith influences their civil conduct, particularly through the theoretical framework of the discursive tradition of *adab*. Accordingly, I explore Judith Butler's work on defining performativity and the agency individuals have over performing their subjectivity for recognition and civil participation. I look at it from the perspectives of where my participants locate themselves as Canadian Muslim Malay subjects within Canada's colonial history and the role they play as a minority that has to also reconcile with its inevitable push and pull of exclusivity and inclusivity.

That is when I elucidate on Ibn Khaldun's analysis of multicultural cities and what I call the Khaldunian hierarchy of multiculturalism due to the hierarchy created out the spectrum of recognition established in societies, and how immigrant minorities negotiate their right for recognition with the majority "white" population. Subsequently, I look into how my participants view their social responsibility in the

multicultural fabric of Canada's colonial legacy and normative diversity through a variety of civil action, such as political participation and social work, including the preservation of Malay traditions such as an artistic disciplinary agent. Finally, I wrap up with an exploration of forming a community on a micro Malay level and a macro Muslim level for the sake of place making a home for the Muslim Malay Canadian self, and how that displays that territoriality remains contestant with the transterritorial vision of a global civil society. Finally, contributing to the revival of the concept of agency amongst Muslim minorities in North America and an understanding of what grounds individuals in times of postnormal weariness. In this case, my participants display that their faith, community, and selected traditions provide a sense of security and grounding despite the social conflicts faced in and outside of their community.

4.2 Redefining the Diaspora

Formerly, the Greek origins of the word 'diaspora' meant the migration and the scattering of a people throughout various geographic territories. For long, however, the epistemology of the diaspora has carried a melancholic connotation associated with violent displacement, such as the Jewish, Armenian, Palestinian Diasporas for example. Nonetheless, diasporic studies have expanded the definition to include a much broader variety of groups due to the high mobility of the globalized postmodern era that is becoming more transterritorial by the time. Fazal and Tsagarousianou argue that the concept we have achieved a point where globalization has normalized human mobility and relational transnational flows of economy, ideologies, and cultural production – referring to Appadurai's ethnoscapes, financescapes, mediascapes and ideoscapes.[263]

Accordingly, the study of human mobility and the immigration experience are necessary points of analysis in understanding the broader discussions over matters of citizenship and rights and identity and culture in a transmodernistic context. Ultimately, the concept of the diaspora is inseparable from understanding identity politics and cultural negotiations. Initially, Safran laid certain characteristics for what categorizes a group as a diaspora:

[263] Shehina Fazal and Roza Tsagarousianou, "Diasporic Communication: Transnational Cultural Practices and Communicative Spaces," *Javnost-The Public* 9, no. 1 (2002): 6.

1) the original community has been spread from the homeland to two or more countries; they are bound from their disparate geographical locations by a common vision, memory or myth about their homelands;
2) they have a belief that they will never be accepted by their host societies and therefore develop their autonomous cultural and social needs;
3) they or their descendants will return to the homeland should the conditions prove favourable;
4) they should continue to maintain support for homeland and therefore the communal consciousness and solidarity enables them to continue these activities.[264]

As significant these characteristics still stand in diasporic studies, they arguably remain outdated given the constant transterritorial challenges to the nation-state with a growing number of people immigrating, not specifically due to war or societal turmoil. Therefore, Cohen challenges these features arguing that a number of adjustments are required in expanding the horizons of diasporic studies. He suggests that, (1) members of a diaspora do not necessarily relocate due to aggressive reasons, sometimes movement is voluntary; (2) there should be strong indicative efforts of integration into the new host society; (3) a more positive outlook to the circumstances of a diasporic community is required citing that a lot of diasporic communities contribute significantly to the societal progress of the host society; (4) and the diasporic community not only share commonalities of a collective identity with those society and that of their homeland, but they also bridge connections with other members of the same ethnic communities from other countries.[265]

That being said, in accordance to this note, I find Safran's specification that a diaspora must have been dispersed in at least two countries is not necessarily the case with all immigrants or even displaced refugees. Most of the first generation of parents I have interviewed resided in other countries before settling in Canada. Some studied in the United States in their younger years, or moved in between Malaysia and Singapore, others even resided in different provinces before settling in Ontario. Despite so, some have not. Many immigrant and refugee diasporas mobilize to only one country, but can certainly transition around the settled state to various cities until they settle down in the preferred province. Such was the example of the Syrian refugees who were accepted in Canada in 2015. Majority of Syrians accepted in Canada were placed in

[264] William Safran, "Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return," *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies* 1, no. 1 (1991): 83–84.
[265] Fazal and Tsagarousianou, "Diasporic Communication: Transnational Cultural Practices and Communicative Spaces," 7.

refugee camps in other host countries, such as Lebanon, Jordan, and Turkey, but some were not.[266] Privately sponsored refugees by Canadian families of Syrian origin or otherwise, such as through the Community Sponsorship Program, are an example of some refugees who could have been brought in straight from Syria without previous resettlement.

With the exception of the mentioned concern, I find Cohen's expansion to the definition of a diaspora provides more room for the applicability of categorizing the Muslim Malays of Canada as diasporic. First, my participants did not move due to hostility in the homeland. As Norhani explained in chapter one, this is mostly a voluntary decision. Also, indicated by the majority of the participants who came from Malaysia that it is unlikely for Malay Malaysians who are a majority in Malaysia to leave given the socio-political comfort privileged for being a majority. Those who came from Singapore or Sri Lanka, have experienced more hostile circumstances for being a minority as explored in chapter two. Therefore, expanding the reasons of immigration to encompass both forced and voluntary immigration is incumbent upon reflecting the complexities of transterritoriality.

Second, this chapter explores the performative efforts the community invests in integrating in Canadian society, embracing it as a new homeland (although there has been indications from the younger generation to the acceptability of future movement if need be). Thus, unlike Safran's limiting depiction of the diaspora as harboring feelings of exclusivity in the host society out of victimhood, Cohen's representation best denotes the Muslim Malay community as active agents in the host society seeking inclusivity, albeit forming a tight group network. Hence, becoming active contributors to the Canadian socio-political and economic fabric of society. Which leads me to the third point. The Muslim Malay community as previously emphasized, is a mix of Malays from different nationalistic origins which helps in forming a collective that seeks refuge in the commonalities of other groups as Cohen acknowledges. More so, identifying as Muslims by faith, subgroups them under the wider Muslim population in the world. In other words, the Muslim Malay belongs to the wider Muslim *ummah* by virtue of being Muslim. Which can be interpreted as a simplified outlook to the

[266] René Houle, "Results from the 2016 Census: Syrian Refugees Who Resettled in Canada in 2015 and 2016," 2019, https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/75-006-x/2019001/article/00001-eng.htm.

notion of transterritorial belonging to a wider dispersed Muslim population throughout the world.

4.3 The *Ummah* as a Transterritorial Diaspora

In the tradition of Islamic oral history, it is said that Abd Allāh ibn al-Mubārak (d. 797), an early Muslim scholar, of Persian and Turkic lineage, dreamt of two angels conversing.[267] One angel asked the other, "How many people came to perform Ḥajj (pilgrimage) this year?" The other angel replied, "sixty thousand" (or six hundred thousand). The first angel inquired more, "And how many people's Ḥajj was accepted?" The second responded, "Not even one. Everyone's Ḥajj had been accepted only because of the Ḥajj of a cobbler named ʿAli in Damascus." Ibn al-Mubārak woke up realizing the exceptionality of the dream, and so determinedly headed to Damascus in search of the cobbler. After a long journey, Ibn al-Mubārak found 'Ali and inquired about his Hajj experience. To which the cobbler surprisingly answered that he did not perform Hajj, confusing Ibn al-Mubārak even further. It is later revealed that 'Ali, a poor cobbler, saved for Hajj for years. His wife was pregnant the same year he finalized his savings to head off for Hajj. One day his wife smelled the smell of cooked meat in the neighborhood and craved it. To satisfy her craving, 'Ali followed the source of the smell to request if they can share some of the food for his wife.

The smell came from their female neighbor and when 'Ali requested her generosity she replied that the food is not *halal* (permissible) for them, but only for her and her children. She said that because of her poverty she could not afford any meat for her children, but she saw a dead donkey and decided to cook it for her children out of necessity. Donkeys are prohibited to be eaten according to majority Islamic juristic opinion. Nonetheless, given her circumstances of necessity it is permissible for her out of survival. Touched by the woman's ordeal, 'Ali donated his Hajj savings to the woman and her children. Due to this deed, it is said that in God's eyes, 'Ali has performed Hajj without going to Mecca, and all pilgrims of that year whose act of worship was not considered sincere enough, were rewarded the spiritual deed of Hajj due to the sincerity of a cobbler. This story signifies an important concept that continues to affect Muslim subjectivity to this day, and that is the idea of a

[267] Habib Siddiqui, "Hajj Stories about the Pious Muslims," *Asian Tribune*, 2020, http://www.asiantribune.com/node/94496.

transterritorial *ummah* connected beyond the physical world. 'Ali's sincere act of generosity was measured on a supernatural level that affected the spiritual wellbeing of other Muslims who originate from other parts of the world. These pilgrims do not know each other but were connected through a spiritual bond that surpassed spatial geography.

Henceforth, Suzanne Hoeber Rudolph argues that religious communities have long been "among the oldest of the transnationals; Sufi orders, Catholic missionaries, and Buddhist monks carried work and praxis across vast spaces before those spaces became nation-states or even states" and currently, they continue to penetrate and ascend beyond state borders.[268] The word *ummah* occurs sixty times in the Qur'an,[269] holding a deep rooted significance in Islamic literature and adherents to the Islamic faith. The meaning of its context depends on its positionality in the text. For this study, I will refer to the Muslim *ummah* in the context of what Muslim scholars generally define as a "religious community bound by faith and transcending all other markers of belonging."[270] Nevertheless, there is a survey of meanings to the word. These religious communities do not necessarily have to be Muslim.[271] There has been cases when *ummah* referred to nations of other faiths and non-believing nations as well.[272] Also, it could mean a direct sense of following or a path embodied by an *imam* (a leader).[273]

How an *ummah* acts determines its historic destiny, this is best fitting as my participants pave their way as civil actors of Canadian society. Given that they established that most of them moved to Canada out of a better need for a quality of life, they also mobilize collectively or act individually to contribute to the persistance of this quality of life as a new home, as will be further explored below. Subsequently, there is a Quranic emphasis that the ideal *ummah* is one that is balanced on a 'middle' path [*wasat*].[274] It could also mean a group of people who adopt a certain tradition or

[268] Garbi Schmidt, "The Transnational Umma— Myth or Reality? Examples from the Western Diasporas ," *The Muslim World* (Oxford, UK : Blackwell Publishing Ltd , 2005), 576, doi:10.1111/j.1478-1913.2005.00112.x.
[269] Maysam J Al Faruqi, "Umma: The Orientalists and the Qurʾānic Concept of Identity," *Journal of Islamic Studies* 16, no. 1 (2005): 2.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Frederick M Denny, "Ummah in the Constitution of Medina ," *Journal of Near Eastern Studies* (University of Chicago Press , 1977), 39, doi:10.1086/372530.
[272] Al Faruqi, "Umma: The Orientalists and the Qurʾānic Concept of Identity," 6.
[273] Ibid., 28.
[274] Ibid., 32.

a way of life and law.[275] Accordingly, scholars argue that makes all humankind an *ummah* in a universalist sense.[276] An *ummah* of believers can have sub-*umam* [subgroups of people] that can later be identified as creeds that have stemmed from the main *ummah*.[277] An *ummah* "can also refer to the actualized, reified historical entity in time and place: a community that lived by a certain law, had specific rituals or *mansak,* and then withered away."[278] Contrary to some translations, an *ummah* does not have to be a group. It can also be one person who contemplates and adheres to Divine laws.[279] In addition to that, it can be either a small group of people or a large one.[280] The number of adherents is less important from what constitutes an *ummah* – its epistemology, rituals, culture, etc.

Thus, time and space are indispensable components of what makes and *ummah* and how it is analyzed[281] articulating the intrinsic transterritoriality of the Muslim subject that is not spatially bounded. Salman Sayyid points out that "It is often argued that an uncertain world produces crises that require the solace of 'primary identities', be they religious, ethnic, territorial or national. This is interesting because the way in which we have talked about collective identities has relied on the use of stable bounded spaces. The general argument is that for a variety of reasons we are now living in a world of flows, and that these flows are unsettling because they disrupt the continuities that allowed collective identities to be formed, maintained and projected."[282] Given this context, the *ummah* is often portrayed as a transnational, transterritorial way of living that has transcended the shackled of the nation-state.[283]

While there is some truth to that, I find that this remains a simplistic analysis that still confines our understanding of the *ummah* within geographical state boundaries. Given the definition that the Muslim *ummah* is a community of believers bounded and connected by faith over territory, social scientists found a fascination with the term as

[275] Ibid., 28.
[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid., 29.
[278] Ibid.
[279] Ibid., 30.
[280] Ibid.
[281] Ibid., 31–32.
[282] S Sayyid, *Recalling the Caliphate : Decolonisation and World Order* (London, UNITED STATES: C. Hurst and Company (Publishers) Limited, 2014), 101, http://ebookcentral.proquest.com/lib/ryerson/detail.action?docID=1920737.
[283] Schmidt, "The Transnational Umma— Myth or Reality? Examples from the Western Diasporas ," 575.

a living legacy of transterritoriality and globalizational studies.[284] How effectively functional the idea behind the transterritorial web of connectivities of the Muslim subject, however, has been a constant cause of debate amongst academic circles. With that being said, Sayyid affirms that Islam has gained a diasporic characteristic[285] not only because of its transterritorial nature as a world religion, but because of the increasing presence of Muslims in the West (North America and Northern and Western Europe) through migration. Partly due to the Western integrational projects post the decolonization period, and partly due to the increasing numbers of Muslim refugees since the 1980s.[286] The notion of the *ummah* is a significant layer of what Haideh Moghissi coins as the diasporic consciousness of the Muslim subject. The diasporic consciousness is the emotional, psychological and cultural detachment from the host country, rather than a continued attachment to the homeland.[287] I would disagree, however, with regards to her argument that members of a diaspora are usually in a cultural detachment from the host country. Rather, my participants reveal how it is a more sophisticated process intertwined with the tension of a tug war of detachment and attachment. Moghissi, rightfully argues, that detachment occurs when the Muslim diaspora, in all its backgrounds, are under constant hostility and exclusions from the majority Western metropolis.[288]

That does not mean, that with the growing detachment from the land of origin, that grows from one generation to the other, that the Muslim diaspora does not carve its way through a new belonging of a new homeland. Especially in a so described multicultural North America that is established on the presence of diasporas. It is in such arguments, that I find once again, a snatching of agency from the immigrant and Muslim subject, as helpless figures surrendering to their fate of homelessness. As if in this constant movement of migration, parts of what grounds the Muslim identity fades, which can certainly be the case for some Muslims. Nonetheless, my participants reveal that faith is a significant grounding component of who they are and how it impacts their Muslim performativity as citizenly agents, no matter where they be located, or

[284] Ibid.
[285] Salman Sayyid, "The Homelessness of Muslimness: The Muslim Umma as a Diaspora," *Human Architecture: Journal of the Sociology of Self-Knowledge* 8, no. 2 (2010): 129–45.
[286] Sayyid, *Recalling the Caliphate : Decolonisation and World Order*, 103.
[287] Haideh Moghissi, "Diaspora of Islamic Cultures: Continuity and Change," *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees*, 2003, 115.
[288] Ibid.

whether they migrate or not. Which showcases an important aspect of belonging to a Muslim *ummah* that I find often overlooked. Belonging to a transterritorial Muslim *ummah* does not mean that Muslims should not have a homeland – a territory to belong to and establish cultural identity. Rather, there is a fluidity in accepting that all lands are God's lands and so if an opportunity of belonging and establishing a dignified quality of life is enclosed somewhere, another opens somewhere else.

