

# Multiculturalism, Mauritian Style: Cultural Diversity, Belonging, and a Secular State

American Behavioral Scientist  
2015, Vol. 59(6) 679–701  
© 2015 SAGE Publications  
Reprints and permissions:  
sagepub.com/journalsPermissions.nav  
DOI: 10.1177/0002764214566498  
abs.sagepub.com



Caroline Ng Tseung-Wong<sup>1</sup> and Maykel Verkuyten<sup>2</sup>

## Abstract

Multiculturalism is on the retreat in many Western countries. As an ideology, it is criticized for failing to engender national belonging and social cohesion and thereby to encourage groups of citizens to have parallel lives. In this article, we present the case of Mauritius that is often viewed as a successful plural society. We discuss the conditions that are conducive to a working multiculturalism in Mauritius as well as the challenges. We use empirical findings from our relatively large-scale survey research among adolescents from the three main ethnic groups (i.e., Hindus, Creoles, Muslims). The metaphorical representation of the nation as a rainbow or fruit salad means that cultural diversity forms part of the national self-image, but within a secular state where individual rights prevail. Our findings show that all participants reported strong and compatible national, ethnic, and religious group identifications and that dual identity was the most chosen identity option. Furthermore, intergroup relations tended to be positive but there was a strong preference for ethnic endogamy. Additionally, there were social psychological processes that work against harmonious intergroup relations. The article concludes by discussing what can be learned from Mauritian style multiculturalism.

## Keywords

multiculturalism, secular state, national and ethnic belonging, intergroup evaluations

---

<sup>1</sup>University of Mauritius, Réduit, Mauritius

<sup>2</sup>Utrecht University, Utrecht, The Netherlands

## Corresponding Author:

Caroline Ng Tseung-Wong, Department of Social Studies, University of Mauritius, Réduit, Mauritius.

Email: c.ngtseung@uom.ac.mu

“Mauritius is also an instructive exception. Despite its potentially conflict-laden ethnic and cultural heterogeneity, the island has maintained a stable parliamentary democracy, with regular elections, peaceful changes of government, and a high level rule of law based on a liberal constitution.”

—Bertelsmann Transformation Index (2006, p. 1)

The small insular island state of Mauritius, located in the Indian Ocean, offers a challenging case for those who have declared multiculturalism a failure. As illustrated in the quote above and according to the Human Development Report 2004, Mauritius demonstrates that ethnic-cultural heterogeneity does not have to obstruct democracy, political stability, and social cohesion. The country contradicts the retreat from multiculturalism in discourse and to a lesser extent in deed among politicians, opinion makers, and scholars in many Western countries and in Europe in particular (Goodhart, 2013; Scheffer, 2000; Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010). European politicians have queued to announce the “death of multiculturalism” (see Verkuyten, 2014) and their declarations symbolize the “assimilationist turn” at the beginning of the new millennium in Europe (Kundnani, 2007; Vasta, 2007).

Yet there also are countries in which a form of multiculturalism has been fostered and institutionalized and where cultural diversity is part of the national self-image. In these countries, multiculturalism is not seen as an accommodating gesture toward immigrants and ethnic minorities but rather as defining the society as a whole. One example is Canada (Berry, 2011; Kymlicka, 2012) and another one is Mauritius, which is viewed as a strong candidate for “truly successful polyethnic societies” (Eriksen, 2004, p. 79). Indeed, the cultural complexity of Mauritius is substantial. On 1,860 km<sup>2</sup>, various ethnic groups live together, around 15 languages are said to be spoken, and the four world religions rub shoulders (Eriksen, 1994). Accordingly, the representation of the nation is one of a multicultural mosaic, a “rainbow” or “fruit salad” in which all cultural groups are incorporated. However, the idyll of a harmonious “rainbow nation” propagated, for example, by the tourist industry hides the fact that Mauritians sometimes experience everyday multiculturalism as a source of frustration and conflict, and that ethnicity plays a role in politics, education, career prospects, and for entitlement issues (Carroll & Carroll, 2000; Eisenlohr, 2006a; Eriksen, 1995; Nave, 2000). In other words, there are also cracks in the colorful multicultural image. Mauritius therefore provides an interesting and informative real-world example of “multiculturalism in action.” It is an exemplar of the multicultural opportunities and dilemmas that are faced by most plural societies.

In this article, we use Mauritius as a case study to illustrate some of the critical issues involved in *living* multiculturalism. Multiculturalism as an ideology argues for the recognition of group differences and offers a positive view of cultural maintenance by ethnic groups and a concomitant need to accommodate diversity in an equitable way (Modood, 2007; Parekh, 2000). The recognition and maintenance of ethnic identities and group cultures are emphasized together with national belonging and equal societal participation of all ethnocultural groups. A focus on group identities and group

differences is central in theorizing in the social identity approach as developed in social psychology (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner & Reynolds, 2001). Therefore, this approach provides a useful theoretical framework for examining and discussing issues of multiculturalism (see Verkuyten, 2006). Following the social identity approach, we discuss the importance of three issues for a multicultural society to work: (a) a recognition and acceptance of diversity as defining society, (b) a sense of common belonging with no contradiction between subgroup (ethnic) and superordinate (national) identifications, and (c) equality and equitable participation in important domains of life. We use these three points to structure the article, whereby we first discuss the more positive aspects of Mauritian style multiculturalism and subsequently address related cracks in the multicultural image.

Main parts of our arguments and claims are based on empirical findings of our relatively large-scale survey research among more than 1,800 Hindu, Muslim, and Creole adolescents living in different parts of the country (see Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010, 2013a, 2013b, 2014). There are quite a number of anthropological studies on Mauritius (e.g., Boswell, 2006; Eisenlohr, 2006a, 2006b, Eriksen, 1998) but our research is the first one that has examined group identifications and intergroup relations from a more social, psychological, and quantitative perspective. We first give a short description of the Mauritian context.

## Mauritius in a Nutshell

Mauritius is a former Dutch, French, and English colony, which obtained its independence in 1968 and became a Republic<sup>1</sup> in 1992. With no prior indigenous population, the French were the first to formally colonize the island. Slaves were brought in mainly from East Africa and Madagascar. When the British won the island in 1810 and renamed it Mauritius, they allowed the French settlers to retain their language and customs. To this day, French is more spoken than English—although the latter is the official parliamentary language—and Mauritian law is a mixture of both French Codes and English Law. Under British rule, slavery was abolished in 1834, and indentured laborers from India, mainly Uttar Pradesh and Bihar (Hindus and Muslims), were brought in to work in the sugarcane fields to replace the freed slaves. A small Chinese community, mainly ethnic Hakka, settled as traders.

To this date, the main cultural groups are the Hindus (mainly of North-Indian origin), Tamils, Telugus, Marathis, Muslims, Creoles, Whites, and Chinese (Eriksen, 2004). Yet the Constitution recognizes only four main religious-cultural groups: Hindus (52%), General Population (29%), Muslims (16%), and Sino-Mauritian (3%). Hindus were drivers of independence and are the current powerful political group that is dominant in the public sector. Mauritian Hindus are distinguished along regions of origin in India and ancestral languages: Hindi, Tamil, Marathi, and Telugu. Although they also came from India, most Muslims have not kept many ties with India but rather form a tight community centered on their religious faith (Hempel, 2009). General Population<sup>2</sup> is a miscellaneous term to describe any Mauritian who does not fall under the other three categories (i.e., Hindu, Muslim, and Sino-Mauritian) and therefore the

former colonizers (Franco-Mauritians, i.e., Whites) and the former slaves (Creoles—in Mauritius, the term refers to individuals of African Malagasy origins) are amalgamated under the same appellation although they are rather distinct communities. This residual group also contains the *gens de couleur* (mulattos) who are of mixed origins. The Whites despite being a small numerical minority are economically powerful and therefore tend to dominate this generic appellation.

