

GLOBAL
DIVERSITIES

Intercultural Cities

*Policy and Practice
for a New Era*

EDITED BY BOB W. WHITE



Global Diversities

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Over the past decade, the concept of 'diversity' has gained a leading place in academic thought, business practice, politics and public policy across the world. However, local conditions and meanings of 'diversity' are highly dissimilar and changing. For these reasons, deeper and more comparative understandings of pertinent concepts, processes and phenomena are in great demand. This series will examine multiple forms and configurations of diversity, how these have been conceived, imagined, and represented, how they have been or could be regulated or governed, how different processes of inter-ethnic or inter-religious encounter unfold, how conflicts arise and how political solutions are negotiated and practiced, and what truly convivial societies might actually look like. By comparatively examining a range of conditions, processes and cases revealing the contemporary meanings and dynamics of 'diversity', this series will be a key resource for students and professional social scientists. It will represent a landmark within a field that has become, and will continue to be, one of the foremost topics of global concern throughout the twenty-first century. Reflecting this multi-disciplinary field, the series will include works from Anthropology, Political Science, Sociology, Law, Geography and Religious Studies. While drawing on an international field of scholarship, the series will include works by current and former staff members, by visiting fellows and from events of the Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity. Relevant manuscripts submitted from outside the Max Planck Institute network will also be considered.

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Intercultural Cities

Policy and Practice for a New Era

palgrave
macmillan

Editor

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Global Diversities

ISBN 978-3-319-62602-4

ISBN 978-3-319-62603-1 (eBook)

<https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-62603-1>

Library of Congress Control Number: 2017950170

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Printed on acid-free paper

This Palgrave Macmillan imprint is published by Springer Nature
The registered company is Springer International Publishing AG
The registered company address is: Gewerbestrasse 11, 6330 Cham, Switzerland

Acknowledgements

It is important to recognize all the people who contributed to this process and without whom the publication of this volume would have never been possible. First we would like to acknowledge the Intercultural Cities Program of the Council of Europe, especially Irena Guidikova, who provided unconditional support for this project and whose advice played a crucial role on more than one occasion. We would also like to thank her fantastic team of interculturalists, including Maureen Georges-Higgs, Pascale Dore, and Ivana d'Alessandro. Preliminary discussions about the forum took place with ICC expert Phil Wood, who proved to be an invaluable source of ideas and encouragement. A number of other ICC experts were also instrumental in making the forum a reality, especially Dani Torres, Jude Bloomfield, Oliver Freeman, Bruno Ciano, and Keizo Yamawaki. A special thanks to Ricard Zapata-Barrero for the initial contact with ICC and to both Ricard and Ramon Sanahuja for their ongoing support in maintaining relations between the City of Barcelona and the City of Montreal. In the City of Montreal we are most grateful for the leadership and commitment of Patrice Allard and the entire team of interculturalists at the city's Service of Social Diversity and Sports, especially Claudie Mompoin, Marc Rivest, and Claire Bradet. We would also like to thank Johanne Derome and Nadia Bastien for their ongoing support and commitment to intercultural relations in Montréal. During the forum we were fortunate to benefit from the presence of Mr. Dimitrios

(Jim) Beis and Mr. Frantz Benjamin, two elected officials who have done a great deal for the cause of interculturalism in Montreal, as well as the former president of the Conseil interculturel de Montréal, Mr. Belgacem Rahmani. A number of colleagues and students from the Laboratory for Research on Intercultural Relations (LABRRI) went above and beyond the call of duty to make the forum a success. Danielle Gratton played a pivotal role in the conception and planning of the forum, including the organization of an international team of facilitators that included Jorge Frozzini, Daniel Côté, Thomas Jézéquel, and Witnise Estimable. Several students were instrumental in terms of planning and implementation, especially Marta Massana, Rachel Boivin-Martin, Philippe Desmarais, Cindy Ross, and Amal Idris-Haroun. Nadim Émond and Myriam Tardif filmed the proceedings and organized the visual archives following the forum. Samuel Victor provided much needed assistance with translation and the production of the book's index. A special thank you to Laurie Savard, who showed a great deal of initiative and whose positive attitude and creative approach to problem-solving made the event a pleasure for all who attended from nearby and from far away.