Sayyid accentuates that the *ummah* is not a nation, contrary to orientalist notions that it is tribal and culturally or ethnically bounded.[289] There is a strong attribute of global universalism that travels beyond statehood in how it eases human mobility, accompanied by the epistemologies, cultural practices, linguistic differences, and diversity of norms Muslims inhabit. Fad elaborates referring to how the prophet of the Islamic faith, prophet Mohamed, immigrated to Madinah and died in Madinah, stating, "The fact is, the world itself is all Allah's [God's] land. No one should put some geographic restriction on you. The fact is, if you have a purpose, you have a mission, you have the ability then by all means go." Henceforth, emphasizing the encouraged movements of Muslims if they seek so. Which comes off as a retaliation to the question of nationalistic loyalty that tends to bend migrants into – whether the diaspora is loyal to the homeland or the host land that eventually becomes a new homeland. This was expressed as Fad and I exchanged our experiences revolving around the question of nationalistic identity. In my case, I often get asked in my travels, am I Egyptian or Canadian, or which comes first. Forcing me to choose one of either. To which Fad simply responds, "You are Muslim." Highlighting how the religious identity overpasses the nationalistic one.

Ultimately, Sheikh Idris concludes by quoting three Quranic versus from the scripture in explaining the civil conduct of Islamic transterritoriality. According to him, the Quranic verses (49:13), (5:2), and (60:8) define three levels of interactions: to learn about other nations and people, so to know; to do good and collaborate with other groups of advocate for good; and to live wherever a person wants so long as they are just and fair and the people of the new homeland show respect and kindness. He concludes,

> Now if you take these three levels, this is the highest human level of interaction. No issue to know people, to know their culture. No issue to deal in goodness

[289] Al Faruqi, "Umma: The Orientalists and the Qurʾānic Concept of Identity," 3.

> with people, to cooperate with people. These are the teachings, contrary to all that being said, and these are the principal teaching of Islam. Now if you have these, then you don't have any problem in being with any culture. And you also have to recognize the rights of people who came before you.

His description addresses multiple guiding factors for Muslims in the West who are stereotyped often is intolerant and desolate. These factors also influence a civil conduct that inspires *adab* in Muslim performativity, which will be discussed below.

Accordingly, Garbi Schmidt points out that there are two layers to the Muslim *ummah:* a vision and a practice.[290] This vision of transterritoriality highlights a significant teaching principle of normativity, and that is the flexibility and fluidity to adopt other cultures and ways of civil being so long as they do not conflict with the fundamental teachings of the faith. And so, while I agree with Sayyid that the diasporic consciousness of the Muslim *ummah* is an outcome of the confinement of the nation-state that the vision of the *ummah* contradicts, my participants disclose a negotiative process that goes within accepting aspects of transterritoriality and aspects of nationalistic citizenship of a new homeland. This negotiation strives to establish a harmonious pattern of civility derived from a deep rooted normative discourse of Islamic civility – often referred to as *adab*. Such as for example how my participants tried to accomodate me while interviewing them, through giving me rides, or hosting me in their houses for example. The negotiations that go into practicing *adab*, I argue is partly for my participants to practice their own agency in leading their lives and, partly to stamp their fingerprints of recognition as active members of Canadian society and ultimately global contributors as well.

4.3.1 Adab: Muslim Civility in a Global Context

Part of the transterritoriality of the vision of the *ummah* is that it establishes an idealistic set of Islamic conduct. That is not to claim that Muslims are homogenous but to highlight the long epistemological scholarly history of what influences their human behavior, consciously or not. Armando Salvatore has been a vocal analyst of what he describes as the crystallization of two major discursive traditions in the history of the Islamic civilization[291] - *shari'a* (Divine law) and *adab*. Both of which "consist

[290] Schmidt, "The Transnational Umma— Myth or Reality? Examples from the Western Diasporas ," 577.
[291] Armando Salvatore, *The Islamicate Adab Tradition vs. the Islamic Shari 'a, from Pre-Colonial to Colonial* (Kolleg-Forschergruppe" Multiple Secularities-Beyond the West, Beyond …, 2018), 8.

of intersecting dimensions of narration, habitualization, and, ultimately, normativity, albeit in a variety of combinations and degrees."[292] *Adab* is often translated to either, literature in Arabic postcolonial modern translations, or cordial etiquette. In this study, however, I focus on the classical meaning of the term which describes *adab* as a normative epistemology that works in harmony with the normative discourses included in Islamic jurisprudence. Including what Salvatore argues is distinguished in its normative conduct of civility in nondivine terms, going as far as to describe it as the secular civil conduct of Islam that is concerned with worldly affairs and human interaction with living beings.[293] Salvatore describes *adab*

> as a concept of etiquette and mastery of forms (including, if not mainly, life forms)…the most general definition of *adab* would embrace the ensemble of the ethical and practical norms of virtuous and beautiful life. We could even define *adab* as a discursive tradition in its own right, including aesthetical and entertaining dimensions alongside edifying and normative ones. It taught a know-how that was integral to the building of social relations. Thus, more broadly, it also served the goal of conflict prevention and social integration. This knowledge of 'social commerce' helps human subjects to maximize their own reputation also by way of eloquence, good speech, and effective communication. Such an approach is supported by the idea that good speech and elegant manners are not just an embellishment, but a necessary ingredient of good, cultured, civilized life. [294]

The classical Muslim jurist al Mawardi (d. 1058), also known as Alboacen, born in what is now Iraq, established the scholastic foundations of all types of *adab* in his book *Kitab Aadab al-Dunya w'al-Din* [*The Ethics of Religion and of this World*], where he explores *adab* as a normative discourse that can be practiced in the world [*al Dunya*] and in its complex relationship with religion in preparation to the hereafter [*al* Din].

The book explores a system of self-discipline and the foundations of a socio-political community. In it, he broadly addresses the significance of establishing civility on earth through six foundational pillars: the adherence to faith or religion, the existence of a powerful ruler, that powerful ruler derives their strength in maintaining full justice,

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[292] Ibid.
[293] Armando Salvatore, "Secularity through a 'Soft Distinction'in the Islamic Ecumene? Adab as a Counterpoint to Shari'a," *Historical Social Research/Historische Sozialforschung* 44, no. 3 (169 (2019): 37.
[294] Salvatore, *The Islamicate Adab Tradition vs. the Islamic Shari 'a, from Pre-Colonial to Colonial*, 9 & 10.

inclusive security and safety, the fortification of prosperity, and continuous hope.[295] In another famous book by eminent classical Muslim scholar al Ghazali, *Ihya 'ulum al-din* [*The Revival of Religious* Sciences] delves into much deeper and thoroughly intricate normative application of *adab* in human rituals and daily practices. He has divided sections of the book into adab *al-akl* (the ethics of eating), *adab al-nikah* (the ethics of marriage), and *al-adab fi-l-mujalasa* (the ethics of socialization and polite society), including the spiritual ethics of *tilawat alQur'an* (the ethics of Quranic recitation). Al Mawardi claims that through the mastery of *adab, umran* can take place in society, referencing Ibn Khaldun's term. In this context *umran* means the cultivation, building, institutionalizing, observing, and promoting of life and place – a formation of culture.[296] Those who neglect to strive for such cultural civility in the *adab* of faith and religion would have inflicted injustice upon themselves, and those who neglect such civility in the *adab* of society and the world, would have inflicted injustice upon others.[297] Hence, Salvatore concludes that adab is not just a normative discourse, rather it is a metanorm that is applied in all aspects of life.[298]

On the other hand, Ellen McLarney analyzes *adab* in an expansive vision that views it as a discourse of power and knowledge production.[299] By disciplining the self in the private sphere an influence of normative application takes place in the public sphere. In this framework, C. Wright Mills sociological imagination is quite fitting. Mills argues that there are two sociological spheres where humans sociologically formulate their epistemology and phenomenology. The first is what he calls the 'the personal *troubles* of milieu' and the second is 'the public *issues* of social structure.'[300] Mills explains that human troubles are founded in the private human experience between themselves and within their local relationship with others. Issues, transcend the inner private experience of the self and look beyond into the *lounge durée* of what forms the public sphere – in which various milieux come together to shape the larger structure

[295] Abu al-Hasan 'Ali Ibn Muḥammad Ibn Habib Al-Mawardi, *Kitab Aadab Al-Dunya w'al-Din [The Ethics of Religion and of This World]*, ed. Mohamed Fathi Aby Bakr (Al Dar Al Masriya Al Lubnaniya [The Egyptian Lebanese House], 2014), 168.
[296] Muhsin Mahdi, *Ibn Khaldun's Philosophy of History: A Study in the Philosophic Foundation of the Science of Culture* (Routledge, 2015).
[297] Al-Mawardi, *Kitab Aadab Al-Dunya w'al-Din [The Ethics of Religion and of This World]*, 169.
[298] Salvatore, *The Islamicate Adab Tradition vs. the Islamic Shari 'a, from Pre-Colonial to Colonial*, 13.
[299] Ellen McLarney, "Freedom, Justice, and the Power of Adab," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* (New York, USA: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 27, doi:10.1017/S0020743815001452.
[300] Mills, *The Sociological Imagination*, 8.

of the social and historic fabric of a society. Subsequently, troubles are private matters that form the values of individuals that are threatened, while issues are public matters that form values of a society that are threatened.[301] The private experience of the individual self ultimately shapes the values of society, which means that the private and public spheres maintain a dialectic relationship where each influence one another. Therefore, Al Mawardi argues by practicing *adab* privately through self-discipline to deal with self-conduct, family affairs, and private matters, can the Muslim subject face the challenges and complications of the issues in the public sphere. Accordingly, *adab* connects between the public and private spaces without separation, once again challenging Eurocentric secular views of private-public distinction.

Consequently, following sections will explore the performative agency of the Muslim Malay diaspora and how they dabble with the convolutions of traditional identity and Muslim identity in a new homeland. I argue that given the theoretical framework of *adab,* Malay Muslims utilize their Islamic civility to enforce their active civil consciousness in Canadian society. Ending with a further discussion with the intricacies of home and belonging in a transterritorial global movement that seems to coincide with the propagated notion of a transterritorial *ummah* and the importance of founding a sense of home and belonging.

4.4 Performative Agency

Judith Butler's extensive work on performativity and the sexual and dispossessed subject has influenced literary work on the topics of subjectivity and performativity. Performativity is for sure an act of agency,[302] but it does not refer to just an act of speech. It is a normative construct that produces and reproduces a cycle of norms – "they are vectors of power and of history"[303] governed by space and time. Accordingly, performativity is not only the

> explicit speech act that exercises performative power; other exercises include (a) the mundane and repeated acts of delimitation that seek to maintain a separation among economic, social and political spheres, (b) modes of prediction and anticipation that constitute part of economic activity itself, and (c) organizations of human and non-human networks, including technology,

[301] Ibid.
[302] Judith Butler, "Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics.," *AIBR. Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana* 4, no. 3 (2009): i.
[303] Ibid., xi.

> that enter into specific economic activities such as price-setting. Hence, even when Bernanke speaks, it is not simply that a subject performs a speech act; rather, a set of relations and practices are constantly renewed, and agency traverses human and non-human domains. What this means, though, is that performativity implies a certain critique of the subject.[304]

Therefore, Butler argues that performativity is not a singular act or behavior, rather it is replication of a norm or set of norms, that could originate from the past concealing their way into the conventions of the present through repetition and reproduction of the social, political, and economic spheres. Moreover, Butler argues that people's performativity of norms is no merely theatrical, referring to Hannah Arendt's theatrical performativity in the *Origins of Totalitarianism*; "indeed, its apparent theatricality is produced to the extent that its historicity remains dissimulated (and, conversely, its theatricality gains certain inevitability given the impossibility of a full disclosure of its historicity)" but more importantly, "a performative is that discursive practice that enacts or produces that which it names, it is by virtue of the power of a subject or its will that a phenomenon is named into being."[305] This performativity of norms thus reflects trends and epistemologies of the social, and in transmodern means, global world. Henceforth, Butler asserts that "Indeed, there is no reproduction of the social world that is not at the same time a reproduction of those norms that govern the intelligibility of the body in space and time. And by 'intelligibility' I include 'readability in social space and time and so an implicit relation to others (and to possibilities of marginalization, abjection, and exclusion) that is conditioned and mediated by social norms."[306] There is an evident power dynamic that reflects itself in the power of recognition. This will be reflected in the experience of my participants on how they see themselves as Malay Canadians and the cultural pressures enforced on Malay women to uphold and preserve tradition.

In order to perform, one has to be a subject of recognition. To be a subject is to comply with certain norms that make the subject distinguishable, be it gender, sexual, racial, nationalistic, institutional or religious expectations. Non-compliance to the standardized norms calls into question the sustainability of one's life and the ontological conditions of one's perseverance as seen in the example of Jehan in chapter

[304] Judith Butler, "Performative Agency," *Journal of Cultural Economy* 3, no. 2 (2010): 150.
[305] Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of Sex* (Taylor & Francis, 2011), 12–13.
[306] Butler, "Performativity, Precarity and Sexual Politics.," x–xi.

two and her decision to move into a co-ed student house, and will be seen in the case of Eliza. We think of subjects as the kind of beings who ask for recognition politically or through national and international law and that holds true but, recognition is primarily social and anthropological in the sense that it is a bottom-up movement. Institutions, communities, and politics are made of individuals and it is the social fabric in the private spheres that manifest in the public spheres. As explained by Taylor in chapter one, recognition is not just an individualistic process. It is collective because it relies on social organization. Albeit so, it is individualistic in the sense that the subject must process the various knowledge production of cultural and social epistemologies surrounding them including featuring the capability of both translation and invention of these epistemologies[307] as discussed in chapter two. This method of assessment is what Butler refers to as a performative agency. The agency the subject embodies in their assessment of norms and socio-political spheres and the will to act upon these assessments in their life choices, in compliance and/or retaliation.