Economically, Mauritius is the “teacher’s pet” of Africa, often hailed as an economic miracle given that the lack of natural resources, a high fertility rate, a high unemployment rate, a monocrop sugar industry, and skilled emigration were the “right” ingredients for an economic disaster in the 1960s. Yet in the early 1980s, the Export Processing Zone was created so that the textile industry became the second economic pillar together with sugar. Simultaneously, tourism was promoted and the island is still marketed as an upmarket resort island. This industry is currently facing difficulties with the economic recession in Europe, the main tourism provider. Recently, the financial sector through offshore and double tax agreement with India has been a strong sector of the economy. Gross domestic product per capita has increased from less than US\$500 to more than US\$6,000 from 1970 to 2010. The economic development of Mauritius is often accounted for by the resiliency and diversity of its people, which is considered one of its main assets. Indeed, Mauritius is popularly illustrated as the meeting point of African, European, and Asian confluences—the “tomato of the Indian Ocean”—and has incorporated this diversity in its national self-image.

## Living Multiculturalism

The relatively favorable economic situation together with the fact of being a small island, a country of immigrants with neither an indigenous group nor an ongoing influx of immigrants and a society nonetheless marked by cultural plurality, are conducive to a working multiculturalism (Kymlicka, 2012). But there are additional conditions for multiculturalism to work. Following the social identity approach, we will discuss the importance of (a) accepting diversity as defining society, (b) a sense of common national belonging without compromising feelings of ethnic group identity, and (c) the endorsement of democratic decision-making procedures. Our argument is that in Mauritius, there is supporting evidence for these critical conditions.

### *Diversity in the Definition of the Nation*

Multiculturalism in Mauritius emphasizes mutual recognition and respect of differences. It is a form of interactive pluralism that “stresses groups in interaction with each other mutually constituting a substantive moral whole” (Hartmann & Gerties, 2005, p. 231). Group differences are maintained and group identity claims are regarded as legitimate in public life. Although the Mauritian government has not come up with a multiculturalism agenda as such, policies related to, for instance grants to cultural centers and language unions (e.g., the Tamil-speaking union, recently the Kreol-speaking union), are illustrations of a multiculturalism approach (Aumeerally, 2005).

The social history of Mauritius is such that there is not a mainstream way of life to which minorities are expected or encouraged to adapt. The politically powerful and numerical majority group of Hindus did once consist of indentured laborers who faced adversity and contempt by the sugar barons and English administrators, but managed to withstand hardship and kept their culture, language, and traditions alive. Because their majority position does not extend to all spheres of life—for instance, economically Franco-Mauritians (i.e., Whites) are powerful and the press is predominantly owned by those from the General Population group—it is neither strategic nor viable for Hindus to maintain hegemony through an emphasis on cultural assimilation. Rather, different cultural registers coexist and what is considered mainstream depends on the specific social nexus in which interactions occur. Bollywood and Hollywood are both shown on TV and in movie theaters and wearing bikinis or trousers on the beach is not an issue. This “liberal” approach to diversity works as long as one knows which cultural register is mainstreamed for whom. For instance, it is alright for a non-Hindu to wear a saree or *churidar* on the Hindu festival Diwali but not normative for a non-Hindu to “just” wear a saree. In some private companies, the expected norm is for women employees to wear Western-type outfit but this is not the case in the public sector where *churidars*, sarees, and Western clothes are worn.

Mauritians unconsciously and routinely navigate among these different registers and out of this diversity, a form of social cohesion—*lakorite*—has emanated. “Lakorite” is a Mauritian Kreol word that does not have a direct equivalence (or roots) in the English or French language. It means getting along well with others, wherever one lives, whoever one’s neighbors are. Richon (2013) has conceptualized the word to denote the Mauritian way of dealing and living with cultural diversity. He argues that through time, Mauritians have been doing “interculturality.”<sup>3</sup> The *sega*, which is a typical Mauritian dance, popularly viewed as originating from slavery, actually has as its main instrument the “ravanne,” which is of Tamil origin, the “triangle,” which is originally French, and the “maravanne” likely of African origin. Fried noodles and fried rice mainly eaten by the Chinese has evolved into a distinctively Mauritian dish quite remote from the original recipe. Sharing traditional sweets with neighbors, friends, or colleagues who are not of the same cultural group on specific festivals is common and expected. In our research, this notion of cultural blending was used in response to an open-ended question to define what it means to be a Mauritian, as is illustrated in the following quote:

If we consider Mauritius, we find that despite the different ethnic groups, religions, etc. . . . there has been a blending of the different cultures so that there is the emergence of Mauritian culture. This Mauritian culture is characterized by shared values and in some manner way of thinking. Other examples include the methods of cooking. So typically a Mauritian is somebody who belongs to this shared Mauritian culture. (Male, Hindu, 17 years old)

Diversity in Mauritius, to paraphrase Billig (1995), takes the form of “banal multiculturalism” where symbols of difference self-evidently abound in the landscape and

permeate everyday life. There are public holidays related to each ethnoreligious groups, religious sacred places anywhere, all cultures represented on Independence Day, different languages on radio and TV, and neighborhoods mostly ethnically mixed. These banal instances serve as reminders that “diversity is who we are” and thereby normalize differences, “they are so different to us” is viewed in terms of “we are all different.”

The metaphorical representation of a “fruit salad” or “rainbow” incorporates in its concept of the nation all the cultural groups without pressuring them into assimilating into a monocultural national ideal. In European, and also American, discourses, the nation is generally identified with one norm-referencing ethnic group (i.e., tacitly the majority group, see Devos & Banaji, 2005), and in these countries, attitudes toward multiculturalism tend to be more positive among ethnic minority than majority members (see Verkuyten, 2014). For minority groups, multiculturalism offers the possibility of maintaining their own culture and gaining a higher social status in these societies. In contrast, majority members tend to see multiculturalism as something for minorities only, that is, as supporting the position and cultural identity of minority groups and threatening the identity and social position of the majority (“what about us”; e.g., Morrison, Plaut, & Ybarra, 2010; Verkuyten, 2014).

In Mauritius, however, the popular representation of a “fruit salad” or “rainbow nation” implies that Mauritians accept and represent their country in terms of cultural diversity. In our research, we found that adolescents of all three ethnic groups (Hindu, Muslim, and Creole) strongly and equally endorsed multiculturalism for Mauritius (e.g., “In general, Mauritians should value the ethnic diversity in the country,” “In Mauritius, all the ethnic and religious groups should be recognized and respected”; Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2014). Furthermore, for the three ethnic groups, the endorsement of multiculturalism was stronger for those who identified more with the Mauritian nation. Thus, those who have a relatively strong sense of national belonging were more in favor of the national ideal of “fruit salad” multiculturalism. As social norms and beliefs regarding diversity are communicated and spread in a society, they become its “cultural representations” (Guimond et al., 2013; Moscovici, 1988) and convey the message “this is who we are and this is what we do.” In an open-ended question on “what makes a person Mauritian,” one of the most frequent responses referred to the notion of “respect for other religious and cultural groups, tolerance for all communities-unity in diversity” (33%). As one respondent puts it,

a person who knows different cultures and also live between all these cultures. A person, for instance, being a Hindu will not only celebrate his festivals but also celebrate the Muslims, Catholics and so on like Noël [NB: Christmas] (Female, Hindu, 17 years old)

The case of Mauritius and also Canada (see Doucerain, Dere, & Ryder, 2013) highlight that beyond “recognition and maintenance of cultural group diversity,” there must be a “glue” factor that holds the society together. In Canada, this is set up in the core ideals of the constitution, which is about promotion of intergroup communication and fostering full participation in the Canadian society. In Mauritius, this “glue”

involves, as illustrated above, different ways of life and “lakorite” nonetheless. Social cohesion does not have to equate to uniformity or assimilation when the identity of the nation is about diversity.