Financial support for the Montreal Forum and for the publication of this volume was provided by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, the Council of Europe, and the City of Montreal. The contributors to this volume are solely responsible for the ideas expressed herein.

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1

From Policy to Practice and Back Again: The Montreal Forum on Intercultural Cities

Bob W. White

Cities have always been places where people of diverse origins cohabit and pursue common goals—quest for a better life, freedom from the constraints of tradition, new forms of community—in spite of their differences. In this sense there is nothing new about the phenomenon of intercultural cities. In recent years, however, demographic changes in cities in many parts of the world have led to increasing concerns about interethnic tensions, social inequality and racial discrimination. One response to these challenges has been to focus on the dynamics and potential benefits of intercultural policy and practice. In fact, intercultural policy for cities has become a dynamic area of research and policy design. Some authors have even suggested that intercultural models represent a totally new approach to the problems of social inclusion and cohesion, nothing less than a new paradigm. By virtue of their intermediate status—neither national nor regional, at the same time global and local—cities are in a particularly good position to formulate policy frameworks that will contribute to the well-being of all citizens, regardless

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of their origins. Certain cities have made significant advances in this domain, but until now very little work has been done to understand the underlying principles and processes behind the creation of intercultural policies and programs.

In May 2014, the Laboratory for Research on Intercultural Relations (LABRRI) at the University of Montreal, in collaboration with the Council of Europe and the City of Montreal, organized an international forum on intercultural dynamics and intercultural policy frameworks in cities. The Montreal forum brought together policymakers and intercultural experts from Europe and North America in order to compare intercultural policies and practices in cities that are affected by and concerned with contact between increasingly diverse populations and communities. The overall goal of the forum was to facilitate communication between researchers and practitioners in their efforts to make cities more inclusive by leveraging recent advances in the field of intercultural policy and practice (for an overview of this emerging field, see White this volume), but it was also intended to generate knowledge about the conditions, obstacles and strategies that are required for the design and implementation of effective intercultural policies in cities.

By bringing together recent advances in the areas of urban planning and intercultural theory, this volume sets out to explore the political and social potential of intercultural cities. The term “intercultural” has many meanings, and these meanings can change according to the context. For the purposes of clarity, “intercultural” refers not only to the organic and sometimes chaotic social reality of large urban centers, with people from different social and cultural backgrounds interacting in often unexpected and unpredictable ways. It also refers to the efforts of local actors (policymakers, city planners, community organizers, academics, etc.) in cities across the globe to promote intercultural principles and policies as a means of fighting discrimination and promoting social cohesion within and between communities. Intercultural policy for cities generally refers to initiatives that raise awareness about the advantages of diversity but also seeks to reduce the negative impact of discrimination at the same time as it encourages positive interactions between people of different ethnic and racial backgrounds. As I explain elsewhere (see White, this

volume), intercultural cities are different from “multicultural cities” in terms of the way that they envision and plan for social cohesion (Qadeer 2016), but the two also have a great deal in common compared with cities that either ignore diversity or refuse to take diversity into account altogether (Wood and Landry 2008).

In some cases, city governments have been able to organize programs and policies that facilitate the emergence of an integrated, multisector approach to intercultural action, or an *intercultural policy framework*. Unfortunately, we still have limited knowledge about the underlying principles of these frameworks and the processes involved in their implementation. The texts presented here constitute a first step in this direction. According to one recent study there are three areas that remain for the most part unexplored in the literature on integration policy in cities: a comparative understanding of smaller or suburban cities, an analysis of the situation of cities over time and international comparisons between cities (Fourot 2015). This volume addresses all three of these issues, with a particular focus on intercultural policy and practice. In addition to this general objective of understanding how intercultural policy frameworks function, the current volume has three specific objectives:

- Mobilize knowledge about the design and implementation of intercultural policy frameworks for cities
- Develop tools for comparative analysis that will be of use to policy-makers and researchers in the implementation of intercultural policies and programs
- Facilitate collaboration between cities but also between researchers and practitioners interested in intercultural policy

After giving some background on the rationale and the content of the Montreal forum, I will look more closely at what can be seen as its primary outcomes which include but are not limited to this edited volume. I will finish with an overview of the contents of the volume, including some words about the different audiences for the volume.

