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The tree of Life

Life is a journey to find our way back home,

But we are not created to Journey all alone.

*God has sent us Jesus to help us on our way, a friend and true
Companion so we don't go astray.*

We are all connected like branches of His Tree.

I am part of you and you are part of me.

*The road to success is not straight. There is a curb called Failure, a loop
called Confusion; speed bumps called Friends; red lights called Enemies;
caution lights called Family. You will have flats called jobs. But, if you
have a spare called Determination; an engine called Perseverance;
insurance called Faith, and a driver called Jesus, you will make it to a
place called Success!*

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Introduction

In Canada the Federal Government's policy on multiculturalism since 1971, first put the idea of multiculturalism in the Federal Constitution by Jean Trudeau, has determined a transformation of Western society that goes beyond the cold and slow process of assimilation of immigrants, especially with reference to the myriad of private citizens in any way of their right of expression.

The policy of the Federal Government of Canada is currently based on some essential points of the Canadian Constitution, which provides for a complex system of multiculturalism that would reconcile the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society (cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society) to recognize the freedom of all members of the community.

Share and defend the cultural heritage of all becomes patrimony through a process of understanding this method that makes the identity and cultural heritage the prospect for growth in the entire country. The policy of multiculturalism should enrich the whole Canada, in harmony with the national commitment to the official languages of Canada (English and French).

Origins

The world grew out of Biculturalism, which had long been Canada's official policy to deal with the differences between the English-speaking majority and a substantial French-speaking minority. In the 1960's, the biculturalism view was challenged by groups as diverse as First Nations and Chinese immigrants and this counter opinion was termed "multiculturalist". Under Pierre Trudeau in 1971, the nation moved to an official policy geared by every subsequent government and was added to Canada's 1982 constitution.

Literature and Culture in a Multicultural Society

What is literature, anyway? How relevant is it today?
Why should I read a Dante or a Pirandello when I can easily get their from an encyclopedia?

The questions, however innocent and well-intended, were quite devastating for the young literature professor, suddenly overwhelmed by a sense of frustration and uselessness. Had the teacher, though inexperienced, not had a firm belief in his profession and in the spiritual and social role of literature and literary studies, the comments might have certainly led him to consider a change of profession.

But the professor, like the Boccaccian Chichibio, counteracted with a lapidary statement in order to avoid losing face and the command of his class: "Literature," he pronounced "is the sublimation of reality through linguistic images.

The fortuitous answer may have had the desired effect at that particular moment. But the ever-haunting questions sent me on a long search for a wider definition of literature, for a meaning that would, as comprehensively as possible, combine both its artistic-spiritual values and its social relevancy aspects. But even now, twenty or more years later, the student's questions and challenges seem to be just as valid and relevant; and perhaps more so today, as the conference organizers themselves pointed out in some of the questions they posed in the "Objectives of the Conference".

The organizers establish a clear link with multiculturalism by observing that since "the large majority of students of Italian literature...are of Italian origin...they share particular needs" and "one of their main goals as Italian-Canadians is that of discovering the culture and the history of the country of origin". Therefore, "the study of Italian literature provides for them as essential vehicle through which they can approach and better understand their rich and complex heritage". Many in Canada would agree: Cultural retention and development constitute one of the basic principles inherent in Canadian multiculturalism.

But, what use will they be able to make of this body of knowledge in Canada? Our Italian-Canadian students usually grow up, live and work within a very diverse and complex Canadian reality: How will this "rich and complex heritage" help them better understand themselves as products of two cultures, two life-styles or two or more sets of values? How will it make them better Italian-Canadians, and at the same time help them to better interact within the Canadian diversity? And more: How can Italian language, literature, culture help them become better teachers, lawyers, engineers, businessmen, politicians, indeed better citizens of Canada, or better human beings?

