Our starting point is Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada, where the forces of globalization, migration, trade and colonialization attracted a white European group of early settler colonialists in the early 1870s. From the beginning, Winnipeg’s built environment was a typical North American one that articulated the dominance of European culture through street names, statues, commemorative plaques and parades.

In our conversation we explore Winnipeg’s changed ethnocultural landscape roughly a century after the founding of the city. Our interest is in the interactions and policies that have acknowledged cultures, and communities thereby facilitating connections and continuity. We seek to understand the overall inequalities that shape built environments and how small changes can be transformative. Our focus is on newcomer groups beyond Europeans, and in particular Asians and Filipinos who have infused Winnipeg’s built environment with their own cultural heritage in particular since the 1990s (Marshall, Bayanihan and Belonging, 2018).

I: ARM

I come to this conversation as a white-identified scholar who has spent her career researching, writing and teaching about religious diversity. My background is interdisciplinary by nature. I’ve researched and taught in the field of Asian studies for two decades, and have been the recipient of national and international interdisciplinary awards. As program co-chair for the American Academy of Religion, religion and migration group, I work in the fields of anthropology and history. As an ethnohistorian, my research methods and approaches draw heavily on fieldwork experience in China, Singapore, the Philippines, Taiwan and Japan. In the
last decade, I’ve focussed on newcomer groups in Canada and researched and written three books on Chinese Canadian and Filipino History.

Our concentration is on Winnipeg’s Filipino community who like other Asian groups have often been perceived and treated as temporary disposable migrants who are constantly on the move. They are temporary because of the kind of contract limited work many of them do as nannies or meat plant workers and also because of legislation that restricts their time in Canada to doing unskilled labour. Many other Filipinos have been able to break out of these migratory patterns though on some level, there continues to be the assumption that Filipinos are transient temporary residents who won’t settle in our communities, or create networks of relationships.

Our paper is about newcomer struggles for recognition not in ways that undermine or seek to break apart communities but rather in ways that draw on the core values of deep equality in Canada and also Philippine cultural heritage. In the words of Pierre Bourdieu, our focus is on the Filipino *habitus* (Bourdieu 1977, 72) or the process Filipinos have adopted to inhabit Winnipeg’s public spaces. They have renamed streets, and infused built environments with statues, commemorative plaques and parades in, and, we think most importantly beyond the neighbourhoods they inhabit. In this way, Filipinos have sought to respect and honour Philippine heritage not as problems or conflicts located in one labour market, space or race but as expressions of Winnipeg’s ethos of deep equality.

Deep equality, according Lori Beaman, exists at the grassroots level in Canadian society as “a vision of equality that transcends law, politics and social policy, and that relocates
equality as a process rather than a definition, and as lived rather than prescribed. It recognizes equality as an achievement of day-to-day interaction, and is traceable through agonistic respect, recognition of similarity and a simultaneous acceptance of difference, creation of community, and neighbourliness.”96 (Lori Beaman, “Deep Equality as an Alternative to Accommodation and Tolerance” Nordic Journal of Religion and Society (2014), 27 (2): 89–111).

Deep equality as a theoretical framework suggests that cultural heritage and ideals are just as important as architectural ones when designing sustainable livable spaces.

II: BRM I come to this conversation as an elected official in the City of Winnipeg, where I have served as the councillor for St Vital ward since 2011. Perhaps understandably, I have a less academic take on the naming of public spaces in honour of citizens or members of various communities.

Culture:

The 2012 funeral of the late Bill Norrie, Winnipeg’s mayor from 1979-1992, served as a reminder of the demographic evolution of the City of Winnipeg, and the elected officials in charge of the City. While mourners spoke of Norrie’s Scottish background and his voluntarism with the United Church prior to political life, Councillors like Devi Sharma (originally from India) and Mike Pagtakhan (born in the Philippines) looked on in the company of Winnipeg’s first Jewish mayor, Sam Katz, whose parents had been holocaust survivors. The once dominant Anglo culture has become more diverse and more complex.