1.1 Background on the Montreal Forum

The idea for the Montreal forum on intercultural cities emerged following a series of informal exchanges between members of LABRRI, officials from the City of Montreal and representatives from the Council of Europe during meetings organized by the Council of Europe in Barcelona in September 2012 and again in Dublin in February 2013. The Intercultural Cities programme (ICC) of the Council of Europe has played a central role in bringing together not only city officials from different parts of the globe but also various types of actors involved in the field of intercultural research (policymakers, planners, policy analysts, researchers, practitioners, elected officials, community organizers). Through specific programs (such as the Antirumors network), evaluative tools (such as the ICC Index) and also its ongoing support of cities and city-based networks, the Council of Europe has been a pioneer and a leader in the intercultural cities movement. The publication of this volume coincides with the tenth anniversary of ICC, and the forum in Montreal is part of the story of how ICC—whose primary mission was limited to the member-states of the European Union—became involved in intercultural policy on a global scale.

Montreal was the ideal location for a workshop of this type. To begin with, the City of Montreal has nearly 30 years of experience in policy research and planning related to social and cultural diversity (see Massana and Rioux, this volume and Allard, this volume). This experience, which in 2011 was recognized by the Council of Europe's Intercultural Cities programme (Montreal placed fifth in the intercultural city index), reflects the desire of different actors and institutions in Montreal to make the city more inclusive and to promote policies and programs that go beyond the traditional approaches based on raising awareness about diversity and discrimination. In many ways the Montreal forum laid the groundwork for meaningful collaboration across the Atlantic since Montreal was the first city in Canada (and the second in North America, following Mexico City) to join the ICC network. More so than almost any region in the Americas, Québec has a long history of engagement with intercultural ideals and policies (Emongo and White 2014), which

is part of the reason why cities such as Montreal have been so active in terms of thinking about intercultural theory and practice.

The conversations between LABRRI and ICC concerning the possibility of organizing a forum about intercultural policy frameworks garnered considerable interest on both sides of the Atlantic. During our discussions on this topic, it was agreed that (1) there is relatively little information about how cities interested in intercultural approaches go about creating policy-based initiatives or frameworks and (2) that the indicators that are currently available for cities to evaluate their performance in this area do not lend themselves easily to comparisons. Following these observations it was decided that an international forum would be organized in Montreal that would focus on the process by which intercultural policy frameworks are conceptualized, created and implemented. It was suggested that having access to this information would not only help certain cities gain recognition for their efforts in this area, but would also help other cities understand how to trace their own path to intercultural policy and practice.

1.2 Content of the Forum

Through a series of presentations, roundtables and interactive breakout sessions that lasted over a period of three days, participants were asked to present recent findings on key aspects of intercultural policy in cities. This meant that cities should present not only the different components of particular frameworks or policies, but also the obstacles most often encountered during design and implementation and the strategies used to create internal and external alliances. In preparation for the forum, the organizers identified five key elements in order to facilitate discussions during the forum:

- Participation of stakeholders (policymakers, community organizers, media, citizens)
- Gaps (real or potential) between policy and realities on the ground
- Study and analysis of interactions (documentation, efficacy, promotion)

- Recent advances in the assessment of policies and programs
- Experiences with intercultural cities networks at the regional or national level

Participants were asked to emphasize the processes by which intercultural city experts have been able to go beyond the challenges of monocultural structures and paradigms by supporting initiatives that promote improved access for minorities and positive, sustained social interactions. More specifically, forum participants were asked to think about two concrete aspects of intercultural policy in order to facilitate different types of comparative analysis: (1) examples of “knots” or obstacles that constrain the elaboration or acceptance of intercultural models and (2) the question of “scale” or the different levels of political and social action that can have an impact on outcomes.