### *The Balance Between the Need for Distinctiveness and That for Commonality*

In Europe, critics of multiculturalism have argued that diversity in cultural values, religion, and ethnic background make people less willing to sacrifice, trust, and share across group boundaries and for the common good (Goodhart, 2013; Scheffer, 2011). Furthermore, European politicians and the media often claim that many minorities have divided loyalties and a lack of attachment to the host society and therefore undermine a cohesive society. Proponents of multiculturalism agree that unity and a shared national identity is important for multiculturalism to work (Modood, 2007; Parekh, 2000). They also argue that a well-functioning society needs a sense of commitment and common belonging. Without this, a society would degenerate into a collection of segregated cultural groups, which only trust and feel solidarity toward ethnic or religious in-group members.

This emphasis on a shared national identity is in agreement with the common in-group identity model (CIIM; Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2007) that is derived from the social identity approach. An overarching or shared sense of “we” works against intergroup tensions and conflicts because it ensures that the previous out-group is incorporated and becomes one of “us.” In this way, the former out-group benefits from the preference that usually exists for the in-group. A shared identity provides a common point of reference and a moral framework with the related sentiments of belonging together, mutual commitments, and responsibilities.

In our research, we found for all three ethnic groups a relatively strong sense of national belonging and national pride (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010). For some of our participants, this was even a normative requirement for being a Mauritian, as the following quote illustrates:

First of all, being Mauritian, means showing a sense of belonging to the country. Also one should be proud of one’s country, irrespective of problems. Instead one should work to combat these problems. Being Mauritian to me means accepting all other religions, living as one and respecting other religions. Being fair or dark in complexion does not matter, as far as we are Mauritian. (Male, Muslim, 17 years old)

Furthermore, and in line with the CIIM, we found that higher national identification was associated with more positive intergroup attitudes. Thus, for all three ethnic groups, a stronger sense of national belonging was related to more positive attitudes toward other ethnic groups.

According to critics of multiculturalism, the required sense of national belonging can be undermined by the maintenance of minority identities. A strong sense of national and ethnic belonging would be incompatible leading to divided loyalties.

Cross-national research shows that in almost all countries, minority groups have higher ethnic identification and lower national identification than the majority group (e.g., Elkins & Sides, 2007; Staerklé, Sidanius, Green, & Molina, 2010). There is also some research evidence for a reemphasis of ethnic distinctiveness (reethnicization) among minority groups, and research in Western Europe has found that many Muslim immigrants consider themselves primarily a Muslim rather than a citizen of their host country (e.g., Phalet, Maliepaard, Fleischmann, & Gungor, 2013).

However, proponents of multiculturalism do not assume that there is a contradiction between national and ethnic belonging. They argue that a dual identity is needed in which ethnic and religious group distinctiveness is affirmed within a context of national connection and common belonging (Modood, 2007; Parekh, 2000). Similarly, the CIIM has recognized that trying to replace ethnic or religious minority identities with a sense of national belonging implies that minority groups lose their distinctiveness, which may arouse reactance and result in intergroup tensions and conflicts (Dovidio et al., 2007). Empirical research on the relationship between ethnic and national identities shows that this relationship depends on the national context. For instance, in immigrant countries (e.g., Canada and the United States), the two identities are either statistically independent or positively correlated, which is illustrated in the widespread use of hyphenated labels such as African-American. In “older” European nations, the association tends to be negative indicating that both identifications are contradictory (Phinney, Berry, Vedder, & Liebkind, 2006). This is illustrated by the point that in many of these nations, it is not common to self-identify, or to be identified by others, in terms of, for example, “Moroccan Dutch” or “German Muslim” (Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012).

In our research in Mauritius, we found for all three groups relatively high levels of ethnic group identification and even higher levels of religious group identification (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010, 2013b). Importantly, these group identifications were not considered contradictory to a sense of national belonging. Both majority Hindus and minority Creoles and Muslims preferred a dual identity whether measured as a self-identification choice (national–religious and national–ethnic) or as high national identification combined with high religious or ethnic identification (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010, 2013b). Furthermore, adolescents were more likely to report a dual identity (national–ethnic, 51.7%), than mainly national (32.4%) or mainly ethnic (15.5%). Additionally, when asked explicitly about how they saw themselves in terms of national and religious belonging, the majority indicated a dual identity: Hindu Mauritian (65.4%), Muslim Mauritian (50.7%), and Christian Mauritian (58.9%). When “diversity is who we are,” then it makes sense that most people view their national and ethnic/religious identities as compatible. In Mauritius, all ethnoreligious groups are seen as making up the “rainbow nation” to the point that being “just Mauritian” can be problematic. Rather, being a good religious follower and practicing one’s ethnic culture paves the road to being a good Mauritian (Eisenlohr, 2011).

Dual identities are not necessarily contradictory or conflicting and one’s ethnic-group membership can form a basis for feeling part of the nation. When the superordinate national category is portrayed as culturally diverse, dual identities can highlight the



positive identification to both the cultural subgroup and the nation, and this can have positive consequences for intergroup relations.

### *Decision-Making Procedures Within a Diversity Polity*

At the political level, cultural diversity raises questions about group identities and political representation. Who gets included in the national imagery and gets to make decisions are important issues for any polity, but in a plural society, these issues become critical to the functioning of the society. From its inception as an independent nation, these were points of contention in Mauritius. To appease the fears of the minorities, a “Best Loser System” (BLS) that awards eight seats to underrepresented ethno-cultural communities, over and above the 60 seats that are allocated using the British principle of first-past-the poll, was installed (see Mathur, 1997). An outcome of the “BLS” is that candidates at the election have to indicate their “ethnic group” affiliation, failing which their candidacy is void. In parallel, however, when the Mouvement Militant Mauricien came to power in 1982, driven by a nationalist ideology of *ene sel lepep, ene sel nation* (one people, one nation), they officially abolished the question of “ethnic group” from the population census, but the BLS stayed on. The BLS has been contested at different points in history but more recently by a group called *Resistans ek Alternativ*. At the general election of 2010, they asked citizens to register themselves as candidates without giving their ethnic group and 104 candidates did so—the so-called “Blok 104.” As expected, their candidacies were not accepted and they took the case to court. The Privy Council ruled that it was for the Mauritian government to decide. Simultaneously, *Resistans ek Alternativ* made a complaint about the BLS to the United Nations Human Rights Committee that, in July 2012, ruled that the mandatory classification of a candidate for general election without an updated population census was arbitrary. Mauritius is therefore under the obligation to update the 1972 census with regard to community affiliations or to reconsider the BLS system. The White paper on electoral reform has recently been published and it advocates the abolishment of the BLS and the introduction of proportional representation. Consensus, however, on the White paper is still in the making.

Against this dynamic societal background of official group representation and color-blind citizenship, we investigated Hindu, Muslim, and Creole adolescents’ fairness evaluations of different decision-making procedures: three democratic decision-making procedures (representative democracy, equal group representation, proportional group representation) and one nondemocratic procedure (cultural group oligarchy; Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2013b). Similar to research among adolescents in Canada and China (Helwig, 1998, 2006; Helwig, Arnold, Tan, & Boyd, 2007) and across Europe (Ellenbroek, Verkuyten, Thijs, & Poppe, in press), we found that adolescents preferred democratic systems (representative democracy) to nondemocratic ones. More specifically, across the three ethnic groups, there was the same ranking: adolescents reported that representative democracy was the fairest decision-making procedure and cultural group oligarchy, the most unfair system. In between the two were forms of group representation that were considered somewhat fair, with equal group

representation considered fairer than proportional group representation. Furthermore, it turned out that stronger ethnic identification was associated with higher fairness judgments for the two group representation procedures, and in particular, equal group representation. This is in line with social identity theory's notion that individuals who are highly committed to their group are inclined to act in terms of their group membership and the interests of their group (Tajfel & Turner, 1979).

There were also some ethnic group differences. In general, numerical majority groups tend to favor strategies that maintain their privileged position and minority groups favor strategies that enhance their position and status (Dovidio, Gaertner, & Saguy, 2009). In line with this, the numerical minority groups of Muslims and Creoles significantly rated *equal* group representation as fairer than the majority group of Hindus. For Hindus, equal group representation means foregoing some of their decisional power, and for the minorities, this means the assurance of having an equal voice. In addition, Muslims had higher fairness rating than Hindus and Creoles for equal group representation indicating that they are more open to the idea of "Muslims being represented by Muslims" (to paraphrase Mansbridge, 1999). Muslim adolescents in Mauritius tend to have higher levels of religious group identification compared with Hindus and Christians (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2013b). In fact, only one party, the *Front de Solidarité Mauricienne*, with an elected leader in parliament, has roots in the Muslim community although it claims to be a party for all Mauritians.