[307] Butler, "Performative Agency," 155.

4.5 Locating the Canadian Subject: The *Shogonosh*

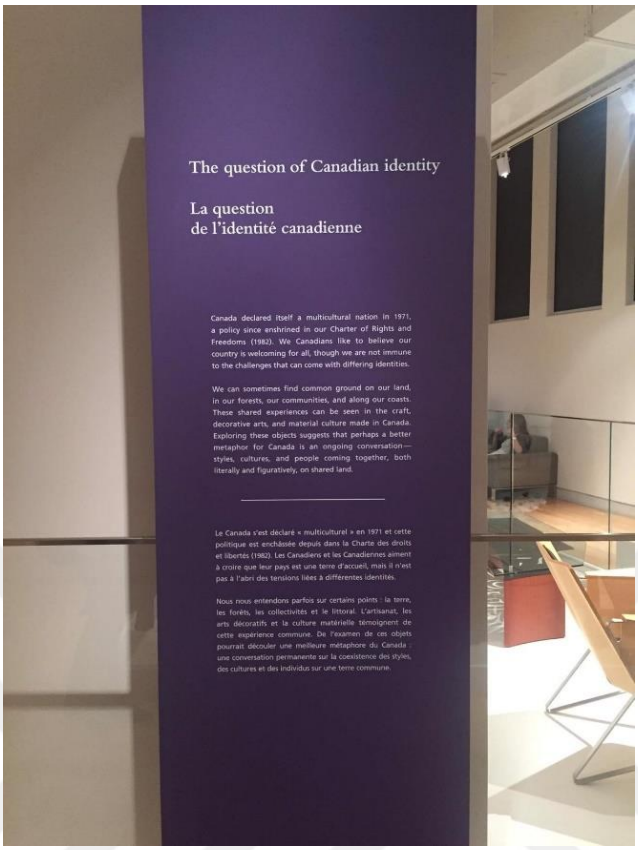

Figure 4. 1: An Information banner in the Royal Arts Museum in Toronto in the Canadian division of the museum.

It reads "Canada declared itself a multicultural nation in 1971, a policy since enshrined in our Charter of Rights and Freedom (1982). We Canadians like to believe our country is welcoming for all, though we are not immune to the challenges that can come with differing identities."

On that note, I would like to bring in an important argument Arendt proposes. Arendt states that "We became aware of the existence of a right to have rights (and that means to live in a framework where one is judged by one's actions and opinions) and a right to belong to some kind of organized community, only when millions of people emerged who had lost and could not regain these rights because of the new global political situation."[308] The right for recognition, while is seen as an internationally acclaimed humanitarian right, remains a constant battle of generations paving the way for recognition. Consider this conversation with Nor for instance, where I ask her what makes her Canadian, she then answers,

[308] Hannah Arendt, *The Origins of Totalitarianism*, vol. 244 (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 1973), 296–97.

> **Nor:** Honestly, Am I really Canadian? That's what I think to myself. I don't call myself Canadian. I feel like the only people who are rightfully Canadian are the people who own this land – Indigenous. If you are not one of those then…
> **Me:** So what is the connection with land? For example, do you have a Sri Lankan passport?
> **Nor:** No.
> **Me:** But your extended family is there and you live here and you ascribe to the culture here.
> **Nor:** Honestly, I have no idea [when it comes to the connection with land] because you are right. I am doing everything here but not the place I am from. When I go back to where I am from I would say I am from Canada, but I still wouldn't say I am Canadian.
> **Me:** But I feel we are more hesitant to call ourselves Canadian when white folks are not.
> **Nor:** I think it's because the whole diversity issue, and multiculturalism. It's the whole being a minority. If you were to put a color on Canada you would not put Brown, you would put Caucasian usually for the most part. I think that's why people [minorities] are not comfortable saying it, and also at the same time, if you have generations that are born and raised in Canada I feel it makes you more Canadian.

I met with Nor the first time in one of the cafés in Toronto where we conversed extensively about our views on Canadianness and Muslimness. Nor belongs to the minority Sri Lankan Malays in Ontario who often gather in their own separate community that is distinct from that of the Malaysian or Singaporean Malays. Nor highlights a relevant concern to that of Arendt, generations of a particular race and religion are needed to fight their way through recognition often on a particular land. After all, "it is not that we first need a place or a mode of belonging, but that the rights we exercise are grounded in pre-legal rights to belonging and to place", Butler asserts. Hence, signifying the importance of territoriality even in the midst of a transterritorial global system. My focus on transterritoriality in this research is not to dismiss the importance of land and the physical, cultural, and spiritual security, often conformity, it provides. Many of the events and communities that shape our senses of self are connected to the families and friendships we form, including work we practice, in spatially bounded geographies which form particular social norms associated with particular identifiable locations. Territoriality thus plays a major role in the constant formation of identity.

This becomes challenged, however, when people immigrate to other geographic territories with a different and similar set of established norms and civility. The

stability territoriality generally represents in the constellations of the social, material and natural entities, are challenged by people's movements between settings – significantly influencing their subjectivity.[309] This is where the neoliberal identity fits with its flexibility jumping between territoriality and transterritorial as indicated by Nor's visits to her extended family. She reconciles this transterritorialty by describing herself as someone who resides in Canada [accordingly adhering to a set of Canadian performative values] but not necessarily a Canadian. Pointing once again to the fluidity of the global civil society – the avoidance of categorization. Nor is also aware that it is in this categorization that she is otherized as a nonwhite Muslim woman of a first generation immigrant parents, which explains her weariness and awareness of the socio-historical context behind what a 'Canadian' entails. This is noteworthy once observed as part of the bigger picture of the history behind the politics of recognition in Canada.

When Pierre Trudeau, in 1969, proposed the assimilationist *White Paper*, with a desire to revoke the Indian Status of the Indigenous people of Canada, which distinguishes their rights as the original settlers of the land, and their history of physical and cultural genocide, a serious backlash from the Indigenous people marked a new era of Indigenous resistance. The *White Paper* of 1969 was an attempt to centralize the government's control over Indigenous affairs[310] and was accordingly revoked due to it deemed "unfeasible."[311] From then on forward the term *Shognosh*,[312] an Anishinaabeg term (belonging to the Anishinaabe Indigenous tribe), came to be. It refers to Canada's European settler populations, primarily those of British origin. It also refers to people

[309] David Conradson and Deirdre McKay, "Translocal Subjectivities: Mobility, Connection, Emotion," *Mobilities* 2, no. 2 (2007): 168.
[310] Elisabetta A Kerr, "Pierre Trudeau's White Paper and the Struggle for Aboriginal Rights in Canada: An Analysis of the Extent to Which the White Paper Was a Turning Point in the Struggle for Aboriginal Rights and Land Claims in Canada," *The Great Lakes Journal of Undergraduate History* 5, no. 1 (2017): 51.
[311] Ibid.
[312] In the words of David McDonald, "Writing in Ontario near Six Nations territory I use the term "Shognosh" to refer to Canada's European settler populations. NB this Anishinaabeg term can also refer to non-white people like me who are assimilated into European ways of thinking and acting. This is consistent with the use of "Pakeha" in New Zealand to designate those of European ancestry and others who are not Maori. Since it is reasonable in political science to refer to Aboriginal people we must in the interests of fairness be willing to categorise ourselves using Anishinaabeg, Cree, Haida and other languages of this country. The use of Shognosh throughout is in my view a crucial signifier in the interests of academic rigour."

of color who immigrated from other parts of the world.[313] Additionally, Indigenous people of Canada refused to be covered under the Canadian Multicultural Policy that took place in the 1960s. Not because they are in rejection of multiculturalism, but because they were not consulted in the formation of multiculturalism as a new Canadian social norm. They argue that multiculturalism has more to do with "the interests of the immigrant ethnic communities than the interests and concerns of the Indigenous people."[314] Instead of recognizing their rights and distinct status, the 1960s Multiculturalism Policy turns the original settlers into immigrants of color.

The irony is, if the Meech Lake Accord recognizes the Quebecois (belonging to the French Province of Canada, Quebec) as a distinct nation, then why is it that the Indigenous people are not recognized as so? It is perceived that the Eurocentric norms of Canadian multiculturalism denies the social civil norms of the Indigenous people in the dominantly "white" public sphere by pitting the *Shognosh* (white and nonwhite immigrants) against them - projecting the Indigenous as ethnocentrically exotic and chauvinistic.[315] Such a transformation in Canada's history has much to do with its colonial "displacement of one form of interconnection by another. This is not to deny that colonialism, or an expanding capitalism, does indeed have profoundly dislocating effects on existing societies. But by always foregrounding the spatial distribution of hierarchical power relations, we can better understand the process whereby a space achieves a distinctive *identity* as a place."[316] In other words, being Canadian entails that in the recognizability of others there is the unrecognizability of another. In light of this reality, new normative values form in the fight for equal recognition, as will be demonstrated below. This fight, as discussed in chapter one, is entrenched in Canada's neoliberal multicultural social structure that affects how through the imagined perception of the other minorities are treated and how they perfrom their subjectivity.

[313] David Bruce MacDonald, "Reforming Multiculturalism in a Bi-National Society: Aboriginal Peoples and the SSearch for Truth and Reconciliation in Canada," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 39, no. 1 (2014): 67.
[314] H Srikanth, "Multiculturalism and the Aboriginal Peoples in Canada," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 2012, 19.
[315] Ibid.
[316] Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," 168.

4.5.1 The Khaldunian Hierarchy of Multiculturalism

Canadian multiculturalism also entails an evident socio-racial and cultural hierarchal hegemony. In a Khaldunian sense, this is only natural. In the much acclaimed classical work of Ibn Khaldun, once a group of people reach, in his terms the superiority of 'royal authority (*mulk*)', this group exercises more than leadership, it exercises the "superiority and the power to rule by force."[317] Hence, the domination of a Canadian white Anglo-Saxon culture in a broad sense. Accordingly, "once [a] group feeling has established superiority over the people who share (in that particular group feeling), it will, by its very nature, seek superiority over people of other group feelings unrelated to the first."[318] By group feeling, we can assume it refers to the structure of social organization including social norms of a particular civility. Therefore, the forceful domination (in many cases imperialism) of a set of particular social norms in the public sphere naturally leads to the submission of another, such is the case with Indigenous social norms and that of minorities. Ibn Khaldun asserts that "even if an individual tribe has different 'houses' and many diverse group feelings, still, there must exist a group feeling that is stronger than all the other group feelings combined, that is superior to them all and makes them subservient, and in which all the diverse group feelings coalesce, as it were, to become one greater group feeling."[319] If we look at this in a Canadian context, that means even if for example Muslims of a variety of racial minorities ascribe to Islam as their encompassing neotribal form, they will still have to give in to the propagated set of cultural values of the majority. In this case, they are the Eurocentric values of multiculturalism and propagated slogans of 'unity in diversity' so to speak, and this applies to all immigrants including Indigenous groups.

While the liberal statements of unity in diversity is beneficial to others, it is worth acknowledging that it could reflect a much factional reality to the Indigenous struggle. On that note, immigrant groups have a responsibility towards the original settlers of Canada and it is worth mentioning that almost all participants questioned about their knowledge of Indigenous rights, responded in awareness of the Indigenous issues in Canada. Sheikh Abdullah Idris, senior community advisor at the GTA community mosque, ISNA, said in an interview with him that

[317] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, ed. Franz Rosenthal, *An Introduction to History*, vol. 3, 1958, 185.
[318] Ibid.
[319] Ibid.

> These are people have the right to claim their land, or at least be treated honorably treated on their own land. And I think that the government of Canada and all these apologetic notes that they made is just *yani* [a small] part of it. Having certain privileges for these people to compensate for what happened to them such as the history of the residential schools. People [assuming white Canadians] are trying to correct their mistakes and people have to be honored for what they are. And this is an Islamic principal by the way. Our job as Muslims is to help them to pursue that, to be recognized for what they are, and to be compensated for what they have lost.

Additionally, the mosque recently assigned a member to initiate projects to bridge the gap between the Canadian Muslim community and Indigenous groups. Nevertheless, as Srikanth points out, certain groups continue to have it better than others. Even when minorities face discrimination due to skin color or religious belief, which has been the case with a few of my participants, Canada's colonial history established its multiculturalism policy to favor immigrant rights over Indigenous rights[320] – initially to reconcile the British French divide then eventually immigrants of color through continuous advocation and resistance. acordinglySo far, there is a growing verbal acknowledgement of the colonial history inflicted upon the Indigenous people by my participants, but I have not observed a tremendous effort of mobilization to bridge a connection between Muslims on a macro-scale and Indigenous groups. That is not to say that immigrants of color have it easy, but this contributes to the role Muslims play in terms of the civil relation with original settlers of a land they now call home.

Nor faced layered exclusivity growing up in school due to her brown skin color, similarly so did Mohamed who strived to fit in, growing up in a majority white school. Fatin describes the inferiority she felt in earlier years as a newcomer,

> You are just feeling inferior sometimes. Especially because my size I am short and small, so that made me feel even more inferior. I am a woman of color, I wear the hijab, I don't speak English the way others do [meaning the cultural language, not linguistically]. I'm not as educated the way others are about Canadian history. They know the contemporary Canadian things, I don't. So all these things that made me think I am lower, I am less. So I tried to hide, I tried to ignore, and make them as if they don't matter making myself more visible to my teachers as she is the smart girl, she is the nice one. She is the good Muslim. Even being Muslim. In my head they must think I'm a Muslim, I'm submissive, I'm part of a terrorist group, I do this, I do that and all these weird things. It's sad but it is true. That was my way of trying to fit in. Unfortunately. But you know I'm glad I did it. Maybe other people cope with it differently, but I did it and it worked. I did it to gain respect. I know it's not

[320] Srikanth, "Multiculturalism and the Aboriginal Peoples in Canada."

> the best and it's not healthy, but I did it to gain respect from people who are not newcomers.

And so colored minorities strive for equal respect and recognition in a postcolonial Canada. Ibn Khaldun argues that the natural outcome of such multicultural societies, results into the formation of subconscious alliances of integration (in the case of the Indigenous, assimilation) between the majority group and minorities; "if the one group feeling overpowers the other and makes it subservient to itself, the two group feelings enter into close contact, and the (defeated) group feeling gives added power to the (victorious) group feeling, which, as a result, sets its goal of superiority and domination higher than before."[321] That being said, the socio-political fabric in Canada is much more complex than a defeater and defeated.