Following a brief presentation on the first day which set out the objectives of the forum and a certain number of key concepts, forum participants heard introductory remarks and welcoming statements from the City of Montreal and from representatives of the Council of Europe. Each day of the forum was organized around three different activities: (1) a brief presentation of the city-based case study for two of the cities that were invited to participate in the forum (Botkyrka, Oslo, Barcelona, Reggio Emilia, Lewisham, Neuchâtel); (2) breakout sessions containing more detailed information about the two cities presented earlier and exchange with forum participants on the details of the particular city under consideration; (3) presentation and discussion of different areas of intercultural practice and policy in Montreal (drawing from local municipal and community-based partners in collaboration with researchers from the LABRRI).

Forum participants came not only from the world of municipal policy and planning, but also from a variety of community-based settings and academic disciplines. Activities during the forum were organized in mixed working groups in order to ensure a balance between researchers and practitioners as well as between guests (mostly from cities in Europe) and hosts (mostly from Québec). Presentations were given in French and in English with simultaneous translation. For the interactive breakout sessions, forum participants were asked to choose the sessions that they

wanted to attend, but they were allowed to move freely between the different workshops. During coffee breaks and lunch, forum participants were free to discuss topics presented throughout the day, and they were also encouraged to visit a series of poster presentations that were prepared by researchers and students from LABRRI (for more information, see <http://villeinterculturelle.net/recherche-2/le-forum-de-montreal/>). Forum participants were generally very enthusiastic about the content of the forum, but they were also struck by a number of important challenges associated with intercultural policy (especially in the context of international comparisons). Many participants expressed an interest in having access to shared tools and potentially developing international guidelines for creation and implementation of intercultural policy, though this proposition proved to be much more complex than initially expected (see White, “The Future of Intercultural Cities”, this volume).

1.3 Outcomes of the Forum

Initially the forum set out with the idea of producing three tangible outcomes: a collection of city-based cases studies on intercultural policy formation in cities, an analytical framework that would make it possible to make comparisons across cities and a preliminary set of principles for orienting intercultural policy work by cities. Below I will discuss the city-based case studies in order to give the reader some idea about how they were conceived and how they came to be published in this volume. The second intended outcome (an analytical framework) ended up being more of a tool than a framework, but it was useful in terms of giving forum participants guidelines with regards to how to organize the research and writing for the city-based case studies. In the end, the third intended outcome (a declaration of shared principles) was not realistic, probably because of the considerable degree of variation between municipal histories and contexts, but this point did lead to fruitful discussion near the end of the forum (for further discussion of these outcomes, see White, “The Future of Intercultural Cities”, this volume).

For many of the contributors to this volume, the idea of writing detailed objective accounts of how cities came to be experts in intercultural policy seemed like a daunting task, in part because policy initiatives

very often straddled historical periods, political administrations and municipal services or departments. This meant that the authors of the case studies did not necessarily have easy access to all the information that was required to write the case study. There was also the difficulty associated with the fact that the case studies presented in this volume are neither academic texts (with complete autonomy from municipal government) nor official city documents (which would have involved certain constraints on the content), and thus each case study required a different type and a different degree of consultation with local city officials.

It is safe to assume that the composition of the writing team may have an impact on the content or on the reception of the case studies. In several cases, the text was written by a team composed of one city official and one intercultural expert (as in the case of Oslo and Botkyrka) or one city official and several intercultural experts (Barcelona). This dyad methodology was also used during the forum in order to facilitate communication between researchers and practitioners and has proved to be a fruitful collaborative mechanism in other contexts (White and Allard 2013). In certain cases (such as Neuchâtel), the text was written solely by city officials who had experience with intercultural policy and who were familiar with ICC terminology and practice. In other cases, the text was written by an ICC expert and was validated by a city official (Lewisham), or it was written by an official representative of the city and validated by an ICC expert (Reggio Emilia). In one case (Montreal), the text was written by a former municipal employee with no current ties to the city and an independent researcher who was previously employed by the city on a contractual basis. Thus, it is important for the reader to remember that in certain cases authors are speaking in their role as representatives of a municipality and in other cases they speaking as independent researchers or outside observers.