There was no difference in fairness judgment of cultural group oligarchy between the three groups of adolescents. Furthermore, *proportional* group representation was not judged as fairer by Hindus compared with Muslims and Creoles. Actually the correlation between proportional group representation and cultural group oligarchy was moderate (around  $r = .52$ ) and both forms of decision making were viewed as unfair. The ideological representation of Mauritius as a "rainbow nation" and "fruit salad" makes unequal group-based decision-making procedures relatively unfair because all groups make up the national rainbow and therefore should have an important say. To view these decisional-making options as fair even when they are to the benefit of one's own group (i.e., the majority group) goes against the nation's emphasis on cultural diversity and therefore could be construed as a form of racism.

Overall, the findings point to the limits of "group-ness" in multiculturalism. That cultural groups should be recognized and valued is one thing but that decisions should be made on a cultural group basis seems to be another matter. These empirical findings with Mauritian adolescents mirror the current consensus in Mauritius on the elimination of the "BLS." Likewise, the ethnic group differences on the fairness of the group representation procedures reflect the on-going debate on the representation of minorities in parliament.

## Possible Cracks in the Multicultural Image

The social identity approach emphasizes that various conditions and processes can work against the development of harmonious intergroup relations. Relations can be

less or more positive depending on the content of group identity, group boundaries and group identifications, and status and power differences between groups (Verkuyten, 2014).

### *Religions in a Secular State*

According to the social identity approach, the nature of the group is important for intergroup dynamics. The characteristics attributed to a group define the identity content and this has implications for the extent to which people identify with it and how they respond to others (Turner & Reynolds, 2001). For example, religious group differences tend to be more difficult to reconcile than ethnocultural differences because they are often seen as sacred beliefs and duties that cannot be compromised. The fact that in Europe, multiculturalism is evaluated more negatively than in traditional immigrant-receiving countries such as Canada and Australia, might have to do with Muslims making up a larger proportion of immigrants in Europe (Koopmans, 2013). Despite the importance of religion, most of the literature on multiculturalism predominantly focuses on ethnocultural groups rather than religious groups. Yet the place of religion in a secular state is a highly relevant issue, particularly in multifaith Mauritius.

Eisenlohr (2006b, p. 396) analyzes the relationship between the state and religion in Mauritius as one where there is a “regime of state neutrality towards religious traditions which at the same time draws on ‘moral values’ as furthering toleration and peaceful coexistence among religiously diverse citizens.” Genuine religious traditions are seen as promoting tolerance and peaceful coexistence and therefore should be encouraged. In Mauritius, this takes the form of government subsidies for religious activities, celebrations of religious holidays and pilgrimages, and establishment of “cultural centers” with ethnoreligious agendas. This is similar to India that, despite independence leading to the partition of its territory, acknowledges religious diversity. For instance, in India all religious communities have rights and receive state grants for the management of their religious communities (see Mahajan, 2005).

Yet in Mauritius, state recognition of religious communities goes together with state neutrality toward religious traditions. This is ensured in the judiciary through individual rights. There is a strong emphasis on individual rights which is accepted by most Mauritians (Eriksen, 1997a, 1998). Take for instance the case of confessional schools (mainly Roman Catholic) and their admission policy. Because of the colonial legacy, secondary Catholic schools were more numerous than State schools at the beginning of Independence and they were fee-paying schools catering for Catholic students. When the government introduced free schooling in the 1970s, it needed the collaboration of Catholic schools for the project to work. These schools agreed to become government-subsidized schools on the condition that they would be able to have 50% of the seats reserved for Catholic students. This arrangement was contested in the Supreme Court by a Hindu named Sutttyhudeo Tengur on behalf of his 11-year-old daughter who, he argued, was being discriminated against as she did not have an equal chance of getting in a Catholic school. He also challenged the constitutionality of the arrangements by the Ministry of Education and Scientific

Research (i.e., Government). The Supreme Court in 2002 ruled in favor of Mr. Tengur arguing that the practice of reserved seat was unconstitutional. Additionally, the Diocese of Port-Louis made an appeal to the Privy Council which also ruled that since Catholic schools were now receiving regular grants from public funds they have to be open to pupils of all religions.

A more recent case is the lawsuit filed by a Mauritian citizen, Gavin Glover, against a mosque in a residential area for its use of loudspeakers in the call for prayers (*Azaan*). In his verdict, judge Lam Shang Leen stated that the right of devotees to practice their religion is not infringed by prohibiting the use of loudspeakers (*L'Express*, 2007).<sup>4</sup> These concrete instances illustrate that Mauritian citizens engage and actively challenge issues related to religious affiliations and up to now have been able to rely on an impartial judiciary system. As Dinan, Nababsing, and Mathur (1999, p. 83) put it, albeit in a self-congratulatory manner, "the great leveling agent within the Mauritian society has been the official government policy of parity of treatment for each citizen, irrespective of religious faith or ethnic origin."

The above examples demonstrate that a multicultural polity can rely on the principle of individual rights when it also recognizes the value of religious communities. In other words, if religion and by extension religious communities are important social markers of people's social identity, then state recognition of such communities can actually promote the acceptance of common individual rights.

### *Group Boundaries and In-Group Closure*

In the "fruit salad" metaphor, the components have to be clearly distinct and maintained rather than squashed together as in a fruit compote or a melting pot. Similarly, the colors of the Mauritian rainbow have to be kept separate for the whole to be beautiful. The group thinking of multiculturalism implies clear group boundaries and the preservation of heritage cultures which should be recognized and respected. One possible implication of this is that multiculturalism stimulates the positive acceptance of ethnic out-groups in the public sphere of work, school, and civic life but not necessarily in the intimate private sphere of family and marriage.

Researchers typically view intermarriage as the "last taboo" in ethnic and race relations (Qian, 2005), and the level of interethnic marriage in society is a common indicator of the degree of societal integration of ethnic groups (Blau, Beeker, & Fitzpatrick, 1984). However, there is the possibility that a plural society that adheres to "fruit salad" multiculturalism actually promotes intraethnic marriage *together* with positive intergroup relations in the public domain. Intraethnic marriage is important for the continuation of the ethnic culture whereas interethnic marriages reduce the possibilities of passing on heritage cultural practices and beliefs to the next generation (Clark-Ibáñez & Felmler, 2004; Huijnk, Verkuyten, & Coenders, 2010). Children born from intermarriage blur ethnic group boundaries and in the long run raise questions about the nature of ethnic groups. Thus, the ideology of cultural diversity and cultural recognition might not only result in the public acceptance of members of other ethnic groups but also in the endorsement of ethnic endogamy. Nave (2000) estimated the rate of

intermarriage in Mauritius to be surprisingly low (about 8.2%) and argued that children born of mixed marriage are encouraged to choose one of the parents' cultural traditions, thereby maintaining the ethnic boundaries distinct (see also Eriksen, 1997b).

In our research, we examined the possibility that there are these two sides to multiculturalism: positive evaluation of out-groups in the public domain (i.e., schools and neighborhood) coupled with a strong preference for marrying an ethnic in-group member (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2014). We used social distance questions that assess the degree of acceptance that people have toward contacts with social groups (Bogardus, 1925), and the results supported this two-sidedness of multiculturalism. First, we found that adolescents of all three groups made a distinction between social distance toward ethnic out-groups in the public domain and in the private, intimate domain of marriage. Second, the adolescents were relatively positive about contacts with out-group members as classmates and neighbors and relatively negative about an out-group member as a spouse. Third, stronger endorsement of multiculturalism was associated with lower social distance toward the *out-group in the public* domain and toward the *in-group in the private* domain. Thus, participants who more strongly endorsed multiculturalism did show a stronger two-sided social distance pattern. These findings indicate that there are two sides to the "fruit salad" multiculturalism of Mauritius: acceptance of diversity in the public sphere and in-group closure in the intimate sphere. This might be considered a recipe for a cohesive plural society, but one that is quite segregated in the more intimate domains of family life.