The coloniality of being of immigrants in Canada is affected by the evident political and legal symbolisms of British constitutional monarchy, Queen Elizabeth II is still head of state (even if considered superficially by some), French and English are the official languages of the state; the federal and provincial legislative system is based on the Westminster legislature; the urban modernization process of the urban city changed names of streets, towns and cities from Indigenous given names to English or French names for the most part; common law is based on British common law (excluding Quebec). These Eurocentric integrated adaptations can be traced down to the highly debated naturalization process of the Canadian point system and citizenship test that immigrants have to take. The point system is meant to represent the skills and assets an immigrant has in benefit of the Canadian neoliberal economy and can be measured as a probable indicator of how fast an immigrant can integrate in society[322] – hinting to Canada's neoliberal multiculturalistic quality. The turning of Canada into a "host" state through neoliberal means has allowed for this subconscious mainstreaming of multiculturalism. Nonetheless, as much as the *Shognosh* immigrant is affected by this Eurocentric body *politique*, they also affect the structuring of its fabric by the norms they bring along with them. In recognizing the Indigenous history of Canada and the relation Muslims establish with this history upon making Canada their home, we are taking a step towards a transmodernistic vision beyond the Eurocentricity of the established state structure.

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[321] Ibn Khaldun, *The Muqaddimah*, 3:185.
[322] Srikanth, "Multiculturalism and the Aboriginal Peoples in Canada," 18.

4.6 On Being a Muslim Malay Canadian

MacDonald argues that immigrants integrate with little agency over their living society; "An immigrant's sense of belonging is a reflection of integration into social networks and institutions, and it fosters feelings of social solidarity with the core or socially predominant group."[323] Immigrants are pinned against the predominant society and their cultural success, while the success of multiculturalism is evaluated upon how much they give up of their own traditions to assimilate into the predominate one.[324] The problem with this statement is that it strips away the agency of the immigrant, particularly the colored immigrant, from its participation as performative agents in Canadian social and political sphere. It is here where I believe my participants seem to showcase otherwise, as they fight to preserve their origins while embracing newly formed norms of Muslim Canadianness.

Consider these statements from Mohamed, a Sri Lankan graduate student, Fatin, and Shila when I asked them what makes them Canadian. Mohamed responded jokingly, "Make sure that you eat pancakes everyday. You gotta watch hockey. A lot of hockey. That's very stereotypical, but Canadian is being a good Muslim" then he seriously affirmed by asking "Cause I think that being a good Canadian would mean, what? Being a good neighbor, being an outstanding citizen, having good morals, being the best person you can be, and also accepting others for their differences too." Fatin confirmed that pride by stating that,

> I think maybe this sounds cliché but everybody says what makes Canada strong I guess is all those different ingredients in one dish. I'm a proud Muslim Canadian with Malaysian roots. My husband is Bangladeshi. I'm proud to uphold those values in our family. I'm not just one thing. I'm proud to live in Canada with Canadian values that uphold these different cultural backgrounds. We take the good in everything and make it our own.

She then continued,

> I'm a Malay coming from Malaysia with Indian and Chinese, with Javanese background, married a Bangaldeshi, raising a mixed kid, and living in an English speaking country. It's amazing, isn't it? I think it's beautiful, rather than being one thing, which there is nothing wrong with that too, but - *allhamudillah*. So we are close to every culture, not just Asian.

[323] MacDonald, "Reforming Multiculturalism in a Bi-National Society: Aboriginal Peoples and the SSearch for Truth and Reconciliation in Canada," 77.
[324] Ibid.

Shila shared how when she and her family moved to Canada almost eleven years ago, she was touched by the multicultural inhabited norms. She recalls, "When we first landed in Canada and went to the immigration office to get our PR cards, there was a statement hung at the entrance that said 'We welcome the world.' For me that statement was so heartwarming." Subsequently she describes,

> When we moved here, my dad reminded us that we are different. How we live is different than they live here, so make sure that you behave the way they do. Like the culture of opening the door. They [Canadians] are nice, very respectful, and kind to everyone regardless of their skin color and who they are, and I feel that even people who live with disability they would include them. I would see people with disability go to the same school, same building like everyone else, but you don't see that in Singapore. They separate them but here they are more inclusive with everyone. That has been my experience so far. Maybe as I advance in the workforce I might experience otherwise.

Multiculturalism and cosmopolitanism are clearly embraced social norms and an emphasized value as a source of pride that will soon be seen to be molded with the support of their Muslimness.

When I asked however, what about their Malayness, and how much of Canadian norms would a Malay accept to integrate, Shila asserted that would be the good moral traits. On a much less nuanced response, Mohamed responded by first confirming that his Islamic faith comes ahead of his culture, which is something he finds challenging in his Sri Lankan diaspora, because he finds that they mix too much misconceived cultural practices with the Islamic faith. He responds,

> I will always be Malay. I know that. Because I have my heritage from Malaysia, but the thing that keeps that identity I would say it is your culture and your tradition that you bring with you, passed down from your family – it originates from your ancestry.
>
> My upbringing was here [in Canada] and there is a pride in saying that. My background is more complex than just saying that I am Sri Lankan Malaysian. There is history in that.

Fatin similarly expressed similar sentiments affirming that likewise in Malaysia, people can "mix a lot of the Malayness with Islam. So for example, I know one of the aunties married someone from Nigeria and in Malaysia there is a lot of anti-blackness. You are not supposed to be racist [in Islam]. So in Malaysia if they put culture ahead of religion, maybe they do in certain cases if they sense some otherness in what they are comfortable with." She later addresses the question of integration speculating as she concludes laughing,

> When you ask these questions about integration, I start to ask myself then how Malay Muslim am I? How much? The Malay part, is it just the blood? The Muslim part, how much like do I believe in everything? This is hard, my parents didn't raise us to make us super Malay. I love the Malay part of me. I cannot say I'm not proud of my Malay identity, but for the Muslim part, I try to put religion above culture. But now I question why am I trying to compare my Malay part to my Canadian part, because maybe 80% of me is already Canadian.

And so, Islam, as a religion, comes off as a decision maker in the shaping of the Malay Canadian normative civil conduct. Sheikh Idris also pointed out that a healthy Muslim Canadian community can be established by a better and proper understanding of religion over culture. When I inquired about what he meant by a 'proper' Islam, he clarified stating by preserving people's rights, by establishing healthy families, by respecting teachers as upholders of knowledge and granting them a reputable socio-economic standing, and by having good aspiring role models for a flourishing civil conduct. In view of that, for the immigrant experience, normative epistemologies are in constant journeying and negotiation. The norms that were once localized, travel along with the immigrant to face a set of new norms and territorial challenges such as in the question of diversity and multiculturalism. Migrants then become agents who try to reconcile their mobility with the new territoriality that is also affected by transterritorial social movement. For the Muslim Malay Canadian, they do so through a prioritization of certain aspects of faith, an awareness of tradition and through social participation.

Sheikh Idris, addressed the rising political activism of the younger Muslim Canadian generation;

> Muslim activism doesn't have to be only in the streets. There are so many ways you can partake in, such as grassroots and whatnot or posts that can influence the decision making process of the country. Generally speaking most Muslims come from dictatorial countries. Dictatorial countries do not have a democratic experience of voting and so on. Also, politics in our countries is a dirty game. People don't like to be in politics as a result, or it is a risky game. You can get arrested or killed. In general, Muslims avoid it. I have been here [Canada] for forty three years and I never voted. People [Muslims] don't think it is an important thing, but recently things changed. The community is growing and Muslims need services, and that requires connections and influence.

He continued explaining that Muslims faced immense stress during the conservative rule of Stephen Harper 2006-2015;

> It became very ugly during Harper. His entire campaign was against Muslims. Muslims had to do one of two things: either they go to political parties and fight through this, or they mobilize themselves into institutions such as Muslimvote, and that all become very effective. As a result, Muslim votes and participation has went up, to some say 68-78%. The result now we have nine MPs [Members of Parliament] and the government ordered three Muslim ministers. That never happened. Muslims started to feel that yes we can make it up there. In this election, there are more Muslims who have run for elections. In the old days, people [Muslims] used to doubt any person [Muslim] who goes in politics in Canada. They think they are government agents spying on Muslims. Now you have the younger generation coming to tell us 'It's best to be on the dinner table than to be the food on the table.'[325]

Statistics Canada shows that in the 2000 federal elections, the Muslim voters' turnout was 25% less than Christian and Jewish Canadians.[326] Including 19% less than Hindu Canadians and 14% lower than Sikh Canadians, both of who have a similar immigration history into Canada.[327] As a result, the majority of the participants were eager to vote in the 43rd Canadian federal election, for many it was the first time. Norhani, excitingly explained how on their community Whatsapp circles, different members have been reminding each other to cast their ballot. Amina has conversed with her children about the importance of voting urging to vote. Shila concludes that she is satisfied that now she realizes the importance of such a performance while she is younger rather than wait till she is older. As a result, the Canadian Muslim Vote, founded in 2015 to educated Muslims on the importance of political mobilization and voting, features a report stating that in partnership with 250 mosques across the country, the Muslim voters' turnout increased to 69% with a 71-89 turnout in all the residential areas they advocated in.[328] That is to say, that the coloniality of being of apparent Eurocentric socio-cultural domination is being challenged by the Muslim immigrant community to enforce their agency.

They also do so through much more subtle means of activism. Members of the Malay community have been actively arranging events with local churches, mosques, and social service organizations to encourage its members to volunteer and participate in social causes. In February 2019, they arranged and interfaith volunteering event where

[325] The exact current number of Muslim MPs is twelve.
They are two Muslim cabinet ministers, not three.
[326] Daood Hamdani, "Canadian Muslims: A Statistical Review," *The Canadian Dawn Foundation*, 2015.
[327] Ibid., 19.
[328] "Past Elections," *Canadian Muslim Vote*, 2019, https://www.canadianmuslimvote.ca/past_elections.

they organized a soup kitchen for the homeless. In November 2019, DMDI held an event titled "Islamophobia & Confronting Hate", hosting a member of the National Council of Canadian Muslim and a Malay member from the community to raise awareness about the rising Islamophobia in Canada, with a talk on prophetic guidance in times of discrimination. Generally, other members are also active volunteers in food drives for food banks. Given this context, Laura Pottinger argues that "Academic theorisations of political activism (action on behalf of a cause) tend to overlook the everyday embodied repetitions and practices of care that make modest, yet purposeful, contributions to progressive social and environmental goals. While traditional accounts champion and romanticise antagonistic, vocal and demonstrative forms of protest, geographers have begun to expand the category of activism to include small, quotidian acts of kindness, connection and creativity."[329] Accordingly, *adab* and social participation inspires a civil conduct that fights for recognition but also respectability. I argue that *adab* can be viewed as a form of quiet or subtle activism. It takes immense effort to discipline the self in the private to motivate positive civil conduct in the public. Additionally, there needs to be more recognition of the subtle actions of members of society that can influence major local and global change. Pottinger's ethnography on community gardening is proof of how a generally dismissed activity such as gardening s practiced by conscious agents who garden for the purpose of preserving the environment and nature. And so, my participants have displayed conscious activism on their side to voice their right for recognition with an understanding of Canada's embedded racial hierarchy.

4.7 Performing Translocality

In understanding where the Malay Muslim stands in Canadian society, comes another important factor of identity performativity, and that is understanding how religious and traditional norms travel with the diaspora and how it affects their performativity as Muslim Malay Canadian agents. In order to understand Arjun Appadurai's coined term translocality, it is important to first understand what is meant by locality. Appadurai defines it as a "phenomenological quality, constituted by a series of links between the sense of social immediacy, the technologies of interactivity, and the relativity of contexts. This phenomenological quality, which expresses itself in certain kinds of

[329] Laura Pottinger, "Planting the Seeds of a Quiet Activism," *Area* 49, no. 2 (2017): 215.

agency, sociality, and reproducibility…"[330] Appadurai's analysis is significant because it observes the minority experience in phenomenological terms which is as important as looking at the immigration experience in spatial terms. This is reflected as my participants often express their sentiments of belonging with feelings, starting their sentences with "I feel…" He then coins an equally significant term, ethnoscapes. Ethnoscapes defies the misconception that cultural norms are spatially bounded which clearly disregards the immigrant experience. Ethnoscapes are meant to "to get away from the idea that group identities necessarily imply that cultures need to be seen as spatially bounded, historically unselfconscious, or ethnically homogeneous forms"[331] to "describe the ways in which emplaced communities become extended, via the geographical mobility of their inhabitants, across particular sending and destination contexts."[332] Such social communities are the immigrants who were once localised and then became internationalised. A translocality is thus "a place whose social architecture and relational topologies have been refigured on a transnational basis."[333] More importantly, the term acknowledges the significance of the role normative localities continue play as sources of subjectivity, creating meaning and influencing identity for the immigrant.

Simultaneously, Appadurai argues that "the distinctiveness of place is retained rather than eroded by global migration flows." In the case of the Malays in this study, they take with them what makes them Malay culturally as they moved to Canada, and consciously or even subconsciously, they take with them what makes them Canadian culturally when they visit their land of origin. Take Shafiqah for example as she enthusiastically describes proudly what Malay means to her,

> For me what it means to be Malay is to be understanding of certain customs that come with where I am from. My Malay identity is my skin color, it's my name, it's an Arabic name. I'll just say it, but there is context to it, because there is a lot of Nur Shafiqahs in Singapore and Malaysia. I don't know where it comes from but there are a thousand people out there who share the same name and of Malays descend. Malayness also means to me being proud of the artistic influence that comes with the culture. It comes with the textile, the music, the dances, the spoken word and poetry, the mannerism that comes with it as well. All of that I find beautiful. I should send you a picture of my office. My office is filled with a lot of pictures of Malays diaspora memorabilia. It has

[330] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, 1:178.
[331] Ibid., 1:183.
[332] Conradson and McKay, "Translocal Subjectivities: Mobility, Connection, Emotion," 168.
[333] Ibid.

> Batik on my wall, a space map, I got a whole map of Southeast Asia because I'm so proud of where I come from, because of the colors, because it truly reminds me of not just where I'm from, but where my ancestors are from. I think for me, one of the things that I'm most proud of when it comes to our Malay culture is exactly that, is how we express ourselves. There is…we express so well artistically, in our mannerism in our language. I find, you know I speak English, I speak French, I speak Spanish, but there is nothing like the Malay language and the subtleness and the gentleness that it represents, and I think that is one thing I'm most proud of, but it is often taken for granted in our community. Culture is a double-edged sword.