The answers to these questions may indeed lie in the policy of multiculturalism and in the new concept of multicultural/intercultural education. The policy (now entrenched in the Canadian Constitution and enshrined in law), though still vague and controversial, has nevertheless already generated some positive results: greater awareness among ethno-cultural groups of their culture and heritage, a strengthened sense of pride and self-identity, which foster participation and integration in the so-called mainstream of Canadian society; and, an increase in the number of Italian-Canadian children studying Italian, especially at the primary levels, in the Heritage Language Programmes, which starting in September 1989, will become mandatory in Ontario elementary schools. Multicultural/Intercultural education, both as a practice and as a concept, may still be discredited as “superficial palliative” or limited at the praxis level. But, “in its ideal form,” in the view of various educators and education theorists, it is becoming “an ethic”, a new approach to, and a theory of education, if not a modern philosophy of the “Universal Man”, or more appropriately in today’s context, of the well-rounded human being. It is assuming the meaning of Paideia: “respect for moral values and that gracious blend of learning and urbanity which we can only circumscribe by the discredited word “culture”, as Erwin Panofsky defined “culture” relating it both to classical *humanity* and to the Erasmian *studia humaniora*. Multicultural education, as I attempted to show in one of my articles, both as a philosophy and as a programme, is an *aggiornamento*, an updating of the aims and goals of a liberal arts education, of *studia humanitatis*, which are given that name, wrote Eugenio Garin quoting Leonardo Bruni, “perché formano l’uomo complete”.

In this connection, then, the policy of multiculturalism and multicultural education, theory and practice, may very well offer the avenue to integrate Italian language, literature and culture, or at least some aspects of them, into the Canadian school curricula at all levels.

As a result they themselves will become the bases of this developing concept of education and of the new Canadian and world citizen this theory-programme envisages. Quite indicative in this regard, is the transference by a Canadian scholar of comparative education of Antonio Gramsci's notion of cultural hegemony to a discussion of multicultural education policies of various countries. The purpose of the paper, printed in 1981, was in fact "to put multicultural education into a broad theoretical and comparative perspective".

Multicultural education, while needing further definition, may nevertheless be described as an all-pervasive process and goal, which reflects and responds to the diverse Canadian reality, and includes and involves all Canadians: individuals and groups, structures and infrastructures, and especially the educational and school system from primary to university, and to education beyond the school. It may well be true that "the attempts to transfer the sociocultural reality of pluralism and policy into educational practice" have been "a mixture of success and failure". Nevertheless, the concept, already implicit in Prime Minister Trudeau's 1971 speech announcing the federal policy, by 1981 had been widely, albeit variedly, accepted and implemented.

In fact, in one of the many papers published on the tenth anniversary of the policy, prof. Keith A. McLeod identified five fundamental principles underlying multiculturalism and three basic types of multicultural education.

The five basic principles of multiculturalism are:

1. *Equality of status* of all Canadians regardless of origin , race, culture, language, creed;
2. Emphasis on *Canadian Identity:*” multiculturalism was to be seen within a bilingual framework and Canadian society;”
3. *Sharing* our culture – values, attributes, histories, experiences, and institutions;
4. *Greater choice* of life-styles and cultural traits;
5. Concern for and protection of *civil rights human rights*.

Even by 1981, then, it was quite clear that, though not unchallenged, multicultural education, as a concept and in practice, had grown in scope and in depth. Its growth was made evident by the three forms of education that according to McLeod had “been most commonly suggested or implemented in Canada....” And they are:

1. The *Ethnic-specific* (i.e .ethnic schools, ethno-cultural programmes, including language courses to promote cultural continuity and development, and to counteract assimilative forces),
2. The *problem-oriented* type, subdivided into two forms:
 - a. specific programmes to meet perceived needs or demands associated with schooling and the assimilation or integration of people of diverse backgrounds;
 - b. anti-discrimination programmes, usually crisis-oriented;
3. The *cultural/intercultural* type of multicultural education, which for our purpose is the most significant of the three because of its humanistic orientation.

Multiculturalism is also said to be “ as Canadian a concept as there is because ethnic and racial pluralism is a prime characteristic of Canada’s population” But in the last fifteen years the concept has been variously applied in numerous countries with similar characteristics. “ In many plural or culturally heterogeneous societies, a multicultural education policy has been adopted to reconcile the divergent segments and to integrate minorities into the larger society.”