### *Ethnic Identification and In-Group Projection*

Ethnic group identification can work against a harmonious plural society because it can have a polarizing effect on intergroup relations. There are many social-psychological studies that have found that higher group identification is not only accompanied by more positive feelings toward one's own group but also with more negative feelings toward out-groups (e.g., Hinkle & Brown, 1990; Mummendey, Klink, & Brown, 2001). This means that it is often not easy to encourage people to be proud of their heritage group and culture and at the same time to be open and well-disposed toward others. We also found this polarizing effect of ethnic identification in our research among Hindu, Muslim, and Creole adolescents. Higher ethnic identifiers were more committed to their ethnic group and this was related to more social distance toward out-groups and less social distance toward the in-group (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2014). Furthermore, adolescents who considered their ethnic identity to be relatively more important than their national identity evaluated ethnic out-groups more negatively (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010).

Another social-psychological process that can lead to more negative intergroup relations refers to the fact that a shared national identity is often considered to be closer to the identity of one's own group than toward that of other groups. Social identity theory argues that intergroup differentiation contributes to a positive social identity (Tajfel & Turner, 1979). According to the in-group projection model (see Wenzel, Mummendey, & Waldzus, 2007), group members therefore have a tendency to perceive their ethnic

in-group as relatively representative (e.g., “We Muslims are the real Mauritians”) and indispensable (e.g., “Mauritius, without us Muslims is no longer Mauritius”) for the national category. And because other groups are considered less typical and indispensable, they would be evaluated more negatively. Based on this model we expected in our research, first, that the participants of all three ethnic groups would perceive their ethnic in-group as more representative and as more indispensable for Mauritius compared with the two out-groups. Second, we expected that higher relative in-group representativeness and higher relative in-group indispensability would have polarizing effects with more positive in-group attitudes and more negative out-group attitudes. The findings were in support of both these expectations. For all three groups there was in-group favoritism in the form of seeing one’s own group as relatively more representative as well as more indispensable for Mauritius. Furthermore, and also for the three groups, higher relative in-group representativeness and relative in-group indispensability were associated with more positive in-group evaluation and more negative out-group evaluations. These findings indicate that a diversity representation of the nation does not rule out the tendency for in-group projection in terms of representativeness and indispensability with the related unfavorable consequences for intergroup relations.

### *Equality: The Position of Creoles*

Multiculturalism implies an ongoing balancing act between demands for equality and group rights and claims of separateness and difference. This inevitably leads to controversies, paradoxes and sometimes, conflicts. Hindus are dominant in the country’s political and administrative system but Creoles lack career prospects in this system and have been exposed to discrimination in the country’s administration and private sectors. The economic boom of the 1990s has not benefited all Mauritians equally, particularly not the Creoles. In general, Creoles are faced with negative stereotypes (being lazy, fun going, and poor), higher unemployment, less political power, and fewer opportunities than other Mauritians (Boswell, 2006; Eriksen, 1998; Palmyre, 2007).

In line with this, we found in our research that Hindu and Muslim adolescents made a much stronger evaluative distinction in favor of their own group than the Creoles did (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010). Compared with Creoles, the former two groups were not only more positive about their own community but also more negative toward the Creoles in particular. For instance, when comparing Hindu adolescents’ evaluations of Muslims and Creoles as two out-groups, Creoles were rated more negatively than Muslims and the same applied for Muslim adolescents’ evaluations of Hindus and Creoles.<sup>5</sup> This negative evaluation of Creoles was also evident in the significantly more negative evaluation of marrying a Creole compared with a Muslim for Hindu adolescents, and of marrying a Creole compared with a Hindu for Muslims adolescents.<sup>6</sup> Thus, it appears that the lower status position of Creoles is recognized by the other ethnic groups (Hempel, 2009).

One reason for the disadvantaged position of the Creoles is the diasporic ancestral multicultural policy (Eisenlohr, 2006a). The notion of being a diasporic nation and the related cultural politics of the state encourage the cultivation of “ancestral cultures.”

Diversity is based on the recognition of the culture of groups that have clear ancestral origins like the Hindus, Muslims, and Chinese. This means that the diasporic ancestral culture policy legitimizes the position of “ancestral groups” but has exclusionary implications for the Creoles (Eisenlohr, 2006a). The Creoles are a mixed group that cannot claim a specific cultural “homeland” and therefore have no recognized claims based on ancestral culture (Laville, 2000). As a result, Creoles have suffered from exclusion because services and other facilities provided by the government—such as the teaching of ancestral language in state schools and the establishment of “cultural centers”—are given only to officially recognized cultural categories (Aumeerally, 2005).

The official term *General Population* is a miscellaneous/residual category that encompasses all those who are not of Asian descent. It is not commonly used as a social identity marker. The Whites, a small but economically influential group, are less concerned about social services and state cultural group funding, whereas, for a long time, the Creoles have not been able (or did not see the relevance) to play the ethnic game to claim group benefits. In 1993, the late Creole priest Roger Cerveaux made an appeal to the Roman Catholic Church of which most Creoles are fervent followers and to the State about the precarious economic and social conditions of Creoles—*le malaise Creole* (Creole ailment). The 1999 riots<sup>7</sup> following the death in police custody of the Creole *seggae* singer Kaya who was arrested for smoking cannabis during one of his concert was for the Creoles, one of too many instances of unfair and unequal treatment. The 4-day riot that followed targeted mainly symbols of the establishment and government power—police quarters, the Citizen Advice Bureau and the national television station—expressing mistrust in the very governmental institutions that should guarantee equality. It is instructive to have a closer look at the attempts to restore peace and the Creoles’ mobilization to this “culmination” of the *malaise Creole*.

President, Cassam Uteem, and the head of the Roman Catholic Church, late Cardinal Jean Margeot, appealed successfully to the population to restore peace. One month after the riots, a pacific peace march—*Chaînes d’Amitié*—was organized where many Mauritians formed a human chain across the island symbolizing peace and unity. This gathering served to reiterate symbolically the cultural representation of “unity in diversity.” But cracks in the veneer of this multiculturalism image had occurred. The government could no longer deny that a section of the population had fewer opportunities than others, while the Creole community got the impetus to mobilize and reconstruct their Creole identity and self-identify as Creoles. For some (mostly the middle class), this took the form of a claim to an African heritage which can be viewed as an identity strategy that fits in multicultural Mauritius where “there can be no space for ambiguity” (Boswell, 2006, p. 6). Indeed in our research Creole adolescents identified positively with their ethnic group and significantly stronger than Hindus (Ng Tseung-Wong & Verkuyten, 2010).

The mobilization of Creoles as a cultural group has had social repercussions. A Truth and Justice Commission was set up in 2009 to look into the legacy of slavery and indenture (Truth and Justice Commission, 2011). Some Creoles have contested that the Commission should not have considered slavery and indenture as similar. Yet the government saw it as an acceptable pacifying strategy satisfying not only the Creoles

but also the Hindu majority. An equal opportunity act was launched in 2008 and in 2012, the Kreol language was recognized and is now taught in primary schools as an optional language that can be learnt at par with the oriental languages.