Shafiqah, as mentioned in chapter one, has experienced her fair share of trying to correct misconceptions of her extended family about their supposed Westernization, but she shares that has been a concern her parents were aware of when they decided to immigrate;

> They got those questions he moment they decided to migrate to Canada. There's 'Oh your kids are gonna lose their values.' There is this constant fear that they'll forget where they come from, they won't be able to speak their language. So I know that fear that ensuring that the culture is preserved is very front and centre for my parents.

Accordingly, her parents made a point that they would speak Malay in the house, her mother would often play the Singaporean radio online so that they would become familiar with the music. Her father was advised by her grandfather than once they arrive they settle close to a mosque, which is an advise her father took heed to. This process of exchange, however, produces a number of contesting challenges of norms and epistemologies. Appadurai argues that the production of locality, anthropologically

> (as a structure feeling, a property of social life, and an ideology of situated community) is increasingly a struggle. There are many dimensions to this struggle, and I shall focus here on three: (1) the steady increase in the efforts of the modern nation-state to define all neighborhoods under the sign of its forms of allegiance and affiliation; (2) the growing disjuncture between territory, subjectivity and collective social movement, and (3) the steady erosion, principally due to the force and form of electronic mediation, of the relationship between spatial and virtual neighborhoods. To make things yet more complex, these three dimensions are themselves interactive.[334]

That is why for instance, Shafiqah felt that connecting to the Singaporean radio online was a sentiment that brought closure to her mom more so than to her. She explains, "I don't think there is a conscious effort to preserve [on her part] it [Malay culture], but

[334] Appadurai, *Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization*, 1:189.

subconsciously I try to retain bits and pieces of it." This shows a natural outcome of how the older generation is naturally attached to memories of the spaces and time of their growth.

These memories attached to culture and tradition take a different form as the younger newer generation established its own memories and understanding of tradition in a different space and time than that of the parents. And it is translocality that constantly defies the boundness of tradition through time and space. Arendt has addressed the formed bonds between people of diverse backgrounds more so on a political scale of legal rights, but it is equally important to address the basic materials of life exchanged behind the formation of such social bonds. For immigrants, their subjectivity has much to do with the basic needs of identity performativity that can be much intertwined with traditional performativity. Like traditional performativity of aesthetics of food and art, or traditional performativity of certain cultural values such as clapping ones hand in front of their heads as a sign of gratitude or gender expectations.

4.7.1 On the Mobility of Tradition and Culture: Artistic Agency

Figure 4. 2 Eid gathering in 2019. Men sitting on the ground reciting takbeerat. Women listening from behind attentively and food set to be served soon after.

On Saturday, August 19, 2019, first day of *Eid Al Adha*, I was invited to join the community's Eid gathering in one of the community centres in Mississauga. As I entered the room, a lot of the members were dressed in colorful *Baju Kurung* and *Baju Melayu*, a few were not. A mix of traditional and non-traditional Malay food was set in an open buffet style on a long table on the side of the room – positioned just about right to leave space for both lines up to be formed on both sides. There was gender fluidity but also a timid sense of gender separation. Some tables were full of mothers and only female occupied while others were only male occupied. I sat at one of the two tables that were more gender fluid with both genders mingling and eating with one other. I suppose there is an element of age and familiarity to also put into consideration. It seemed that most of those who sat at the table I sat at as well were more familiar with each other, either old friends, family friends, from the same university, or members of MASAT. They were also a majority in their twenties and thirties. That is not to say that men and women did not interact with one another beyond the tables. On the contrary, some helped with setting the place and the food and during clean up, particularly younger men, but it was quite evident that it was women who were particularly active in arranging and organizing the space and the gathering.

The event started first with a senior highly respected female member of the community welcoming everyone out loud and then requesting from the men to take their position and start the *takbeerat*.[335] The men formed a circle sitting on the ground and started chanting the *takbeerat* out loud and the women sat in silence and contemplation. Ten minutes after a man was invited to the front, dressed in his *baju melayu* and a *songkok* covering the top of his head, to give a short Islamic reminder of the importance of the *Eid Al Adha* and what it resembles in the blessing of having a community and repentance. Overall, indicating a sense of religious visibility. With that celebration has started with members of the community soon after lining up organizedly for food. I managed to approach the senior female member who organized the event, and who also invited me to attend. We met for the first time and for the sake of respecting her anonymity I will refer to her as Zeina. As a mother, Zeina's main concern was the preservation of their roots as a Malay diaspora in Canada. She was clearly proud of her heritage explaining how all these efforts are for the sake of preserving language, religion, and the Malay traditions that preserve their Malay identity. She was excited and equally concerned. An echoed narrative was expressed at our table as I got to know those I sat with. Syafiq and Aqil were especially enthusiastic about sharing the history of the Malay Archipelago. Jehan and I conversed over some of the stereotypical challenges of Malay women and personal incidents of academic discrimination we faced as visible Muslim women. Many of the others who surrounded us spoke and joked comfortably in Bhasa Malay. I left the event noticing a clear visibility of certain cultural identity performances that are linked to attempts of preservation.

This became more evident in my conversation with Fad, who generously made time to meet me all the way in Mississauga from Waterloo. Fad also happens to be my *silat* guru in 2016-2017. *Silat* is a martial art and a Malay folk dance that is both armed and unarmed, and can include the usage of magic or *sihir* and the connection with energies.[336] The practice of magic and *dabus* [a Malay dance form] is highly debated among Muslim scholars of Islamic law, and thus not all practitioners of *silat* practice magic given its impermissibility in majority opinions of Islamic law.[337]

[335] Spiritual recitations of praising God.
[336] Douglas Farrer, "'Deathscapes' of the Malay Martial Artist," *Social Analysis* 50, no. 1 (2006): 25–50.
[337] Lee Wilson, "Beyond the Exemplary Centre: Knowledge, Power, and Sovereign Bodies in Java," *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 17, no. 2 (2011): 304.

Furthermore, some *silat* gurus would argue that *silat* teaches "people to defend themselves, to attack others in a controlled way, to teach the community defense, and to teach people to die happy. You must be happy in life to die happy. *Silat* must teach you how to live properly, with Islam or other religions, in order to prepare you for death."[338] Therefore, *silat*, is a performative genre of art that disciplines its practitioners a particular kind of civility. *Silat* is also an ecologically reflective art that reflects the biosphere and what nature engulfs. It is implied that Malay art and traditional craft is extracted from floral (plant), fauna (animal), and the cosmos (universe).[339] Hence, *silat* reflects two natural forms: *bunga* (flower) and *buah* (fruit).[340] The movements of *bunga* are often danced at Malay weddings or ceremonies,[341] such as the ones I saw at MuslimFest 2016 and a part of the initial performance in ASEAN 2017, and are considered graceful, improvised, flowy, and circular. The performance of *bunga* can be similar to *tai chi*, only less angular and rigid, and the timing is more fluid than the slow meditative pace of *tai chi*.[342] Some *silat* moves enact Islamic prayer such as the beginning of the performance, the performer claps their hands towards their chest similar to standing form during prayer. It also enacts some Hindu prayers forms, while others summon energy from within the performer or from the surrounding environment.[343] Some *silat* movements mimic the movements of "animals or of human beings engaged in quotidian activities, such as sewing, combing one's hair, or chopping wood."[344] Similarly, Malay art is known for its traditional inspirations from nature. Malay motifs reflecting animals and plants attributes carved on wood, painted, or printed on textile include *kepla cicak* (lizard) , *kuda luat* (sea horse), *badak mudik* (hippo), *kucing lalok* (sleeping cat), *bunga tanjung* (Spanish cherry).[345] All of which signify a wider set of beliefs, norms, and myths. For instance, *kucing lalok* that is the motif of a sleeping cat, symbolizes laziness, while *bunga tanjung* symbolizes generous hospitality.[346]

[338] Farrer, "'Deathscapes' of the Malay Martial Artist," 29.
[339] Hamdzun Haron et al., "Motifs of Nature in Malay Traditional Craft," *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research* 21, no. 1 (2014): 174.
[340] Farrer, "'Deathscapes' of the Malay Martial Artist," 30.
[341] Ibid.
[342] Ibid.
[343] Ibid.
[344] Ibid.
[345] Haron et al., "Motifs of Nature in Malay Traditional Craft."
[346] Ibid.

Bunga, on the other hand, is danger disguised behind the perceived 'femininity' of buah *silat*. *Buah* is the method of the "practical application of combat strategies to take down and lock an opponent. [It is] the fruit of the flower in the garden of *silat (silat sekebun)*…Beautiful yet deadly, it is the flowery, graceful, aesthetically pleasing dance that differentiates *silat* from other martial arts."[347] Douglas Farrer exclaims how he could not see deadliness behind some of the *bunga* performances, until a *silat* guru held a razor while performing.[348] Similarly, I remember while practicing, heightened Islamophobic incidents happened in 2017 against visible Muslim women, and so our guru suggested to teach us how to use our *hijabs* as a defense weapon if grabbed by it. To look at Malay arts is to look at distinguished linguistic forms of communication.

Butler argues that performative agency involves an ethic of conduct.[349] This is what I refer to as civility. Fad for instance, constructs this civility in a set of performative ethical conduct that he believes can help Muslim Malays become proud active Muslim Malay Canadians.

> First and foremost, they need religion, if they don't behave like a Muslims then the connection will not be there. Somehow, they will feel who am I? So what do I believe? – it is part of being a Malay. Second is race. They need to have some kind of identification about being a Malay. What is Malay? What is the difference between Chinese, Indian, and Eurasian? So what makes me a Malay? So they need to be educated. Third, they need to know food, the cuisines…If you don't know how to cook it, you need to know how to eat it. So you need to know *mee robus*. So being a Malay, you eat the Malay food. It is a bit weird but the fact is people will say, 'Oh you know how to eat *mee robus*!' the connection will be there.

He further continued stating,

> Fourth, if you don't speak Malay you are not a Malay. That's what I believe. Because how can you be an Egyptian if you don't speak the basic Egyptian Arabic? A Malay needs to speak as a Malay, be it you are fluent or non-fluent that's not the case, but you need to understand basic Malay. And lastly, you need to learn *silat*. I am not promoting *silat* but…*silat* links you directly to the royal aspect of Malay, the Sultan. Because in *silat* you will be taught how to behave and how to act when you are facing a royalty. In *silat* it consists of some movements, some customs, some *a'daat* – rituals – that are correlated to the Sultanate. There is a sign of respect, there is the way we walk, the way we take the weapons, the *tompa*, the *parang*. All these weapons can be found in the palace…Those are the challenges the Malay Muslims in Canada are facing.

[347] Farrer, "'Deathscapes' of the Malay Martial Artist," 30.
[348] Ibid.
[349] Butler, "Performative Agency," 155.

I was quite intrigued with his articulate sense of identity as most of those I interviewed did not quite trace it down to a particular set of self-discipline or ethic of conduct as Butler refers to it, and the distincly historically rooted cultural performances. I could not help but ask how he came up with this conclusion of normative conduct, to which he responded,

> I'm not a pure Malay. Why? Because my grandfather was Chinese. People don't even think I look like a Malaysian….You're like a Jackie Chan. Even in school they call me "abe". Abe means old in Chinese. The fact is…I have an identity crisis, I don't even know who I am. My granddad and my mom have some Arabic line. Am I Arabic? No, I am not. Am I a Malay? Maybe I am. The fact is…sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, I was searching for who I am. My dad introduced me to the…during my teenage life I got to understand

All of this highlights Alfred Gell's debate over a reassessment of the role of art in anthropology. Gell argues that, "…anything whatsoever could, conceivably, be an art object from the anthropological point of view, including living persons, because the anthropological theory of art (which we can roughly define as the 'social relations in the vicinity of objects mediating social agency) merges seamlessly with the social anthropology of persons and their bodies."[350] Which challenges the systematic orientalist appropriation of art that has been systemized in the studies of cultural anthropology. Instead, Gell argues that art is an agency tool that is a sophisticated reflection of the complex social constructs of groups, their environments, and their norms. Accordingly, this undoubtedly raises the question of traditional performativity and its relation to identity. Tradition is a concept that can often be mistaken for its stagnancy out of the ignited opposition to the perceived modern. Pop culture has repeatedly portrayed tradition romantically in nostalgic tones and charming allures of the past as the 'good or better times.' Celebrated sitcoms such as *Downton Abbey*, or movies such as the *Tokyo Story* and even the *Harry Potter* series in its portrayal of Hogwarts in its medieval landscape while London in its modern urbanization. Such examples might seem naïve or taken for granted to the common eye, but they impede in the psyche an imagined portrayal of tradition and culture as motionless symbols and normative constructs of a set historical time frame. Rather, it is important to point out that tradition is an interpretive process that is both continuous and discontinuous.[351]

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[350] Alfred Gell, "The Theory of the Art Nexus," *Art and Agency: An Anthropological Theory*, 1998, 7.
[351] Richard Handler and Jocelyn Linnekin, "Tradition, Genuine or Spurious," *The Journal of American Folklore* 97, no. 385 (1984): 273.

I would argue, is even more so a negotiated process of continuity and discontinuity for visible minority immigrant communities in the West. On that note, *silat* would probably be more of a personal choice of martial arts in Malaysia and Singapore. Its emphasis in the Canadian diaspora is due to the unique asset of having a *silat* guru which grants the opportunity of highlighting the importance of its performativity amongst the minority. The importance attached to its relationship with identity is heavily weighed on the scale of performativity in comparison to how its importance to identity would be weighed back in the Malay Archipelago.

Figure 4. 3: Norhani's artwork in her art studio at her home.