In at least one comparison Canada’s model was said to come “ closest...to satisfying the educational aspirations of both the majority and minority in an ethnically divided society”. At the 1984 National Conference in Multicultural and Intercultural Education in Toronto the concept was also discussed in reference to other experiences and to a global perspective in education. The participants from Australia, Britain, Jamaica, Italy ,the European Community and from all Canadian Provinces and Territories first described their particular multicultural reality and respective educational policies and programmes. But what they all stressed was the need for international and intercultural cooperation in education, for a form of intercultural education that would eliminate dogmatism and ethnocentrism . Perhaps because Canada is a microcosm of the world, Canada’s model indeed seems to reflect and aim for this global dimension in education.

In the United States, where there is no official policy of multiculturalism, various educational associations and publications have been promoting multicultural and intercultural education for years. Indeed interesting and relevant in this context is the 1986 MLA” President’s Column: The Future for the Study of Languages and Literature” (*MLA Newsletter* Winter 1986). J.Hillis Miller first of all stressed the importance of such

study in the education and development of the individual and of citizens. He also advocated new teaching and scholarly strategies and changes in course content and structure on the basis of two important factors: the methodological and curriculum innovations that disrupted the old consensus about literary study, and particularly a broad and realistic view of contemporary American society. In effect his observation is a recognition of the failure of the American assimilations or so-called “melting –pot “ orientation, and implicitly an acceptance of multicultural education.

In fact, some of “the most important “ demographic, cultural and institutional “novelties”, that according to Hillis Miller have been affecting the teaching of languages and literatures in the United States, correspond to those upon which rests multiculturalism and multicultural education : namely. In Hillis Miller’s words: the “ multilingual and multiracial nature of the United States, a country of many overlapping cultural heritages... in which. For increasing numbers of citizens, English is a second language. ” Above all , Hillis Miller’s further linking of “ this pluralism in our culture with political decision making and public policy “ and with “ our responsibility as teachers... to make sure our voices is heard by those making those decisions “ has long been a theme not only within the Canadian Federation for the Humanities but also within multicultural education circles, at conferences, in books and articles, particularly in Canada and in the Unites States.

Though uniquely Canadian, multiculturalism seems to have found a common ground and common aims on a global scale. This may prove beneficial to Italian language, literature and culture. They certainly have a wealth of ideas and the stature to be integral parts of this new movement in Canada or anywhere else, for cultural as well as economic

and political reasons. In Canada's pluralistic democracy, the numerical strength and the increasing socio-political role of the Italian – Canadian group provide a strong base for the growth of Italian studies in this country. Similar and other conditions exist in the United States. At the same time, Italy's renewed economic and cultural vitality (as the world's sixth or fifth economic power) and its historic and artistic patrimony (which UNESCO estimates at one-third of the world's and at least two-thirds of the entire western world's cultural heritage) give new strength and prestige, as it did in the past, to Italian studies in various parts of the world. It is primarily, of course, its "wealth of tradition" that made Thomas G. Bergin comment that "...either at home or abroad it is, generally speaking, the Italian who are the teachers and the *anglosassoni* the pupils."

The future role of Italian letters in North America or the world will also depend on our clearer understanding of multicultural education and their common links. One important aspect of multicultural education is the fact that the concept is said to be "grounded in a realistic appraisal of the nature of Canadian society," which has demonstrably much in common with many other societies.

Therefore, as such, the concept coincides with the "mundane, humanistic education" which represents, if not the fundamental characteristic of Italian civilization, certainly what Aldo Scaglione called "the more persistent Italian traditions": the "practical and rational concerns" that Italy primarily displayed even in the Middle Ages.

This "mundane involvement", an idea inherited from ancient literature and learning, was indeed prevalent among Italian humanists, for whom *storia litterarum* was not " 'volgare erudizione' ma scoperta del vincolo umano a tutti commune, sviluppo delle basi ideali di ogni verace città".

It is, one can say, a distinguishing feature of Italian life and letters from St. Francis to Croce. It is an idea at the very base of modern Italian history and culture since the birth itself of Italian language and literature, intended to serve both the traditional learned public and the newer, and more varied “democratic” commune society.