Interestingly, the teaching of Kreol as the “ancestral” language of Creoles has been viewed as a politically acceptable decision but Kreol<sup>8</sup> as *Kreol Morisien*—the Mauritian language of all and not of a particular ethnic community—is seen as problematic by some. A Kreol-speaking union receiving governmental funding has recently been launched. The Catholic Church through its *Komite diosezin premier fevriye* (Diocese Committee for 1st of February) had its first Creole Convention where the vicar, Jean-Maurice Labour, argued that “the ‘malaise creole’ is behind us, it is time for identity affirmation” (Le Mauricien, 23 October 2013, translated). The theme of the convention was *Kreol lite, Kreol kapav* (Creoles struggle, Creoles can), and the purpose was to discuss the resilience of Creoles and the importance of education within a Catholic framework. This Catholic Church “rubber stamp” might be viewed as problematic because for long, the Church in reproducing the social hierarchy among Whites and Creoles has not helped Creoles in forming an identity of their own. Nevertheless, even if social and economic disparities for the Creole community remain and even if it takes more than a committee, union, or report to erase stereotypes and discrimination, positive steps forward are being made. Importantly, these steps are possible because they are taken *within* the multicultural framework of cultural group recognition and rights which was already in place for other cultural groups in Mauritius. Multiculturalism in the form of group entitlements and claims seems to work in Mauritius because in principle, it is beneficial to all, depending on being recognized as a separate “ancestral culture.”

However, aforementioned part illustrates well the flip side of multiculturalism, that is, in promoting and recognizing cultural group differences, Mauritian multiculturalism has taken the form of a search for purity and rootedness (see Eisenlohr, 2006a). Multiculturalism is silent about the outcomes of the ideology for those who cannot or do not want to assert a social group belonging. This can be unproblematic and even advantageous for those with clear ancestral “cultures” but for those who are mixed, this vision of the nation may paradoxically leave them out of place when they literally are the embodiment of diversity.

## Taking Stock of Mauritian Multiculturalism

What can be learned from Mauritian style multiculturalism and what are possible policy implications? First, different sociohistorical contexts breed different social conditions that are either more or less conducive to the acceptance of cultural diversity as a defining aspect of the nation. The social history of Mauritius illustrates well the dynamic nature of defining the nation. Since independence, Mauritius has been portrait, although sometimes in a caricatured way, as a “rainbow” or “fruit salad.” This culturally inclusive manner of defining the nation has the merit that the legitimacy of cultural group differences having a place in the polity (i.e., sense of indispensability) is not questioned. Yet there is not only the grassroot representation of the nation as



intrinsically diverse with distinctive “cultural components” that should be preserved but also the official view of being a secular democratic state that does not view religions as problematic. On the contrary, religion is considered an important vector of “moral values” that reinforce toleration and peaceful coexistence (Eisenlohr, 2006b). The state’s neutrality toward religious traditions has so far been enshrined in the individual-rights-based judiciary. The acceptance of basic values of individualism is critical for Mauritian multiculturalism to work. Having the sense that the state recognizes and values cultural and religious group differences, but yet equally emphasizing that group recognition does not become group discrimination in the eyes of the law, are key ingredients to a working multiculturalism. This was reflected in the preference of adolescents of all three groups for representative democracy as the fairest decision-making procedure.

Second, social cohesion does not necessarily have to equate to similarity and “neat” harmony. Out of cultural diversity a form of getting along—*lakorite*—can emanate where individuals negotiate differences in their daily lives and come to accept different ways of living. Additionally, the adolescent participants viewed their national and ethnic/religious identities as being compatible. Our results demonstrate that dual identities are viable and needed, not just for minorities but also majority members. Dual identity in Mauritius was expressed by both majority and minority group members and satisfies the twin need for commonality and distinctiveness (Brewer, 1991). Accepting subjectively important group identities and treating them respectfully increases the legitimacy of authorities and fosters trust in institutions and decision-making procedures (Tyler & Blader, 2003). The social policy implication is that individuals should not be forced to choose between their national and ethnic or religious identity. Instead of being viewed as a possible threat to national cohesion, dual identifiers can embody the nations’ unity in diversity and contribute to the opportunities for economic and cultural cooperation between communities within the nation and in a globalized world (Ng & Metz, 2014).

Third, and in line with proponents of multiculturalism and the CIIM, the more our adolescent participants reported feelings of belonging and identification to the nation, the more they reported positive evaluations of out-groups. Yet a sense of common belonging does not preclude less favorable group-based attitudes and forms of exclusion. For example, Creoles tend to be viewed more negatively and kept at a greater distance than other ethnic out-groups. Additionally, we found in our research, a two-sidedness to multiculturalism: positive evaluations of out-groups in the public domain and at the same time in-group closure in the intimate domain of marriage. Furthermore, ethnic identification had a polarizing effect, whereby stronger ethnic identification was associated to more public and private social distances. And even in the cultural complexity of Mauritius, in-group projection occurs. Adolescents from the three ethnic groups considered their own group as relatively more representative and indispensable for the nation and these perceptions were related to more negative out-group attitudes. These findings among adolescents are of course not representative of Mauritius but they come from the only available large-scale survey data that we know of and they do indicate that there are social-psychological processes that can work

against positive intergroup relations. The implication is that multicultural policies should be sensitive to these processes and recognize that a focus on group differences can lead to reified group distinctions and relatively strong group boundaries that can fuel group stereotyping and in-group closure. Multicultural policies can create a preference for group members to remain within the boundaries of their ethnicity and stimulate more exclusive forms of ethnic group identification.

## Conclusion

Support for multiculturalism has decreased in most Western societies, especially among politicians and opinion makers (see Goodhart, 2004; Verkuyten, 2014). Yet cultural and religious diversity is a fact of life and there is the risk in declaring wholesale multiculturalism a “failure” of throwing the baby out with the bath water. The social context of Mauritius and our empirical findings demonstrate the positive outcomes as well as the challenges of adopting a multiculturalist approach. Foremost, Mauritius metaphorical representation of the nation as a fruit salad or rainbow nation shows that it is possible and strategically beneficial for *both* majority and minority members to frame the nation in terms of diversity. In a national context in which “diversity is who we are,” people tend to endorse multiculturalism, have a sense of national belonging, and tend to be positively disposed to have contacts and interactions with out-group members. This is in line with the multiculturalist approach of making the national category more inclusive. Cultural diversity can be compatible with a sense of national belonging and social cohesion within a secular state that values individual rights (Kymlicka, 2012). However, our findings also show that the notion of a “rainbow nation” demands from its citizens that they know where they belong and that it does not stop one color from wanting to outshine the others. The case of Mauritius illustrates the multicultural dilemmas and opportunities involved, that is, the challenge of finding a balance between recognizing differences and developing commonalities, between differential treatment and equality, and between group identities and individual liberties.

## Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Funding

The author(s) received no financial support for the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

## Notes

1. As a juridical entity, the Republic of Mauritius includes not only the island of Mauritius but also a number of outlying island dependencies such as Rodrigues (distance 563 km; population 35,000 habitants) and Agalega (933 km northward; 200 habitants). The studies reported only dealt with mainland Mauritius.

2. The Constitution (First Schedule, Section 31[3]) stipulates that “[The] population of Mauritius shall be regarded as including a Hindu community, a Muslim community, a Sino-Mauritian community and every person who does not appear to belong to one or another of these 3 communities shall be regarded as belonging to the General Population which shall be itself regarded as the fourth community.”
3. A debate on interculturalism versus multiculturalism is beyond the scope of this article. The reader is directed to the lead article by Meer and Modood (2012) and the ensuing commentaries in the *Journal of Intercultural Studies* (Volume 33, Issue 2). Suffice to say that interculturalism can be viewed as the active dialogue that takes place between people of different cultures to bring about understanding and acceptance of difference.
4. Interestingly, this stirred debate among the Muslim community because the Azaan is considered as a (vocal) symbol, one that can be viewed as “quintessentially” Muslim. In contrast, the absence of a Muslim Personal Law has not led to lobbying by the Muslims for separate legal arrangements as is done elsewhere (e.g., India, Tanzania).
5. Hindu adolescents evaluated Creoles ( $M = 2.70$ ,  $SD = 0.94$ ) more negatively than Muslims ( $M = 3.12$ ,  $SD = 0.99$ ),  $t(835) = -12.01$ ,  $p < .001$ . The same applied for Muslim adolescents’ evaluations of Creoles ( $M = 2.59$ ,  $SD = 0.89$ ) and Hindus ( $M = 3.25$ ,  $SD = 0.80$ ),  $t(624) = -17.76$ ,  $p < .001$ .
6. Hindus were more negative toward marrying a Creole ( $M = 3.83$ ,  $SD = 1.153$ ) compared with a Muslim ( $M = 3.63$ ,  $SD = 1.28$ ),  $t(842) = 4.70$ ,  $p < .001$ . Muslims were also more negative toward marrying a Creole ( $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = 1.03$ ) compared with a Hindu ( $M = 3.97$ ,  $SD = 1.19$ ),  $t(625) = 7.16$ ,  $p < .001$ . Higher score represents more social distance.
7. There are two prior reported ethnic riots (in 1965 and 1968) in the short history of independent Mauritian both linked to Independence.
8. Kreol is the *lingua franca* of Mauritians. First, a pidgin and for a long time not recognized by many Mauritians themselves as a language, it has now acquired the status of a language with a grammar and dictionary and recently a government funded language union. The recent population census (2011) demonstrated that 80% of Mauritians reported speaking Kreol at home.