The Winnipeg of the 1960s and 1970s was certainly a predominantly white European culture. There were powerful elected politicians from outside of the Anglophone Christian group that Norrie represented – for example Steve Juba, mayor from 1957-1977, was a high
profile official of Ukrainian descent. But the naming of various public places was still primarily reflective of white, European Anglophone culture. In fact, in 1958 the Council of the RM of St Vital (the area which I now represent) removed the French name “de la Giclais” from one of its streets because the citizens found the French “too hard to pronounce”, and replaced it with “Sterling Avenue.”

In the latter part of the 20th century Winnipeg became a more diverse city with different newcomer groups seeking to inhabit and have public spaces reflect their heritage and cultures. The first mosque opened in 1976 in St Vital (not far from Sterling Avenue). Mayor Norrie created a special advisory committee to facilitate the migration of Vietnamese boat people in 1979. Three levels of government cooperated to revitalize Chinatown in 1987.

The 1988 the Canadian policy of Multiculturalism that had encouraged communities from coast to coast to acknowledge and involve newcomers from all ethnic backgrounds was legislated as an act. The beginning of the preamble read: “WHEREAS the Constitution of Canada provides that every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and benefit of the law without discrimination and that everyone has the freedom of conscience, religion, thought, belief, opinion, expression, peaceful assembly and association and guarantees those rights and freedoms equally to male and female persons; etc.”

By the time of the 2016 census, the situation in Winnipeg had evolved to the point where Tagalog is now the second most common mother tongue, finishing slightly ahead of French. The City of Winnipeg has taken steps to name many different public structures in honour of many non-European community stakeholders.
A Gandhi statue has been erected near the Canadian Museum for Human Rights. The city’s new bus rapid transit line, opening in 2019, will feature a station dedicated to Japanese Canadians who were forcibly removed from their homes and who came to work in Winnipeg Beet Farms during the WWII (based on a similar station in Portland, which I researched at a previous Livable Cities conference). Malala Park, named in honour of the youthful Pakistani Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, opened in 2015. Even the French name “de la Giclais” removed from Winnipeg’s street map in 1958, has been resurrected with a new bike trail being given this name in June, 2017.

There will always be contested political terrain in regard to the naming of different public spaces. In recent years Winnipeggers have suggested removing certain Anglo names in order to establish names reflective of the City’s indigenous community. This may cause some tension as the City debates whether to honour relative newcomers such as the Filipino community, or to honour indigenous figures. Nevertheless, we see these as expressions of day-to-day efforts needed for deep equality that go beyond just the tolerance or accommodation of one cultural group.

ARM

Street names, statues, commemorative plaques and parades transform ordinary spaces into places of meaning for the people who inhabit them. Jane Jacobs in 1961 published her ground-breaking book, *Death and Life of Great American Cities*, that led to a career dedicated to understanding the significance of everyday lives on urban sidewalks and in other public spaces. A decade later William Whyte also examined the social efficacy of gathering spaces and
he too looked to large and well known North American cities for data. Early writers on the subject of space and culture didn’t really delve into race except when they examined the pitfalls of ghettos and low income housing, public safety or prison life. Instead, they drew on core concepts derived from Western culture and history to create a default view of an urban ideal city.

Our perspective is different. Decisions that make cities livable for one group, become intolerable for others who form a minority. Like Dell Upton and Joe Wai and others, our interest is in multiple diverse publics and people of colour who don’t just populate the inner city. They live in on its edges, and also in better neighbourhoods. In Canada, expect their city to reflect them, too but deep equality hasn’t always been the norm.

As Brian alluded to, in the early history of Winnipeg, certain places were reserved to celebrate European heritage and culture, while other places were earmarked as Chinatowns ghettos where Chinese newcomers worked and lived. At the extreme end of this spectrum of raced place-making were residential schools; these places were set up to help, re-educate, and civilize and most importantly contain Canada’s indigenous peoples (Rutherford 2002, 2005; Wang 2003; Mack 1997; Brown 1988; Miller 1996; 1989; Valverde 1991). Non-dominant society members knew their places. They understood the implicit bias that shaped Winnipeg’s spaces and its cultures. Cities were not intended to be livable for them. Fast Forward 100 years when a story in Maclean’s Magazine from 2015 focusses on discrimination in Winnipeg and in particular discrimination against Indigenous peoples who Winnipeggers to this day still associate with the North End of Winnipeg. Winnipeg’s Mayor Brian Bowman declared 2016 as
the Year of Reconciliation and implemented a number of policies aimed at making Winnipeg a livable city for everyone.

