



WILL KYMLICKA

Are Models of Multicultural Citizenship Sustainable?

References to the “rise and fall of multiculturalism” have become a kind of master narrative widely invoked by scholars, journalists, and policymakers alike to explain the evolution of contemporary debates about diversity. Although people disagree about what comes after multiculturalism, there is a surprising consensus that we are in a post-multicultural era. I will suggest that this master narrative (1) mischaracterizes the nature of the experiments in multiculturalism that have been undertaken, (2) exaggerates the extent to which they have been abandoned, and (3) misidentifies the genuine difficulties and limitations they have encountered and the options

for addressing these problems. Before we can decide whether to celebrate or lament the fall of multiculturalism, we need first to make sure we know what multiculturalism has meant both in theory and in practice, where it has succeeded or failed to meet its objectives, and under what conditions it is likely to thrive in the future.