## References

- Aumeerally, N. (2005). The ambivalence of postcolonial Mauritius: Policy versus practice in education: A reading of official and popular multiculturalism. *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 11, 307-323.
- Berry, J. (2011). Integration and multiculturalism: Ways towards social solidarity. *Papers on Social Representations*, 20(2), 1-21. Retrieved from [http://www.psych.lse.ac.uk/psr/PSR2011/20\\_02.pdf](http://www.psych.lse.ac.uk/psr/PSR2011/20_02.pdf)
- Bertelsmann Stiftung. (2006). *Bertelsmann Transformation Index* (Mauritius Country Report). Retrieved from <http://www.bti-project.org/fileadmin/Inhalte/reports/2006/pdf/BTI%202006%20Mauritius.pdf>
- Billig, M. (1995). *Banal nationalism*. London, England: Sage.
- Blau, P. M., Beeker, C., & Fitzpatrick, K. M. (1984). Intersecting social affiliations and intermarriage. *Social Forces*, 62, 585-606.
- Bogardus, E. S. (1925). Social distance and its origins. *Sociology and Social Research*, 9, 216-225.
- Boswell, R. (2006). *Le malaise Creole: Ethnic identity in Mauritius*. Oxford, England: Berghan Books.

- Brewer, M. B. (1991). The social self: On being the same and different at the same time. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 17, 475-482.
- Carroll, B. W., & Carroll, T. (2000). Accommodating ethnic differences in a modernizing democratic state: Theory and practice in the case of Mauritius. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 23, 120-142.
- Clark-Ibáñez, M., & Felmlee, D. (2004). Interethnic relationships: The role of social network diversity. *Journal of Marriage and Family*, 66, 293-305.
- Devos, T., & Banaji, M. R. (2005). American = White? *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 88, 447-466. doi:10.1037/0022-3514.88.3.447
- Dinan, M., Nababsing, V., & Mathur, H. (1999). Cultural accommodation in Mauritius. In C. Young, (Ed.), *The accommodation of cultural diversity: Case studies* (Rev. ed., pp. 72-102). New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Doucerain, M., Dere, J., & Ryder, A. (2013). Travels in hyper-diversity: Multiculturalism and the contextual assessment of acculturation. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 37, 686-699. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2013.09.007
- Dovidio, J. F., Gaertner, S. L., & Saguy, T. (2007). Another view of "we": Majority and minority group perspectives on a common in-group identity. *European Review of Social Psychology*, 18, 296-330. doi:10.1080/10463280701726132
- Dovidio, J. F., Gaertner, S. L., & Saguy, T. (2009). Commonality and the complexity of "we": Social attitudes and social change. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 13, 3-20. doi:10.1177/1088868308326751
- Eisenlohr, P. (2006a). *Little India: Diaspora, time, and ethnolinguistic belonging in Hindu Mauritius*. Oakland: University of California Press.
- Eisenlohr, P. (2006b). The politics of diaspora and the morality of secularism: Muslim identities and Islamic authorities in Mauritius. *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 12, 395-412.
- Eisenlohr, P. (2011). Religious media, devotional Islam, and the morality of ethnic pluralism in Mauritius. *World Development*, 39, 261-269. doi:10.1016/j.worlddev.2009.11.026
- Elkins, Z., & Sides, J. (2007). Can institutions build unity in multiethnic states? *American Political Science Review*, 101, 693-708. doi:10.1017/S0003055407070505
- Ellenbroek, M., Verkuyten, M., Thijs, J., & Poppe, E. (in press). Adolescents' evaluation of the fairness of governmental decision-making procedures: A study in 18 European countries. *Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology*.
- Eriksen, T. H. (1994). Nationalism, Mauritian style: Cultural unity and ethnic diversity. *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 36, 549-574.
- Eriksen, T. H. (1995). We and us: Two modes of group identification. *Journal of Peace Research*, 32, 427-436.
- Eriksen, T. H. (1997a). Multiculturalism, individualism and human rights: Romanticism, enlightenment and lessons from Mauritius. In R. Wilson (Ed.), *Human rights, culture & context: Anthropological perspective* (pp. 173-181). London, England: Polity Press.
- Eriksen, T. H. (1997b). Tensions between the ethnic and the post-ethnic: Ethnicity, change and mixed marriages in Mauritius. In H. Vermeulen & C. Govers (Eds.), *The politics of ethnic consciousness* (pp. 254-276). London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Eriksen, T. H. (1998). *Common denominators: Ethnicity, nationalism and the politics of compromise in Mauritius*. Oxford, England: Berg.
- Eriksen, T. H. (2004). Ethnicity, class, and the 1999 Mauritian riots. In S. May, T. Modood, & J. Squires (Eds.), *Ethnicity, nationalism and minority rights* (pp. 78-95). Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

- Goodhart, D. (2004, February 10). Too diverse? *Prospect*. Retrieved from <http://www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/magazine/too-diverse-david-goodhart-multiculturalism-britain-immigration-globalisation/#.UpM7Uyc-UeM>
- Goodhart, D. (2013). *The British dream: Successes and failure of post-war immigration*. London, England: Atlantic Books.
- Guimond, S., Crips, R. J., De Oliveria, P., Kamiejski, R., Kteily, N., Kuepper, B., . . . Zick, A. (2013). Diversity policy, social dominance, and intergroup relations: Predicting prejudice in changing social and political contexts. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, *104*, 941-958. doi:10.1037/a0032069
- Hartmann, D., & Gerties, J. (2005). Dealing with diversity: Mapping multiculturalism in sociological terms. *Sociological Theory*, *23*, 218-240.
- Helwig, C. C. (1998). Children's conceptions of fair government and freedom of speech. *Child Development*, *69*, 518-531.
- Helwig, C. C. (2006). Rights, civil liberties, and democracy across cultures. In M. Killen & J. Smetana (Eds.), *Handbook of moral development* (pp. 185-210). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Helwig, C. C., Arnold, M. L., Tan, D., & Boyd, D. (2007). Mainland Chinese and Canadian adolescents' judgments and reasoning about the fairness of democratic and other forms of government. *Cognitive Development*, *22*, 96-109. doi:10.1016/j.cogdev.2006.07.002
- Hempel, L. M. (2009). Power, wealth, and common identity: Access to resources and ethnic identification in a plural society. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *32*, 460-489. doi:10.1080/01419870701722422
- Hinkle, S., & Brown, R. (1990). Intergroup comparisons and social identity: Some links and lacunae. In D. Abrams & M. Hogg (Eds.), *Social identity theory: Construction and critical advances* (pp. 48-70). London, England: Harvester Wheatsheaf.
- Huijnk, W., Verkuyten, M., & Coenders, M. (2010). Inter-marriage attitude among ethnic minority and majority groups in the Netherlands: The role of family relations and immigrant characteristics. *Journal of Comparative Family Studies*, *41*, 389-414.
- Koopmans, R. (2013). Multiculturalism and immigration: A contested field in cross-national comparison. *Annual Review of Sociology*, *39*, 147-169.
- Kundnani, A. (2007). Integrationism: The politics of anti-Muslim racism. *Race & Class*, *48*, 24-44.
- Kymlicka, W. (2012). *Multiculturalism: Success, failure and the future*. Berlin, Germany: Verlag Bertelsmann Stiftung/Migration Policy Institute.
- Laville, R. (2000). In the politics of the rainbow: Creoles and civil society in Mauritius. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, *18*, 277-294.
- L'Express. (2007, March 27). *Pollution sonore: Cafouillage autour de l'application de la loi?* [Noise pollution: Mess up on law enforcement?]. Retrieved from <http://www.lexpress.mu/article/pollution-sonore-cafouillage-autour-de-lapplication-des-lois>
- Le Mauricien. (2013, October 23). *Konvention Kreol* [Kreol Convention]. Retrieved from <http://www.lemauricien.com/article/konvansion-kreol-jean-maurice-labour-malaise-creole-derriere-nous-temps-venu-s-affirmer>
- Mahajan, G. (2005). Indian exceptionalism or Indian model: Negotiating cultural diversity and minority rights in a democratic nation-state. In W. Kymlicka & B. He (Eds.), *Multiculturalism in Asia* (pp. 268-313). Oxford, England: Oxford University Press.
- Mansbridge, J. (1999). Should Blacks represent Blacks and women represent women? A contingent "yes." *Journal of Politics*, *61*, 628-657.