Norhani points out a crucial reality that reflects a dilemma for minority recognition in Canada. She excitingly discussed that as a creative person, she values artistic endeavor. With the help of her Malay community and family, she designed her basement as an art workshop where she displays all her artistic work, and often gathers members of her community there. She expresses that being a Muslim and a Malay does not mean that members of these groups have the qualification to represent or should be expected to. For many people, it is still an ongoing process of self-discovery, of learning and relearning. Indicating that there is an expectation that befalls the minority to know

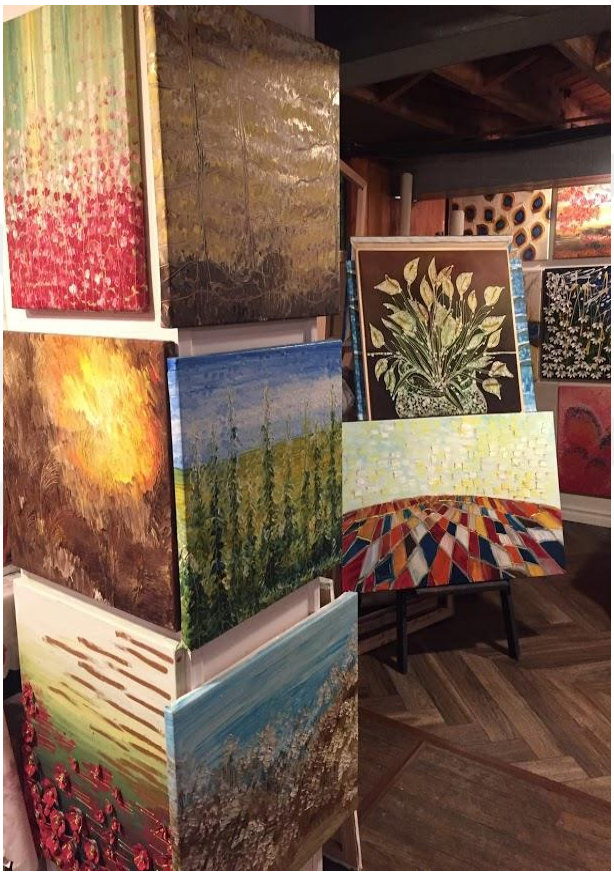

Figure 4. 4: Norhani's art studio.

everything about what makes them Malay or what makes them Muslim, and a boxing of art as traditional when it holds different meanings and purposes to different people. “For me, this [her basement] is my haven. I like to come here to distress. I paint because I like it. It’s freeing. And I want to teach children that there are no rules in art. You just do. Why constrict yourself to rules when it is all creativity? I paint here because it is my safe space”, Norhani explains. That does not mean that Norhani is not proud of her Malay Muslim identity. On the contrary, her art studio has been a constant space of pride for the community. That being said, Norhani and Fad point an

underlining issues of minority recognition in Canada – Muslim minorities are molded and expected to fit a Eurocentric image of what they are supposed to be, be it negative as Muslim equating a terrorist, or supposedly positive, equating peaceful Sufis or traditional artists. Often these performativities are orientalized to fit a Eurocentric need as Said argued, not subjecting the majority white population to the same stereotypical list of identity questioning. Which also strips away agency from minority members to shape who they are as individuals, their likes and dislikes as independent selves. More so, art in particular should not be confined or boxed into specific perception of traditional minority roles when tradition is an ever evolving process.

This shows that the traditional and the new (modern) are interpretive rather than descriptive: "since all cultures change ceaselessly, there can only be what is new, although what is new can take on symbolic value as 'traditional'".[352] Which also means that tradition is a discourse in constant evolution. Secondly, culture is treated as an interpretive entity that defines which traits are old, which are new, and how do they fit together on the larger social sphere.[353] Accordingly, Kroeber's defines tradition as a set of traits handed down from one generation to the next, shaping social identity.[354] Kroeber's definition is traced down to the classic discipline of American archaeology that implied the modeling of tradition after the observation of the natural biosphere as indicated in *silat*.[355] In contrast to Kroeber's conception of tradition, Edward Shils emphasizes how tradition is in constant change. Nonetheless, he argues that tradition changes incessantly but it also depends on an unchanging essential core.[356] As Shils phrases it, the "'essential elements' of tradition persist in combination with other elements which change, but what makes it a tradition is that what are thought to be the essential elements are recognizable . . . as being approximately identical at successive steps."[357] I argue that these unchanging cores consists of the fragile interpretive nature of normative civility. It is what my participants have been showcasing all along in their differentiation between religion and culture. Which also goes through a process of self-discovery and redefining of community norms from one generation to the other. The

[352] Ibid.
[353] Ibid., 273–74.
[354] Ibid., 274.
[355] Ibid.
[356] Ibid., 274–75.
[357] Ibid., 275.

following segue will further explore this differentiation as expressed through the Malay woman's expected traditional role of cultural and moral preservation.

4.7.2 The Malay Woman and the Expectations of Cultural Reproduction and Identity Preservation

One of the members I least expected to accept my offer for an interview was Eliza. Eliza was not in Canada at the time, she is a visiting professor in Australia, who mostly travels between Montreal and Ontario. That said, the main reason I thought she would refuse an interview is because she is a divorcee, and I was briefed of the sensitivity of her positionality within the wider Malay culture of divorce.[358] Like other participants who agreed to be interviewed by myself, their acceptance was incumbent upon my positionality as a non-Malay. I was often told echoing sentiments to that of Syafiq, "I most probably wouldn't meet with you if you were Malay." When I inquired as to why, he responded, "Because our people can be very judging towards each other." As I was ending my interview with Eliza, noticing her unease, I asked her why she agreed to our Skype meeting, she unhesitantly responded "Because you are a non-Malay and because I want others to know of my story – how it feels to be a female Malay divorcee and how it feels to be a single mother in the community." Jehan's experiences that were further shared in chapter two reflect the shared concern and anxiety of the community's group reaction in choosing unconformity to normalized norms.

Jere Cohen explains that "Once normalization is seen as involving group pressures, one can argue that it is a type of conformity…Normalization contributes to the operation of group norms because pressures toward uniformity lead to the crystallization of norms in the first place; norm formation occurs through normalization via pressures toward uniformity."[359] In other words, groups create a state of conformity that can pressure its members into uniformity for moral or identity preservation purposes. Echoing Bourdieu's *collectio personarium plurium*,[360] where a member of the community has to think within deep consideration of the standardized collective norms, often stripping away the individual's independent agency of thought

[358] Jamayah Saili and Abdul Rahman Saili, "At Odds: Perceived Stigma of Single Professional Malay Women," *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences* 8, no. 14 (2018): 79–90.
[359] Jere Cohen, "Conformity and Norm Formation in Small Groups," *Pacific Sociological Review* 21, no. 4 (1978): 442.
[360] See chapter two.

and action. Cohen elaborates that by stepping outside the regularized norms of the collective, by challenging the uniformity of a small group, a compromise might be reached to satisfy all members of the group. Nonetheless, it could also lead to stigma and shaming to those who break the culturally standardized norms that define a group. Accordingly, I soon came to pick up on an evident notion of cultural capital within the community.

Cultural capital is one of the most overlooked forms of capital accumulation, mainly because it is more anthropological than it is materialistic. It has to do with prestige and reputation, which are judged by the community and socio-political and religious institutions structured in place. Bourdieu argues that "Because the social conditions of its transmission and acquisition are more disguised than those of economic capital, it is predisposed to function as symbolic capital, i.e., to be unrecognized as capital and recognized as legitimate competence, as authority exerting an effect of (mis)recognition, e.g., in the matrimonial market and in all the markets in which economic capitalist not fully recognized, whether in matters of culture, with the great art collections or great cultural foundations, or in social welfare, with the economy of generosity and the gift."[361] Additionally, cultural capital can also be interlinked with social capital in which financial capital establishes social status, which for instance, is built on the basis of class division. Nonetheless, cultural capital is not always positively accumulated. There is an element of misrecognition or lack of it on that matter, which is associated with roles members of a community perform that can lead to establishing a reputation based on a stigmatizing group judgment of an individual. Hence, cultural capital is associated with the accumulated reputation of individuals, which is also connected to how much they conform to the group's values.

In this context, defining reputation is crucial in understanding the pressures enforced on women in upholding communal activism and moral value. McNamara defines reputation as "a social judgment of the person based upon facts which are considered relevant by a community."[362] He asserts, referencing Gibbons, that reputation is composed of both social and legal judgment. It also has four components; "First, as a *judgment*, reputation is an evaluation of a person. Secondly, reputation is based on *facts*. Those facts may be something a person has done (such as accepted a bribe)

[361] Pierre Bourdieu, "The Forms of Capital," 1986, 18.
[362] Lawrence McNamara, *Reputation and Defamation* (Oxford University Press, 2007), 21.

or a characteristic of a person (such as their sexuality). Thirdly, as a *social judgment*, reputation is a product of association. Fourthly, reputation flows from a particular form of association: it is about what is considered relevant by a *community*."[363] Concluding that community, as a group, is the essence of where reputation lies due to its claim of moral judgment.[364] And so, I would add, that reputation demands respectability and recognition within the group and once the uniformity of moral value is challenged within the group, Bourdieu's accumulated cultural capital can lead to misrecognition as stated above. Due to the symbolic significance of reputation, it is often enacted in performative means. Eliza's story is a good example of how by the recognition of certain performances, there is the unrecognition of others, and in doing so a chain of exclusivity takes hold.

Eliza has long distanced herself from the community, yet the weight of her experiences has required her to muster the energy and courage to cope with the anxiety of sharing her story. Her first visit to Canada was in the late 1980s when she moved as an international student. She then later embarked on a life full of travel and educational aspirations where she then moved to Montreal and got married. Soon after, her family moved to Ontario but she finished her PhD after her divorce and started working as a professor and policy advisor in various non-for-profits. "I was not very engaged in the Malay community to begin with, whether in Montreal or Ontario, but I would participate occasionally for the sake of my children. I don't want them to lose their Malay identity. I want them to be comfortable speaking Malay with others, and be proud to wear our traditional clothes and eat our food. The relationship between the community and I worsened as I divorced though," said Eliza. She then continued, "I am not aware of all the new members of the community. I have long distanced myself from them, plus I am old now, but the discrimination I experienced was humiliating and disgraceful and I fear for the younger newer female members of the community. If one of them decides to divorce she will most likely face the degrading isolation and shunning I faced." I further inquired if she can describe specific incidents, to which she refused to share specifics.

Nonetheless, she did vaguely describe broad examples such as when she used to go to gatherings and socialize with other mothers only to realize how they find a way to

[363] Ibid., 21–22.
[364] Ibid., 22.

twist general topics into attacking her personally for her decision to divorce; "If I were to describe it, it's like shooting gun shots at you, and you can't respond because they are so concealed, but you know exactly what they mean." Another less nuanced incident she decided to share was when she was invited to an event at a community's member's house and members of the family distributed leftover food to all visitors but her,

> You know, I felt so hurt, but *subhanallah*, I had another party to attend to that day. It was for my child's Muslim friend and they gave me so much food I felt that God knows, you know? He is watching. But it's not about the food. Just because of my status, they thought they can look down on me. I don't want this food, but at least show respect. I just don't trust them anymore. Performances of rituals [religious and cultural] doesn't mean that people hold the value of *adab* [civility].

On that note, Eliza points out two important points: the Islamic notion of *adab* or civility, and the connection between social capital and status. Because *adab* was not practiced on a personal level within some community members, the result in public leads to harm of others. Additionally, her discrimination as also based on her low social status, prior to further education, which harmed her reputation and social status in the community even more. To better explain, Eliza further elaborates,

> Divorce can be a very lonely experience and I was not offered support or even advice. Do you know why I worked so hard for my PhD? Because I wanted to elevate my status and my children's status. A lot of the discrimination and attacks I received was because they looked down on me. When I first divorced I had to stand up financially on my own two feet and take care of my kids, and preserve culture and religion. They don't understand how single mothers have double the challenges. You are a mother, a father, a student, a worker. So many times I wanted to run away and I so wished if there is another Malay Muslim single mother out there who I can share with her my pain. There is a lot I want to unpackage, but I couldn't find anyone back then. It was like it's a taboo for a woman to set herself free, when in our religion it is not.

Eliza concluded that she finds solace and support from the larger Muslim community in the mosque or from her Muslim neighbors, but not from the Malay community. Which indicates an alarming pattern in small communities, and that f pressured for conformity unjustly, members will leave the group and seek another. In Eliza's case the larger Muslim community outside her cultural community was more supportive, maybe due to its larger number, and maybe due to its emphasis on civil conduct – particularly that it is a minority group in a larger demographic that is fighting for its own recognition as well.

Eliza shows that indeed, women are often seen as the safe keepers of moral value and cultural reproducers of group identity, "consequently, they are often placed at the forefront of struggles to maintain and reproduce culture. Situated at the intersection of local and familial cultural values with those of dominant cultural values they are subject to the classifications and judgements operating at a spectrum of levels and domains, from state to those of the family, the community and faith groups."[365] Which exerts immense social and reputational pressure on them.

Shafiqah describes how her female friends often remarked on her previous singlehood and freedom to travel solo as a woman, which has also put pressure on her parents who have been questioned on their parenting methods by other members of the community. Jamayah Saili and Abdul Rahman Saili have conducted a closer study into the Malay notion of the *andartu* or *Andalusia* that refers to unmarried women as old virgins or old maidens. Arguing through their ethnographic study that the unmarried of women, either Malay or from the West, experience immense pressure and discrimination to marry. Shafiqah further expressed her frustrations adding,

> There are certain gender roles and expectations of women in Malay culture that I don't agree with. The concept that women after a certain age have to be married, have kids, serve their husbands and continue to compromise certain ambitions just for the sake of the family unit…I have a friend, Canadian Malay, but she recently gave birth to a kid and there are those confining traditions that she has to abide by. Like not going out for thirty days, not eating certain things. You are not supposed to drink a whole drink…a lot of these elements stem from traditional healing and I understand that, but I find that there is scientific evidence that would triumph some of those things. And what I find a bit ironic is that she's a doctor. I suspect that women go through this period of confinement to look good for their husbands [after the body gain and physical changes pregnancy]. I get the healing argument, but I question the validity of it, because it can go to an extreme.

Fad has equally confirmed that he finds there is a disturbing lack of recognition in the Malay community towards the roles women play and an over expectation from them for cultural preservation.

"I think women are the pillars of all families. Men are not that meticulous. My wife knows that" he said laughing as he exchanged a glance of appreciation towards his wife who was accompanying us in our conversation. He continued,

[365] Linda Morrice, "Cultural Values, Moral Sentiments and the Fashioning of Gendered Migrant Identities," *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 43, no. 3 (2017): 404.

> My wife manages my schedule, everything. Some people ask, 'why am I giving power to my wife?' I know myself. I'm not detail oriented. My wife is much more detail oriented. So the fact is, she will remind me 'your meeting is at this time, or you have to this at this time, you have to take the garbage out at that time.' The fact is, men are laid back; we tend to be relaxed. The woman is the one who motivates and pushes. In Malay culture, they always think that the man has to be in charge. Of e-v-e-r-y-t-h-i-n-g. To have the final say. To plan and be outspoken, should be the man, but they don't understand that family is a unit. You need two people to agree on something for that something to happen…It's about negotiation and cooperation between two adults. I believe women are very important, but men and women have their role in the community, in the family, and in upbringing the kids.

When I asked him whether he thinks there is more pressure on women to preserve, before I finish the question and without hesitation he responded, "Yes. There is that thing in the Malay community. They have this judgment that women have to do more. Even if she is a single parent; if a women has been divorced by a man, the judgment will always fall on her. Even if she chooses to divorce. In my community, the Malay community, there is a very high expectation of women. Women must always listen to the husband, even if the husband is not right. This is not Islam. Islam provides a fair judgment to women…Malays have this issue [conflict] between culture and religion."