In most cases the writing of the case study involved collaboration not only across disciplines but also across professional cultures (academics, experts, city employees, community organizers, etc.), which gives each case study a particular orientation and sensibility. From an editorial point of view, this represents a shortcoming, since some chapters read as academic texts (with a theoretical framing and a complex referencing system) and others read as policy documents (with an insider's point of view and a strong commitment to explaining programs and objectives). Given the objectives of the volume, we decided that these different approaches to writing and telling stories should

cohabit the same space so that readers could gain a sense of what happens when researchers and policymakers in this domain attempt to work together. Reading these texts together also gives a sense of what happened at the forum, a meeting of minds that was at times difficult but also pleasurable and filled with discovery (see White, this volume, Frozzini, this volume). After the forum, the policy working group of LABRRI compiled data from the different breakout sessions in order to provide each of the case study teams with material for writing their texts. This material included a summary of the issues and questions covered during their session using the three-part model that was developed for the forum: contexts, obstacles, strategies (see below).

In compiling this volume we assumed that each city involved in the forum had something to offer readers in terms of understanding intercultural practice and intercultural policy, but we also knew that no two cities are the same and that bringing together the case studies under one editorial roof would pose certain challenges. First of all, there is considerable diversity in terms of scale since some cities are large (Oslo) and some are small or medium-sized (Reggio Emilia). Some are metropolises (Montréal, Barcelona) and others are suburbs (Botkyrka); in some cases, the cities are not cities, but boroughs (Lewisham) or cantons (Neuchâtel). Some cities have expertise in terms of particular strategies for mobilizing support or raising awareness about intercultural issues and have been doing so for a long time. Others have only begun this process recently. Some cities have done systematic research before formulating policy, and other cities have focused primarily on a set of political or social principles from which future actions should emanate. Some cities are closely tied to regional and national levels of government, sometimes in an antagonistic relationship, and others are relatively autonomous in their actions. Not all cities provide the same services, and intercultural policies find themselves housed in various organizational configurations. Since each city is different, we are aware that the final publication will not provide an in-depth comparative analysis, though we hope that readers will be able to do some of this comparative work themselves, by reading across chapters and through the different sections of the volume.

Our main objective for the case studies was to focus attention on the process by which intercultural policy frameworks are created and implemented. The authors of the case studies were asked to explain the steps taken by planners and policy experts not only to respond to local challenges, but also to go beyond the challenges of already existing structures

and paradigms. Case studies were supposed to include material about difficulties encountered and obstacles faced at different moments and by various actors involved in policy design and implementation. To help focus thinking on this process, we asked each of the case-study teams to keep in mind three general themes in the research and writing of their texts:

1. What are the *contextual factors* that influenced the creation of intercultural policy?
2. What *obstacles* were faced in attempting to formulate intercultural policies?
3. What *strategies* were used to put intercultural policies in place and make them last?

Given the diversity of experiences across the different cities and the time constraints involved in preparing the different case studies, we did not ask the case-study teams to follow a particular structure or format. We did, however, ask the teams to use concrete examples, not just of policies but also of everyday situations or dilemmas. We also asked teams to provide detailed information about challenges and obstacles encountered since we assumed that addressing the sometimes-uncomfortable negative aspects of intercultural integration would give a more balanced view of the work that cities do and reduce the risk that the case studies would be perceived as promotional documents for the cities. In order to ensure some degree of continuity between the different case studies, we also provided the case-study teams with a series of specific questions about various aspects of policy formation and implementation:

Conceptual Issues

- What keywords characterize your policy and to what extent might they be adopted in other cities elsewhere?
- What texts or concepts have you found useful for thinking about intercultural policy?
- Where do you see the gaps between policy and practice? In your experience, was it better to begin with policy and move toward practice or the other way around?

- What strategies were developed to go beyond simply informing everyday citizens and getting them involved in interactions or in change through social participation? In your city, how is this participation viewed (as a privilege, a process, a responsibility)?
- What is the relationship between poverty and ethnic diversity in your context, and how are concentrations of poverty to be understood in relation to intercultural policy frameworks?