- Mathur, R. (1997). Parliamentary representation of minority communities: The Mauritian experience. *Africa Today*, *44*, 61-82.
- Meer, N., & Modood, T. (2012). How does interculturalism contrast with multiculturalism? *Journal of Intercultural Studies*, *33*, 175-196.
- Modood, T. (2007). *Multiculturalism*. Cambridge, England: Polity Press.
- Morrison, K. R., Plaut, V. C., & Ybarra, O. (2010). Predicting whether multiculturalism positively or negatively influences White American's intergroup attitudes: The role of ethnic identification. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, *36*, 1648-1661. doi:10.1177/0146167210386118
- Moscovici, S. (1988). Notes towards a description of social representations. *European Journal of Social Psychology*, *18*, 211-250.
- Mummendey, A., Klink, A., & Brown, R. (2001). Nationalism and patriotism: National identification and out-group rejection. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, *40*, 159-172.
- Nave, A. (2000). Marriage and the maintenance of ethnic group boundaries: The case of Mauritius. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *23*, 329-352.
- Ng, E. S., & Metz, I. (2014, February). Multiculturalism as a strategy for national competitiveness: The case for Canada and Australia. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-14. doi:10.1007/s10551-014-2089-8
- Ng Tseung-Wong, C., & Verkuyten, M. (2010). Intergroup evaluations, group indispensability and prototypicality judgments: A study in Mauritius. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*, *13*, 621-638. doi:10.1177/1368430210369345
- Ng Tseung-Wong, C., & Verkuyten, M. (2013a). Is cultural group representation a fair option? Adolescents' evaluations of forms of decision-making in multicultural Mauritius. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *37*, 727-738. doi:10.1016/j.ijintrel.2013.09.010
- Ng Tseung-Wong, C., & Verkuyten, M. (2013b). Religious and national group identification in adolescence: A study among three religious groups in Mauritius. *International Journal of Psychology*, *48*, 846-857. doi:10.1080/00207594.2012.701748
- Ng Tseung-Wong, C., & Verkuyten, M. (2014). "I'd rather we be neighbours than lovers": The two-sidedness of multiculturalism. *Group Processes and Intergroup Relations*. Advance online publications. doi:10.1177/1368430214546068
- Palmyre, D. (2007). *Culture Créole et foi chrétienne [Creole culture and Christian faith]*. Mauritius: Marye Pike Editions.
- Parekh, B. (2000). *Rethinking multiculturalism: Cultural diversity and political theory*. London, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Phalet, K., Maliepaard, M., Fleischmann, F., & Güngör, D. (2013). The making and unmaking of religious boundaries: Comparing Turkish and Moroccan Muslim minorities in European cities. *Comparative Migration Studies*, *1*, 123-145. doi:10.5117/CMS2013.1.PHAL
- Phinney, J., Berry, J. W., Vedder, P., & Liebkind, K. (2006). The acculturation experience: Attitudes, identities, and behavior of immigrant youth. In J. W. Berry, J. Phinney, D. L. Sam, & P. Vedder (Eds.), *Immigrant youth in transition: Acculturation, identity, and adaptation across national contexts* (pp. 71-116). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Qian, Z. (2005). Breaking the last taboo: Interracial marriage in America. *Contexts*, *4*, 33-37.
- Richon, E. (2013). *L'accorité [Getting along]*. Grand-Baie, Mauritius: Mauritiana.
- Scheffer, P. (2000, January 29). Het multiculturele drama (The multiculturalism drama) [Web log post]. Retrieved from <http://retro.nrc.nl/W2/Lab/Multicultureel/scheffer.html>
- Scheffer, P. (2011). *Immigrant nations*. London, England: Polity Press.

- Staerklé, C., Sidanius, J., Green, E., & Molina, L. (2010). Ethnic minority-majority asymmetry in national attitude across the world: A multilevel analysis. *Political Psychology, 31*, 491-519. doi:10.1111/j.1467-9221.2010.00766.x
- Tajfel, H., & Turner, J. (1979). An integrative theory of intergroup conflict. In W. G. Austin & S. Worchel (Eds.), *The social psychology of intergroup relations* (pp. 33-48). Monterey, CA: Brooks/Cole.
- Truth and Justice Commission. (2011). *Report of the truth and justice commission* (Vol. 1). Retrieved from [http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/ROL/TJC\\_Vol1.pdf](http://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/ROL/TJC_Vol1.pdf)
- Turner, J. C., & Reynolds, K. H. (2001). The social identity perspectives in intergroup relations: Theories, themes and controversies. In R. Brown & S. Gaertner (Eds.), *Blackwell handbook of social psychology: Intergroup processes* (pp. 133-152). Oxford, England: Blackwell.
- Tyler, T. R., & Blader, S. L. (2003). The group engagement model: Procedural justice, social identity, and cooperative behavior. *Personality and Social Psychology Review, 7*, 349-361.
- United Nations Development Programme. (2004). *Human development report: Cultural liberty in today's diverse world*. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org/en/content/human-development-report-2004>
- Vasta, E. (2007). From ethnic minorities to ethnic majority policy: Multiculturalism and the shift to assimilationism in the Netherlands. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 30*, 713-740. doi:10.1080/01419870701491770
- Verkuyten, M. (2006). Multicultural recognition and ethnic minority rights: A social identity perspective. In W. Stroebe & M. Hewstone (Eds.), *European review of social psychology* (Vol. 17, pp. 148-184). London, England: Wiley.
- Verkuyten, M. (2014). *Identity and cultural diversity: What social psychology can teach us*. London, England: Routledge.
- Verkuyten, M., & Martinovic, B. (2012). Immigrants' national identification: Meanings, determinants and consequences. *Social Issues and Policy Review, 6*, 82-112.
- Vertovec, S., & Wessendorf, S. (2010). *The multiculturalism backlash: European discourses, policies and practices*. Oxon, England: Routledge.
- Wenzel, M., Mummendey, A., & Waldzus, S. (2007). Superordinate identities and intergroup conflict: The ingroup projection model. *European Review of Social Psychology, 18*, 331-372.

## Author Biographies

**Caroline Ng Tseung-Wong**, PhD, is a senior lecturer in the Department of Social Studies at the University of Mauritius, Réduit, Mauritius. She obtained her PhD from Utrecht University, and her research interest is in interethnic relations, multiculturalism, and cultural identities.

**Maykel Verkuyten**, PhD, is a professor in Interdisciplinary Social Science and the Academic Director of the European Research Centre on Migration and Ethnic relations at Utrecht University, the Netherlands. He obtained his PhD from the Erasmus University Rotterdam, and his research interest is in ethnic identity and interethnic relations.