Similarly in a larger demographic, Nor feels an equal pressure not only as a Malay but also as a Muslim, where she recalls having experienced stigmatization from other Muslim girls in school because she is a non-hijabi (does not wear the headscarf), and has been to mosques where her active female presence and participation was not welcomed in the mosques' affairs. Further echoing Fad's sentiments of how she is frustrated with the cultural hold over Muslims supposed Islamic performativity. This all indicates another important characteristic of culture and tradition, which is that they can also be violent. While they rigidify a certain image of identity, their performativity in a collective sense recognizes some by unrecognizing others. Henceforth, the emphasis of some of the participants on religion as they find it much more fluid in interpretation for amiable normative constructs. This is where Sheikh Idris echoes the participants' sentiments, strongly stressing that even amongst Muslims there is a challenge in differentiating between what he describes as "cultural practice and Islamic practice." He further explains that, "Muslims ethnically are diverse linguistically and culturally. Even in the same country. Even cultures within the cultures themselves. Take a country like Sudan. You go from one region to the other, it is like you moved from one country to the other. People speak a different language, the way they dress

is different. The way they conduct themselves is different. All of this molded into Islam, so it becomes a multitude of different things called Islam." Therefore, while the *ummah* concept might seem unifying, it is also divisive, which makes it a good fit for the convoluting contradicting characteristics of a transterritorial global civil society. Nonetheless, it could also come off as quite idealistic and not as *ummatic*, as Schmidt describes it.[366] In other words, the *ummah* as a vision of a society is promising with its transterritorial diverse all-encompassing features, but that does not mean its universalistic ideals are reflected in union in the performativity of a shared Islamic identity.

Moreover, given the Khaldunian hierarchy of multiculturalism, there are expectations and pressures put on the minority itself to preserve, to uphold what makes them, them. That is not to deny that minority identity can be a source of pride given its uniqueness amongst the majority in Canada, but I argue that the performativity of preservation is a postmodern phenomenon, and it creates a homogeneous expectation on all members of the minority community to preserve according to a particular unbending vision of tradition and religion. Consequently, the expectation to preserve, as seen above, often befalls upon the shoulders of women in the community, which can create holes and tension in the community's structure, possibly even losing members. That being said, my female participants defy a significant Western orientalized imagery of the Asian self, particularly the women, and that she is submissive, abiding, passive, and apathetic.[367] All of which, are characteristics they prove the opposite of. The women in this study at least, are active civil agents. They organize the events, bring the community together, are aware of the community's setbacks and working on them in their own ways. Fianlly, this also means that having a community is deeply significant in grounding and establishing a home for stability in the midst of the uncertainty and chaos transterritoriality throws along the way.

4.8 Finding Home amidst Transterritoriality

Belonging to a diaspora is a transterritorial experience that bridges between two homes or more. It is an phenomenological experience of relating to the many homes members of the diaspora are attached to, be it the older homeland or the new homeland. To some,

[366] Schmidt, "The Transnational Umma— Myth or Reality? Examples from the Western Diasporas ," 586.
[367] Maggie Chang, "Made in the USA: Rewriting Images of the Asian Fetish," 2006.

the question of homeland still remains open-ended. Which I argue, as we possibly head towards a transmodern vision of global civil society, diasporas will need further broadening of its definition as it encompasses more nuances of immigration and not only the mobility of people but also, the mobility of emotions and epistemology that affect civil conduct. As the lines between 'here' and 'there' and what encompasses these spaces and times become more blurred, the question of home and belonging develop into a pressing matter in this growing transterritorial world. Therefore, addressing this question, I believe is just about the right way of wrapping up this study. Edward Said described that the world is heading towards "'a generalized condition of homelessness,' a world where identities are increasingly coming to be, if not wholly deterritorialized, at least differently territorialized."[368] The phenomenon is no longer confined to the tragic circumstances of refugees, migrants, displaced and stateless people. Rather, this is growing into a much bigger world occurrence.

Akhil Gupta and James Ferguson describe it as a world of diaspora where " transnational culture flows, and mass movements of populations, old-fashioned attempts to map the globe as a set of culture regions or homelands are bewildered by a dazzling array of postcolonial simulacra, doublings and redoublings."[369] In which, we see patches of Japaneseness in Canada, whatever that encompasses, in sushi bars and Comiccon festivals and Anime Expo conventions, or a touch of Indian in yoga clubs and retreats in Brazil, or the sweeping of revolutions in one region as witnessed in the Arab revolutions and the traveling of cultural movements such as Black Lives Matter from America to activist action in Lebanon, and so on and so forth. The blurriness of here and there is no longer just global, but even local, which drives people "remaining in familiar and ancestral places [to] find the nature of their relation to place ineluctably changed, and the illusion of a natural and essential connection between the place and the culture broken."[370] The key in providing a sense of belonging and safety seems as indicated by my participants is in community building.

In building, sustaining, and maintaining a community, diasporas create a home that provides them with stability, and the agency to be active civil participants of society. When asking my participants where is home for them, I was often answered with

[368] Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," 9.
[369] Ibid., 10.
[370] Ibid.

particular specific places. Norhani for example, finds here home is in her neighborhood in Hamilton, where she volunteers to support Syrian refugees in her region, including taking care of her senior neighbors next door. Her only regret is that she did not settle in Canada earlier to bring her parents with her. Similarly, Fad find his home is in his Muslim community in Waterloo. He explains the bittersweet relationship of establishing a new home in a "foreign land",

> It's the quality of life. Cost of living, the environment, and the space. I am able to say what I feel. I might be right, I might be wrong, but I am able to express myself. So the next question is: do I feel home? Yea. *Sadly,* I feel home here. Because I feel at home in a foreign land, so that's sad, but I feel happy. It's like being in a weird relationship. I feel happy because I'm here. I feel sad because this is not home in theory or in immigration. There is no lineage. One more point as to why I feel sad, because I am not able to bring my friends and my family here.

Nevertheless, Fad harbors no regrets either. He believes he has a purpose and a future for him and his children in Canada. Almost all other participants are not hesitant in stating that their home is now in Canada, where their families and established wider community is. Shafiqah makes a point in asserting that her home is now in Canada and refuses to entertain the debates that question the loyalties of especially second generation Canadians. That being said, the second generation, even when asserting that they find solace and safety in having their home in their cities and neighborhoods, they remain open to the possibilities of moving somewhere else if need be. Despite this flexibility, they hope and strive to achieve more recognition as Muslims in Canada. Even when some are weary of the future of Muslims in Canada such as Eliza, others are highly optimistic. Fatin describes that in aiding in bringing the Malay community together, she feels like she "belongs somewhere", further conveying,

> Like I have connection. I have attachments. I have responsibilities, memories and potential mentors for my daughter. Like all these aunties and uncles who can teach her. That is pretty awesome! I don't need to look for it. All the teachers for my daughter are already there, if we are still here. Five, ten years from now we may move somewhere else. Hopefully if I have more kids the most important thing is faith. Being healthy and happy, being secure. I hope that the Muslim culture will become more accepted. It is already better accepted but you will see more good things on TV, more *hijabis* on TV. Maybe one day my daughter will run for elections! You never know! Maybe one day she will become prime minister of Canada! I don't know. Maybe she will be someone simple living a happy life. No matter what, I hope she will be happy here and Canada will have something to thank us and we will have something to thank Canada for.

Fatin's hopes for the future highlight a vision for a rooted establishment for future lineage in the country and a place making of familiarity and recognition. And so, Sheikh Idris compliments the above comments explaining the importance of documenting the legacy of the Muslim community in Canada.

He explains that to create a healthy community is to first understand that complexity behind the diversity of the Muslim community in Canada that comes from numerous backgrounds with different cultural packages and different religious performativity. He says,

> First, the Muslim community here is diverse in everything. The way you teach people, their cultures, their languages, everything. Now the most difficult part is how to build a community having all this diversity of people and their divisions. How do you bring them together to build a community? But we managed. We are no able to bring people who start a variety of institutions. This starts from individuals. We don't have governmental or institutional support from somewhere. Which means a community is like a magnet that attracts people. Which is the nature of Muslims to begin with [in North America]. If you look at all the [Islamic] services and institutions they all started from some two three people at home who are teaching their kids, then their neighborhood, then they rent a space and so on. If you follow the [community] development here, that's how it is for Muslims in North America.

The challenges however is in sustaining and maintaining the community to provide role models, guidance, and support for the next Muslim generations in the region. He continues,

> Now Toronto has 120 [Muslim] institutions, centres, name them. The fact that a community can do this without a government or a major scholarly leader [like the Vatican] shows that there is something in this community that is really healthy. Number two is sustainability. For example, to this day there is no masjid that collapses, or is dismantled, or a service out of business. ISNA or instance is 50 years now. Number three that it is to accommodate. That is the ability to carry this [legacy] and hand it over to the coming generation. Their challenge will be how to advance it from here. Number four is a community that renews itself. That's the ability to assess an action plan and community plan five years from now and how they change now. Is there a fallout from the community? Absolutely. When we first decided to build ISNA people thought that we are crazy to begin with anyways.

He finally concludes with a fifth point that some of my participants have echoed as well, and that is the educational opportunity being a minority exposes Muslims to, and that is the freedom to question their religious beliefs and explore it as conscious agents, which he explains that by choosing faith rather than inheriting it like culture, Muslims create a lively active community with consciously practiced civil norms.

This shows the importance of attaching causes and missions to places and the constant presence of place making in the collective mobilization of the diaspora. It also portrays that despite the fluidity of transterritoriality and global civil society, humans are still in need of rootedness and social structures that influence their private and public behavior. The Muslim Malay diaspora in Canada demonstrate that to be at home, is to build a support system whether within the micro Malay community or the macro Muslims community that creates familiarity, wholesome security and freedom to express one's values. Sayyid explains that the essence of home – to be at home – means "the world is familiar to us, because its institutions, rules and complex web of relations are the same discursive productions that articulate our identities in terms of being 'at home.' There is then a sense of belonging that is produced through various hegemonic discursive practices."[371] This also notes another attribute of global civil society. Just when transterritoriality seems to dominate a global trend of derooted traditional and religious norms through the fluidity of human movement and information, territoriality reinscribes itself at just the moment it is about to be expunged.[372] With that I conclude by pointing out, the way contemporary spaces are being imagined, mobilized, and enforced through institutionalization, to create a community for the transterritorial hybrid identity questions "the imperialist and colonialist notions of purity as much as it question[s] the nationalist notions"[373] of national identity. And with that, the hybridization of the Muslim Malay Canadian identity is a case of an amalgam of transmodern values and a representation of a postmodern world slowly heading towards a transmodernity of a global civil society.this is your argument and you hgave to show us in layers in this chapter and remind in the beginning

I would like to conclude with a statement Sheikh Idris shared in his interview. The word 'Canadian' is a problem because it is now embracing an individualistic subjectivity. He gave the example of how a first generation would relate differently to what makes them Canadian to how a second generation would feel. It also carries a different meaning for the diverse racial groups of the land. For the Indigenous people it carries a continuous historical narrative of oppression, land grabbing, and trauma. While for different minorities it could encompass experiences of inferiority or

[371] Sayyid, "The Homelessness of Muslimness: The Muslim Umma as a Diaspora," 140–41.
[372] Gupta and Ferguson, "Beyond 'Culture': Space, Identity, and the Politics of Difference," 11.
[373] Homi Bhabha, "Location, Intervention, Incommensurability: A Conversation with Homi Bhabha," *Emergences* 1, no. 1 (1989): 64.

opportunities and change, or an amalgam of all. “In Canada, there will always be the issue and question of what is a Canadian. The Europeans came before us [colored immigrants], but now we came. We just came later, and so we feel that we have the same rights those people [the white] have. And that is why it is important for us [newer immigrants] to go back and see who are the original people of this land. And that deserves attention and funding.” In light of this, minorities are also left to negotiate these responsibilities with the will to be recognized while mixing norms of their traditions to that of embraced neoliberal multiculturalism. This is a very delicate and personal process that undergoes an immense amount of thought and effort to exert the agency to exist as Muslim Malay Canadians through political and social engagement, and an evolving of traditional norms.

My participants have expressed on numerous occasions and on different terms the importance of faith in balancing the delicacy of the multiplicity of normative influences of what are Canadian norms and what are Malay norms. I refer to the Islamic discursive tradition of *adab* as a normative conduct of civility inspired by faith and molded in tradition, identity and home making. By prioritizing faith, as a positive personal and social grounding force, they also embrace the chaos and instability of global transterritoriality while still focusing on establishing and sustaining a sense of home in their neighborhoods and cities. Finally, emphasizing the significance of maintaining a community has on enriching the legacy and recognition of Muslims in Canada.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

In 2016, an interactive map, using big data analysis, took the internet by a storm showcasing global human migration trends from 2010 to 2015;[374] basing its analysis on the UN Population Division data reports on human movement. Around the US presidential elections, during a time of a hyped anti-immigration and anti-refugees rhetoric, including ambitious dreams of wall building (The Mexican border wall) and of course Islamophobic political propaganda (referring to Trump's "I think Islam hates us" quote)[375], Max Galka, big data analyst and designer of the artificial maps, designed another map timeline, documenting the United States' migration history from 1820 to 2013.[376] Both maps illustrate the mass movement of human travel into all sorts of national territories. The maps, certainly have their shortcomings, particularly in the broadness of their categories. Nevertheless, the significance of these maps is in their narration of the human condition through movement and globalization and the challenges that come with it. More importantly is their usage of artificial intelligence in artistically documenting human movement, which is a reflection of future technological trends. On first look of the maps, it is like seeing a piece of art that is full of chaos, yet orderly trends of migratory patterns. Not to mention the spike in colors as we hit the 1990s in the second map that reveals a drastic spike in immigration to North America, indicating a new set of a political history of recognition, multiculturalism, and minority rights.

