



“The mission of the United States is one of benevolent assimilation” (William McKinley)

# ASSIMILATION

**August 9, 2018**

*This is the first part of Ruxy and José’s conversation. The second part is at the URL below:*

<http://goldfish365.com/accents/canadian/assimilation-2/>

Ruxandra Duță: Actually there’s a difference in **multiculturalism** (Yeah) between (The) America and Canada.

José Cruz: The difference is this: Canada re- Not just respects it, but encourages (Yeah) the maintenance of the different cultures. America is called the “melting pot”, (Yeah) where you come in and you’re expected to assimilate. (Mm) Now there’s a lot of good things to be said about the idea of assimilation. If you have um uh an assimilated society you don’t have these religious and ethnic groups vying against each other. (Yeah yeah) You just have, I’m Italian so we eat Italian food. Oh well I’m German, we eat German food, but we’re both Americans. (yeah) There’s a lot less of a clash. Whereas, um if it’s not handled properly, and Canada does a good job of handling it, but like let’s say what’s happening in say Belgium, where the Muslims (Oh yeah) are kept in their own (Oh yeah) neighbourhoods. They don’t assimilate and the rest of the the Belgians don’t want to assimilate with them. (Yeah yeah) And they’re just kept in their own neighbourhood, you’re going to get these religious clashes. (Yeah yeah obviously) So Canada handles it I think well, and because we’re a- we all still look at each other as Canadians even though (Yeah) you’re Chinese, uh you’re of Chinese descent, you’re of Indian descent, and (Yeah yeah) you’re of English descent, we all still see each other as Canadian. That

kind of helps if anything (Yeah) um in its own way keeping these religious and ethnic differences (Yeah) at bay. Whereas in America, if you’re willing to assimilate (Yeah) then yeah, fine. (Yeah yeah) But **there’s** always going to be some people that don’t want to assimilate as much (as much) as America wants them to.

Ruxy: Yeah. Yeah. I mean that applies everywhere. It’s not just America. Even in Europe it’s it’s the same. But yeah what really bothers me is these places where- these situations where people don’t don’t want to assimilate. It’s- I mean and the whole idea of, “Oh, but I’m Romanian, I will never be Canadian.” You don’t have to be black or white. You can always be that sweet in-between. Or why can’t you be Romanian and Canadian, like it can-

José: Or be what you need be (Yeah be) at that moment.

Ruxy: Yeah exactly. And be what you want to be. It’s like, if you want to be just Romanian, it’s fine. But if you live in a country you have to understand- you have to understand the culture, the traditions- (Yes absolutely) it’s- (Absolutely absolutely) People that don’t want to assimilate I just don’t I just don’t understand.

José: I tell you one group though that doesn’t get what we’re saying here, about the need to assimilate: I’m sorry, it’s **the foreign community** in Japan.

Ruxy: Oh that is so true. That is very true.

José: This I uh- I still see it. Like, the- I don’t say white privilege (Yeah) but basically the North

American privilege that you see. (Mm) I still have friends who will come in from a bad experience at um, the immigration or the customs department here you know, where they had to get a visa. (Yeah yeah) And they said, "Oh man, they gave me such a rough time. And they were questioning me about this. And and I didn't understand what they were saying. And they didn't have anybody there who could speak English." (Oh) And I'm, and I'm saying, this is the wrong country to complain about the fact that they don't speak English. (Yeah that's true) "Yeah but, oh why did I just spend all these years teaching English here? How come these people can't speak English?" Wrong country. Again, wrong country. And, the fact that you can even get away with living a life here without knowing the native language (Right?) you don't see the privilege inherent in that?

That's oh, (Well) that just frustrates me so much.

José: They'll learn bits. You know, they'll say- they'll learn how to say things like, **moippai** (Ha ha) and they'll learn how to say things like **summimasesen** (Yeah of course) which is you know (But it) it's bar talk. (Yeah exactly) It's not not enough to take care of yourself. (Yeah exactly) Where you still have to, "Look I can't understand these forms. Don't you have a translator." Where you actually think that that's an OK thing to ask for.

Ruxy: Yeah. Yeah yeah yeah. Exactly.

Ruxy: Yeah, right? And then you complain that you've been living in the country and nobody speaks English but you haven't bothered to actually learn at least a bit of the language.

Word count	Time	Words/Min.
770	3:52	199.14

Pointers:

**multiculturalism:** Ruxy should have said, "**multiculturalism**" (0:01)

**there's:** José should have said, "**there are**" (1: 26)

**the foreign community:** José misspoke in naming an entire group. He should have said, "**Some people in** the foreign community" (2: 25)

**moippai:** Japanese for "**one more** (drink)" (3:34)

**summimasesen:** Japanese for "**excuse me**" (3:36)

Discussion:

Do you like learning about new cultures and languages?

Would you like to live in a different country and culture?

Would you like people from different countries and culture to live in your area?

VOA ARTICLE: "IS EUROPE TURNING INTO A FORTRESS?"

<https://learningenglish.voanews.com/a/is-europe-a-fortress/3056839.html>

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