Today people tend to regard themselves through their community and also religio-cultural heritage. They might self-identify early Scottish Presbyterians of Canada or as Zionists and Jews of Israel. They might be recently migrated Taiwanese Buddhists. Each group migrates to Canada with a specific religio-cultural heritage set of baggage. Here, they look for places where they may belong, unpack, settle and set out their cultural heritage. Not all cultures and heritages sustain or connect groups to the broader public. Hedges might be part of a select cultural heritage, for instance old English, but their structures don’t create community. So this is another of our interests. How do we facilitate, recognize and sustain community through cultural heritage? How do we create cultural flows designed to unite people in the spaces where they live. Deep equality isn’t perfect and it’s an ongoing process. A good example of this is the figure Dr. José Rizal who is hero to many (though not all) Filipinos who have migrated to Winnipeg, and for whom parks and streets have been renamed in North America.

**BRM**

Filipinos have been migrating to Canada since the 1880s and Winnipeg, Manitoba, is home to Canada’s oldest and largest per-capita Filipino Canadian community. In Winnipeg, Tagalog is the second most-common language. While Filipinos remain among the largest group of Asian newcomers to North America, their histories and cultures have tended to be invisible to broader society as the Philippines was perceived to be a temporary renewal source of unskilled labour. This changed in the 1990s, when Winnipeg and North American Filipino
communities had grown large enough to support Philippine Independence Day celebrations in which Dr. José Rizal figured prominently.

The emergence of Filipinos in the global diaspora and in Canadian communities during the 1990s may also have coincided with preparations for hundredth anniversary celebrations commemorating Rizal’s death in 1896. These events overlapped with a growing Filipino patriotism, nostalgia for better leadership in the Philippines, and dreams of a stronger Filipino nation following the end of the Marcos regime. Commemorative acts, such as street and park re-namings from Toronto to Winnipeg to Chicago and beyond, have enabled Filipinos to imbue public spaces with their own histories, showcase their nation’s heroes, and to have their culture known for more than low skilled temporary jobs. In Chicago, for example, not far from the most American of temples, Wrigley Field, one finds the Rizal building which was built in 1977 on Honourary Jose Rizal Way. Such displays of cultural heritage have provided spaces where people can dream of the Philippines, be inspired by their own cultural heroes, and imagine a future for themselves and their children away from their homeland.

The Winnipeg Filipino success in making livable spaces for themselves may also have something to do with the community’s political activism. Filipinos been elected at Federal, Provincial and City levels (with representatives from each of Canada’s main three political parties). Filipino politicians have rallied public and political support for new projects named in honour of the Filipino community – a sign of the community’s strong social life. Foremost among these are the Dr. Jose Rizal Way opened in 2008, and Dr. Jose Rizal park with a major stone marker celebrating the Filipino hero which opened in June, 2014. The city has plans to add a Dr. Jose Rizal statue in the next year in the northern quadrant of the city where the way
and park are located. Just as a Filipino Choir was selected to sing at the swearing in of the new City mayor in late, 2014, the movement of the annual Filipino Street Festival from the northwest corner of the City to the main park in front of the provincial legislature in 2016 is yet another expression of deep equality that makes Winnipeg a livable city not just for long-time residents.

By focusing on Rizal the Filipino community gains by having a recognizable, memorable figure but at the risk of creating a kind of hero-worship, with an uncriticizable figure at the top. In the Winnipeg context one could ask, "are the public spaces named for Rizal anything but politics?" The answer we think is more complicated. Some of the motivation may be vote winning. But surely some of the motivation is to recognize Rizal, the thinker and revolutionary who inspired many to dream and imagine a better more just world.

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