I find Galka's maps to be a colorful yet bleak canvas of the reality of global civil society. It is both chaotic yet orderly. Managed yet mismanaged. As Keane describes it, "neither a static object nor *a fait accompli*."[377] Which if this study has disclosed

[374] Max Galka, "World Migration Map," *Metrocosm*, 2016, http://metrocosm.com/global-migration-map.html.
[375] Jenna Johnson and Abigail Hauslohner, "'I Think Islam Hates Us': A Timeline of Trump's Comments about Islam and Muslims," *The Washington Post*, 2017, https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2017/05/20/i-think-islam-hates-us-a-timeline-of-trumps-comments-about-islam-and-muslims/.
[376] Max Galka, "Two Centuries of US Immigration," *Metrocosm*, 2016, http://metrocosm.com/us-immigration-history-map.html?fbclid=IwAR0rJjIc7lZozI_l0oF9CXUOW65qGVe8ESeczx0g65J6kiqFaIiLAWh0-pI.
[377] Keane, *Global Civil Society?*, 7.

anything, is that although there is beauty and advantage in this chaos, there are also major uncertainty that socially, culturally, spiritually, and individually affects the human condition including its biosphere and living habitat. To describe the world as postnormal is to illustrate the shaky reality of its transition into uncertainty, or as Sardar coins the 3C's: complexity, chaos, and contradictions. The 3 C's have created a space and time of ignorance, violence, a lack of recognition which strips away people's rights and respect to their identities and value systems. Ignorance is significant, because underlining all the struggles for recognition is the misrepresentation and dismissal of the Other's civil value. If we wish to combat acts of xenophobia and Islamophobia raising awareness of the Other is not enough, but active multicultural participation and exchange is crucial. That is why global civil society, as discussed in chapter two, provides its actors with the freedom of choice and is action driven in providing meaning and purpose in the insecurity and ambiguity of postnormal times.

Global civil society provides a complementary theoretical framework that works hand in hand with postnormality and transmodernity that is explored in chapter one. Specifically, because both highlight the fluidity and adaptability of the modern self, the awareness of its members to global notions and their desire to contribute, inspired by their individuality and traditions, including the normalization of multiplicity of identity and normative values. In accordance with that, a set of new normative values are established (civility) and are very much affected by global and local trends of neoliberalism that flexibly found its way into the fabric of global civil society. Therefore, to better understand the impacts postnormality has on communities, I conducted an ethnography on a small group of the Muslim Malay diaspora residing in the GTA in Ontario, Canada. This research is unique because of its recognition of the experience of the Muslim Malay and Southeast Asian hybridity of identity that contributes to their active agency as members of civil society. Which in my opinion contributes to expanding the horizons of diasporic studies in the West.

Chapter one provides background into the details behind the fieldwork, on my positionality as a non-Malay and on the methodological process of acquiring data. It also delves into the theoretical framework of explaining my analysis on modernity and my choice of a postmodern and a transmodern discourse, adopting Dussel's work on transmodernity, despite providing some criticism towards postmodernity.

I particularly argue that in understanding the postmodern identity we have to understand its Eurocentric globalized origins and the possibility of negotiating other contesting identities through a transmodern model that my interlocutors manifest in the uniqueness of the multiracial backgrounds they originate from, given the diversity of cultural and religious identities the Malay Archipelago harbors. The adaptation of a transmodern model helps in the battle of recognition in multicultural societies such as Canada, thus exploring Taylor's politics of recognition theory. Chapter one was an exploration of how neoliberalism shapes Canada's multiculturalism which continues to frame the question of identity and minority rights to this day. Particularly, through the Muslim experience as Islamophobic rhetoric has been heightened in the last two Canadian federal elections. Subsequently, providing a smooth segue into how my participants' understanding of identity manifests in a global civil society.

Accordingly the self as a relational accomplishment that is the result of a constellation of multiple connections with people, community, events, places and biospheres, historical and present. In accordance with this thought, in chapter two I analyze the broad categories of occupational identity, Malayness, Muslimness, and Asianness that my interlocutors identified themselves with and how they manifest cultural production in their sense of self. More importantly, I look at the multiple political and social institutions and policies that build up certain assumptions of what constitutes each of these identifications by relating it to Salvatore's Foucauldian meta-institutional matrix. Therefore, easily being molded and exploited by other contesting ideologies and powerful institutions to manage members of society. What might come off as a surprise to others, is how aware participants of this research are to the contesting ideologies of the self and the power structures that control the knowledge production of culture and identity. Thus, depicting agency in thought and action of who they are on a macro global scale.

Which takes me to my third chapter which explores the power of performative agency and how my participants showcase their civility highlighting their Canadian and Malay sense of belonging. Claiming agency in choosing what to preserve and manifest in action; performing what they stand for. Their performativity of civil responsibility allows me to examine the debates over diasporic studies and how the Malay diaspora challenges the idea of the victimhood and misfortune of immigration. Rather, my participants have showcased, as global and local civil actors that ability to define who

they are through subtle activism, given that the majority of the participants would rather create change through their jobs or social work. Including their acknowledgment of settler colonial history and the Indigenous plight. As well as a flourishing of their artistic agency and aesthetics of culture that distinguishes them as an Asian Muslim diaspora. Which also defies orientalized imagination of the Asian self as apathetic and passive to social and global issues. Additionally, I analyze elements of solidarity within the community and sometimes the lack of it due to a high level of judgment and expectations of female performativity of cultural production as the upholders of cultural identity. Leading some members to seek solidarity within the larger Muslim community when needed. Furthermore, exploring the dilemmas of immigration through the translocality of subjectively chosen traditions, and how faith is prioritized as a motivator of civility and a deciding factor in times of clashing value systems. Which aids in creating a community and a sense of home and belonging

As explored in chapter one, Dussel argues that the reformulating of norms has been dominated by a Eurocentric world vision of the postmodern. It does not seem too farfetched to envision the transmodern postnormal period we are entering, with new competing epistemologies and norms. Hence, my consideration of *adab* and the concept of the *ummah* in the third chapter is a proposal for the exploration of other world norms and understandings. Thus, both Sayyid[378] and Sardar heavily emphasize that the life deciding fundamentals of this period lies in the power to name and define. Sardar asserts that,

> During the eras of colonialism, modernity and post-colonialism, the West had defined what it is to be human and 'modern', what is freedom, rationality, science and civilization, what is 'free market', 'democracy' and 'international law', what are 'human rights' and 'humanitarian causes', and is economics, political science, architecture, art, history and tradition, what is sacred and what is not. The real power of the West rested on its power to define the key concepts of humanity and human society. But postnormal times tell us, if it tells us anything at all, that these definitions have passed their 'sell by' date. This is where creativity and imagination enter the equation.[379]

And so, we could argue that with all the cautionary assessment of the 3C's, these are one of the best times for scholastic creativity and normative reassessment of the

[378] Sayyid, *Recalling the Caliphate : Decolonisation and World Order*.
[379] Sardar, "Postnormal Times Revisited," 37.

Anthropocene – referring to Paul Curtzen's term which means analyzing the extend of human activities' global impact.[380]

Accordingly, the condition of postnormal times emphasizes agency, granting will to humans in times of insecurity,[381] to further explore what makes them what they are. What are their values? What are their roots? How do they define and represent themselves, and how do they perform their values? These are times when the discipline of anthropology is much needed. In such times, ignorance, as Sardar explains,[382] and capitalistic luxury, as Ibn Khaldun highlights,[383] govern, igniting xenophobia and fear of the Other that could eventually lead to the demise of societies. Ignorance is the obliviousness of tradition and culture. An ignorance of Indigenous ways of living and knowing. Postnormal theory refers to such ignorance as the 'Unthought', which can be discovered and unveiled through the discoveries of future times – calling it the 'known unknowns'.[384]

The Unthought is

> the general ignorance of the complexity of the world around us as well as our knowledge of other cultures and societies; the built-in ignorance within certain problems we face, the answers to which can only be discovered in future times ('known unknowns'); and what in PNT theory is called the 'Unthought', the ignorance we have and promote because we are incapable of or unwilling to look in certain directions (thanks largely to the established disciplinary structures) or think beyond the dominant paradigms ('unknown unknowns'). We have never faced so many problems simultaneously, we have never experienced such accelerating pace of change, or such globalised interconnections and complexity, and have never been so steeped in ignorance of things that have such extensive consequences beyond our own context.[385]

Therefore, the established current structural system locally and globally is in need of new methods of being, a revisiting of older epistemologies and traditions of other peoples, and an exploration and the support of newer modes of thought that in my opinion have to value the process of evolving traditions in producing the future while preserving human dignity. Chapters two and three are an exploration of the multi-layered complexities of how a small group of people attempt to ground themselves and

[380] Paul J Crutzen, "Geology of Mankind," in *Paul J. Crutzen: A Pioneer on Atmospheric Chemistry and Climate Change in the Anthropocene* (Springer, 2016), 23.
[381] Sardar, "Postnormal Times Revisited," 27.
[382] Ibid., 28.
[383] Oxford Union, "Mehdi Hasan | Islam Is A Peaceful Religion | Oxfor Union," 202.
[384] Sardar, "Postnormal Times Revisited," 28.
[385] Ibid.

the collective in such times. Through the study of the Muslim Malay diaspora in Canada, I am exhibiting how through a conscious reassessment of traditions and religious value, and constant negotiations of the diversity of norms they are exposed to, they act as agents who are trying to grasp how the world is changing and how that impacts their identity. Essentially, my focus is on reviving the spirit of agency in anthropological studies. Rather than analyzing the state of participants as outsiders incapable of controlling their own fate, this study highlights how minorities and members of a diaspora are active participants and agents of their life story, surpassing all narratives of victimhood and inferiority.

More so, the role of religion plays a significant role in such grounding. Mainly due to its transterritorial quality, but also because as my participants have portrayed, the flexibility of religiously Islamic inspired principals, such as *adab*, display in highlighting civility in times of uncertainty. Given Dussel's plea for the incorporation of different world views for achieving a transmodern world, I found that by introducing the discursive tradition of normative *adab* and the transterritorial vision of an *ummah* are contributive concepts to future studies. *Adab* plays a flexibility in integrating other cultures so long as they do not harm the core values of the group. On that note, as expressed in the introduction, there is a dire need in redefining 'religion' in a context that deconstructs and decolonizes its Eurocentric overarching meaning. Furthermore, the transterritorial characteristic of an *ummah* has created an appreciation for travel and leniency for Muslims to seek other lands in preservation of human dignity and in pursuit of knowledge. That said, for the future of global civil society studies, I believe more research needs to be done over the importance of land and human indigeneity in times of transterritoriality. As transterritorial the world is becoming we cannot overlook people's attachment to land. The phenomenological concept of home, as addressed in chapter three, is in need of more thorough scholastic attention. As Muslims adopt a diasporic identity, chapter three has shown how diasporas strive to create a home out of '*the* home'.

Another important question in moving forward in future studies is the question of, what does a native land mean in a transterritorial world? Despite the transterritoriality of diasporic movement, people still look for a place to settle and a community to build. Which compliments my concern for further investigation on the power of territory, the identity that forms within its roots, and how that affects cultural identity. Diasporic

studies are also in need of an analytical evolution, as we witness more human movement, the definition needs to evolve to encompass a larger diversity of migrants. I still maintain that people are forced to flee not only from physical violence, but violence that can take other forms such as economic poverty, social humiliation, minority suppression, and lack of social tranquility, etc. Land is also connected to the birth of traditions, and in global civil society we are witnessing a deeply interconnected globalized system as information travels transterritorially, connecting the world like no time before. With this transterritoriality of traveling traditions and knowledge productions comes a set of challenges, such as cultural appropriation and othering.

Therefore, I hope in this research I have contributed to improving the lack of Muslim representation in Asian studies, in which as further shown in chapter two and three holds a rich intertwinement between the Islamic faith, Malay values, and global trends. As well as has shown in this study, there is a need for a much more realistic image of the Southeast Asian North American who is neither passive nor apathetic, but very much active and engaged in local and global civil affairs. Moreover, I hope to have also shed light on bettering our conscious assessment of neoliberal multiculturalism in Canada, by looking at the role Muslim immigrants play in Canada's socio-political contribution and their relationship with its colonial history and Indigenous relations. Thus, highlighting what Ramadan describes as the Muslim consciousness[386] which is the historical presence of Muslims with all their diversity in the West and that requires serious recognition and historic documentation. What I think would be more contributive in tackling Islamophobia is to provide more comparitive analysis on the diversity of the Muslim diasporas who live in the West, who contribute to civil preformativity through their own traditions and religious experiece.

Through the study of the Canadian Malay diaspora we can see that even as people move and face cultural shockwaves, they still try to uphold their ancestral roots while questioning their legitimacy. And with that I conclude, that as we head into a postnormal world of big data, posthumanism and artificial intelligence, environmental crisis, social movements, and an acceleration in modern diseases and viruses, the question is then what are the effects of transterritoriality on the future? Are we on the brink of a new world system? Is there a system beyond the nation state? These are

[386] Tariq Ramadan, *Islam, the West and the Challenges of Modernity* (Kube Publishing Ltd, 2009), 281.

questions that require further scholarly attention. Sarder suggests while we cannot control the dangers that are posed by the circumstances of our postnormal time, we can consciously analyze the threats of the imposed changes, to shape a better, ecologically driven, more humane, and more dignified alternative. Which can be achieved through a creative scholastic endeavor and enforced alternative performative norms for a transmodern vision, rather than just a one encompassing postmodern Eurocentric vision of world structures.

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APPENDICES

Appendix A

Demographic Details

International Students	Canadian Citizens	Permanent Residents (PR)*
7 students	10 Canadians	1 Singaporean
5 Male Ages ~20s	4 Female Aunties Ages 50s~60s	Male Ages ~30s
2 Female Ages ~20s	5 Young Adults ➢ 4 Female ➢ 1 Male Ages ~20s	
	1 Underage Ages 15	
	No men ages 40+ participated	

* PR stands for permanent residency; the process of receiving Canadian Citizenship.

Name	Race & Ethnicity	Nationality	Occupation
International Students			
Adam	Malay + Javanese lineage	Malaysian	Undergrad Student + MASAT Admin
Jehan	Malay + Javanese lineage	Malaysian	Undergrad Student + Part Time
Arief	Malay	Malaysian	Information Technology
Zara	Malay	Malaysian	Graduating student
Syafiq	Malay + Javanese	Malaysian	Undergrad Student + MASAT Admin
Aqil	Malay + Javanese	Malaysian	Undergrad Student + MASAT Admin + Part Time
Mikhail	Malay	Malaysian	Undergrad Student
Canadian Citizens + PRs			
Shafiqah	Malay	Canadian from Singapore	Senior International Development Officer at Global Affairs Canada
Eliza Wong	Malay + Sino Chinese	Canadian from Malaysia	Professor

Aidan	Malay	Canadian from Malaysia	Student
Shila Lee	Malay + Sino Chinese, Indian and Arabic lineage	Canadian from Singapore	NGO Project Assistant
Amina	Malay + Arabic and Scottish lineage	Canadian from Malaysia	Part Time
Fad	Malay + Sino Chinese + Arabic lineage	Singaporean	Graduate Student
Nor	Malay lineage	Canadian from Sri Lanka	Teaching Assistant
Mohamed	Malay lineage	Canadian from Sri Lanka	Graduate Student
Fatin	Malay + Javanese lineage	Canadian from Malaysia	On Maternal Leave + Graphic Designer
Norhani	Malay	Canadian from Malaysia	Personal Support Worker
Sopiah	Malay	Canadian from Singapore	Chef

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