It is precisely the rediscovery of this peculiarly Italian intellectual quality and above all its integration into the Canadian reality, that will also make Italian letters and culture relevant and closely connected with the role and goal of multicultural education. And this is possible since sharing ideas and values is another principle underlying the policy of multiculturalism. In Canada itself, the historical reality, its present diversity, the French-English language controversy, make evident that multicultural awareness among all Canadians is fundamental, especially among the members of its fourth or third largest ethno-cultural group, particularly among educators, and above all among the teachers/scholars of Italian literature and culture.

If “ la cultura umanistica è pienezza di umanità, e quindi società,” then our profession both requires and justifies our greater involvement in the key social issues. Participation in public life does not necessarily mean seeking public office. In most cases it would just require some drastic shifts in our thinking regarding our research and teaching: more important than updating our techniques, incorporating more recent theories or methodologies, or seeking new programmes would be to restore to its fullest meaning that philological- rhetorical method whose main goal was the enhancement “ dell’umana e civile conversazione,” and whose function was “nell’educare, nell’insegnare, nel trasformare un presentimento in un possesso, nel persuadere e nel formare.”

In Hillis Miller's words, our responsibility is to figure out the best ways to ensure the existence in our democracy of an informed citizenry that can read and think clearly.

There would, in fact, be no need to have "faith in multicultural education" or have the schools become "the purveyors of the new learning," as Masemann calls it, if the humanities programmes or "old learning" in the universities and schools had not been demoted to mere service disciplines or generally neglected. In recent years, however, both in Canada and the United States, there have been many arguments in favour of restoring or reinforcing the humanities in school curricula, and about their relevance to life and work.

The American Robert E. Proctor in his *Education's Great Amnesia* ascribes the decline of the humanities to the degeneration of scholarship, to our obsession with techniques and methodological fads. Our concern for "brilliance of insight, mental acuity, and the mastery of technique regardless of content" Proctor states, is contrary to the examples set by Petrarch and his followers "who provided a critique for this approach by arguing that the ultimate purpose of study was not to become learned, but to become good." The book, according to Charles Trinkaus, while "showing the relation of these humanistic studies to the personal and social life of the ancient world and the Renaissance" points out above all "specific ways [in which] they can be restored as effective guides to contemporary living and work."

Similarly, the Canadian educator, Frederick Krantz, argues that a reformed and up-dated humanities programme can best fulfil the spiritual and material needs of today's individual. But he also deplores the decline of the liberal arts colleges in most universities and the "disturbing revisions" in academic programmes and structures. This result was not

only because of pressure from government, business and students, but also because “ the faculty members in the liberal arts have permitted, even hastened, their colleges’ decline.” Many became too “ unaware of the nature of their calling,” as “ academics - teachers, scholars, intellectuals - “ whose main role, he reminds us, is “ to encourage our students to become informed, thinking, sensitive human beings.” Therefore “true education,” (according to its etymology: “*educere*, ‘to lead out’...as from ignorance to knowledge”) is not merely “career preparation.” In fact, “employment-oriented education is a humane letters, whose “noble vision” since the Renaissance has been to perfect “the humane being intellectually and morally and [ready] him for civic life, “is” in the long run directly practical, utilitarian in the best sense and quite the reverse... of elitism.” The “reform” and the “striking new balance” that Krantz advocates from the liberal arts curriculum is simply an up-dating of an ideal and practice common in Italian culture at least since the artistically-refined and society oriented *Duecento* Italian poets implemented the belief and principle that the “beautiful” is also “practical.”

As educators we have a responsibility to illustrate to days groping humanity the significance of Bruni’s statement that the main purpose of the study of the human arts and sciences is “la formazione di una umanità liberata capace di affrontare i problemi della vita”.