Stakeholders

- What are the different categories of stakeholders, and how were they mobilized?
- Was there a particular situation or event that led to the mobilization of different stakeholders? How did you know the time was right?
- Were there certain types of stakeholders or individual stakeholders that you view as particularly good or even necessary allies?
- Were there others that were more antagonistic?

Internal Mobilization

- Do you have any experience with opinion leaders in government or in local communities? What lessons were learned from these interactions?
- What is the most difficult part about mobilizing support in this area? Did you have a detailed plan or did the plan develop as time went on?
- What did you do to get transversal support, meaning across different sectors or divisions associated with the municipal government?
- How did you ensure that support for these ideas is maintained over time given that an intercultural vision often goes against the grain of traditional thinking about governance?

External Mobilization

- What is the nature of your relationship with local communities or community-based citizen groups? Do they represent more of a resource or an obstacle?

- What is the most difficult part about mobilizing support in this area? Did you have detailed plan or did the plan develop as time went on?
- How did you mediate relations between the different scales of government (administrators, politicians, decision-makers)? Which are more significant in your context?
- What is the relationship between your city and other cities in the region or in your country that are also interested in developing intercultural policy?
- What is the relation between cities and suburban and rural areas in your region?
- What was the nature of your relationship to the ICC network and/or other cities in the network? What aspects of the program were the most instrumental in helping you advance the cause of intercultural policy?

Evaluation and Communications

- What plans are there for evaluating not just the outputs but also the outcomes of policies and their impact? Is the notion of evaluation built-in to your planning?
- What is the role of public opinion, and what did you do to document local practices or survey local opinions about intercultural policy or interactions?
- What communications strategies were used to make citizens aware of policy initiatives, and how could they have been improved?

1.4 Overview of the Volume

Research in Montreal has shown that people working in the municipal government have a great deal of knowledge about intercultural dynamics on the ground, and in many situations, they are called upon to play an advisory role based on this experience (see Allard, this volume and White 2017). In addition to their role as advisors, they are also called upon to mediate between local community organizations and interest groups who

have difficulty making sense of competing ideas and ideologies from different levels of governance. Even city officials who work in places like Montreal, which has a long history of immigration and extensive experience in the area of diversity management, find themselves in a difficult situation since they are expected to have a clear set of policies and guidelines with regard to a rapidly changing social environment, but they often lack the political and financial resources to take on the difficult task of social cohesion in complex multiethnic environments.

The primary audience for this volume is policymakers and planners, specifically those involved in the social and economic integration of immigrants. By this category we mean elected officials and administrators involved in the elaboration and implementation of municipal policy, but the research outcomes may also be of use to practitioners in other areas of the public sector, such as education, health and social services. Scholars of immigration, ethnic studies and intercultural relations (as well as their students) constitute a secondary audience for this publication, especially those interested in bridging the gap between basic and applied research. Just as practitioners may have a difficult time with some of the more theoretical texts, researchers may be uncomfortable with the policy-based texts that are more descriptive in nature. By attempting to bridge the gap between the worlds of research and policy—which often present themselves as different “cultures”—this volume sets out to provide practitioners with new tools and concepts, and researchers and their students with information about intercultural and institutional dynamics on the ground. We realize that this volume is not for everyone, but we believe that the ambition of bringing together different universes of meaning—a core principle of intercultural theory—has the potential to contribute to new ways of thinking about policy and practice as we move into a new era, hence the subtitle of the volume.

The texts in this volume are organized into three sections. The first section—“Intercultural Policy and Cities”—introduces a number of key concepts and issues regarding intercultural practice and policy in cities. The text by Bob W. White sets the stage for the texts that will follow by asking not only “Why intercultural cities?” but also “Why policy frameworks?”. This text provides an overview of the literature on integration

policy in cities and describes the different elements that can be used by cities as building blocks for intercultural policy frameworks. The text by Irena Guidikova gives some background about the ICC network and explains the emergence of interculturalism as an “urban policy paradigm”. It also provides valuable information about the cities that have become models of intercultural practice and how the Montreal forum contributed to their interrelated trajectories. Patrice Allard’s text takes on the complex issue of municipal responsibility—especially within the context of national majorities such as the case of Québec—and proposes a description of the different roles that cities play in their ongoing efforts to make cities inclusive in response to an increasingly diversified population.

The second section of this volume—“A Tale of Seven Cities”—contains rich and detailed accounts of how seven different cities came to be recognized as international leaders in the field of intercultural policy: Oslo (Norway), Barcelona (Spain), Botkyrka (Sweden), Reggio Emilia (Italy), Lewisham (United Kingdom), Neuchâtel (Switzerland) and Montreal (Canada). Each of these city-based case studies speaks to the larger issues and challenges that all cities face when they embark on the uncertain path of intercultural practice: the difficulty of raising awareness about diversity, resistance on the part of local administrations and elected officials, misconceptions in the media with regard to migrants and refugees, the lack of resources for policy design and implementation and the stubborn reality of systemic discrimination, to only mention these. But each of the case studies also opens our eyes to worlds which are unique unto themselves, worlds that are made up of specific histories, political trajectories and social realities.

The people who occupy these worlds—city planners and elected officials, but also community organizers, researchers and everyday citizens—are faced with different types of challenges, some of which are structural (such as the fact that in certain contexts cities are closer to national than to regional government), some of which are historical (as in the case of countries with structures based on multiple ethnic groups) and others which are due to a dramatic turn of events (for example flashpoints in violence or the rapid influx of refugees). Faced with these challenges,

there is a sense of heroism in the way that actors respond, using creative solutions to respond to immediate needs, but also trying to slowly massage the structures of municipal government in order to improve relations between the different communities that share the city. The authors of the case studies showed a great deal of commitment in the preparation of these texts, often working in teams and organizing the writing outside of their regular responsibilities in order to ensure that the story to be told would reflect the reality and complexity of these uniquely intercultural spaces. Each of the seven case studies presents a different path to intercultural policy; individually they serve as models, together they are a source of inspiration.

The final section of the volume “The Montreal Forum and Beyond” includes a series of texts that attempt to follow through on the promises made by the organizers of the forum. Jorge Frozzini offers an analysis of the terminology that was used during the meetings in Montreal and how words can make it difficult to communicate across different types of boundaries (linguistic, cultural, national, continental) to achieve an understanding of common goals. Daniel Côté situates the notion of “diversity advantage” in a larger context of global economies, political tensions and social justice, urging the intercultural cities movement to think critically about the potential pitfalls of this model. Marta Massana’s contribution attempts to bring together different strands of practice across cities by making a preliminary proposal for the comparison of intercultural practice and programs. Each of the texts in this section is written by a researcher working on intercultural dynamics and public policy in Québec; thus the texts have the potential to open various levels of intercultural dialogue across the Atlantic. The texts in this section are critical of the encounters that took place in Montreal, but they are clearly intended to be constructive. While they fully embrace the policy positions put forth in the case studies set out in this volume, they also want to push thinking about public policy and intercultural practice in order to go beyond “the management of diversity” or even “planning for difference”, toward new models of cultural belonging and social cohesion.

Given the constraints of space and limits with regards to the costs of translation, we were not able to publish all the texts that were written in preparation for or in response to the forum in Montreal. We regret this situation since the quality of analysis and the inherent interest of the texts not included here was striking. For this reason, we have decided to publish a second volume, this time primarily featuring texts in French, in order to ensure a multiplicity of perspectives but also to keep the conversation going with regard to intercultural policy and practice in cities. This volume will feature a number of texts that are specific to Canada, most notably the way that intercultural practice plays out in municipal contexts in Québec, but also the complex relations with First Nations communities, two issues that stimulated considerable interest during the meetings in Montreal but which could not be included in this volume. On behalf of the contributors to both volumes, it is my pleasure to present this evocative collection of texts about the intercultural practice and policy in cities. By bringing together these stories, we hope to show that the challenge of intercultural theory and practice (Emongo and White 2014) will more than likely take place in the time and space of cities.

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Part I

Intercultural Policy and Cities