Restoring scholarship to the Petrarchan model, as Proctor suggests, teaching or shaping reality Panofsky’s sense, also entail making the poet’s total message come alive, freeing literature, in Dante’s sense, from those who turn it into “una professione, anzi mercimonio, “or make it “di donna meretrice.” In fact, a study of Dante’s work alone in today’s context would indeed make clear the profound links of Italian language

and literature in our multicultural context, with multicultural education: his concept of language as a humanizing force, as individual and community expression and awareness builder (summarized by Glauco Cambon in the formula “ Loquor, ergo sum”) relates directly to one of the basic principles of multiculturalism : to the preservation and enhancement of individual and group identity of any linguistic and ethnocultural minority, and therefore to the policy and practise of language teaching/ learning in schools and communities; his search not as a mystic but mainly as a secular writer “ laico” (itself a difficult concept to fully convey to North American students) for God or perfection while he celebrates the human person , human and “ humanistic “ activities makes his work indeed a guide for our society, wavering between materialism and religious fanaticism or superstition. Also, Dante’s “entusiasmo per la divulgazione” is for many of us a proof that such activity is neither beneath nor contrary to the loftiest scholarship or poetic pursuits.

Dante’s work alone is enough to show that Italian literature and culture are too important, too relevant to all of us, to be studied or taught only in Italian literature or culture classes.

The “recupero” of this type of “italianità culturale” will reconnect our work and our being to our most solid literary, cultural and human foundation without isolating us. In fact, it will enable us to rise above the narrows of ethnicity and of acadamia and to *participate* more actively and more meaningfully in the shaping of our future, by incorporating our heritage into the evolving concept of multicultural education.

The University of Windsor B.A. programme in Multicultural Studies was instituted on the basis of such considerations. It is specifically the result of an examination of the principles and goals shared by multicultural

education and the humanities. It is in fact unique in various ways: it is the first in Canada to be offered by a department in a Faculty of Arts, in this case the Department of Classical and Modern Languages, Literatures and Civilization. Also, unlike those in other universities which place a major stress on the social sciences, it is the only programme based on the studies of languages and cultures *per se*, in their inter-relations, and also in reference to the Canadian context. It connects, therefore, the study of world languages and cultures with both the reality of Canadian diversity and with the global pluralistic society. This connection, then, is simultaneously beneficial to both areas, and thus to Italian studies. It will at the same time enhance the students' global awareness and future employability.

Contrary to the trend reported by Giovanni Freddi in his recent book *L'insegnamento della lingua-cultura italiano all'estero*, Italian in urban centres like Windsor is studied not so much for the "realità culturale, scientifica ed economica dell'Italia contemporanea" as for "riaffermazione etnica" or for "vicende legate all'emigrazione." When and if the motives related to immigration and ethnic pride diminish or disappear, Multicultural Studies Programmes, like the Windsor one, may encourage third or fourth generation Italian-Canadians and non-Italians to take Italian. They provide all Canadians with an opportunity to discover Italian literature and culture.

Other strategies will also be necessary, however, to overcome the many obstacles in the way of both multicultural education and Italian studies in North America. Multiculturalism is still seen by some as promoting cultural imperialism or the levelling of all cultures and values, even though in accordance to one of its basic principles it will increase freedom of choice. By offering an opportunity to investigate, seek out

the best in our tradition, and make it an integral part of Canadian culture and society, all Canadians will have better courses that stress communicative skills at the expense of the literary or cultural components. Moreover, the linguistic or stylistic approach alone to the study of literature can often discourage North American students, usually novices in literary studies and still inadequately trained in the language. But it is not insurmountable: at first, at least, the content approach, the presently humbled socio-historical method, may be a more suitable route to the study of literature. Specific verses and passages can still be used to illustrate both the depth and breadth of the poet, his creative power, his mastery of language and form. As a result the students may slowly gain real admiration for the so-called great works of literature, rather than simply accept them as such on faith, or and the instructor's say.

In other words, this perceived or real "difficulty" of Italian literature may be turned into a vehicle of teaching and learning by allowing the poet's work, personality and aesthetic image of reality to be spiritually active in time; and this is possible "solo attraverso [un'] operazione storico-critica" which, in the still valid words of Walter Binni, "fa concretamente vivere l'eternità", cioè l'estetico significato storico-umano dell'opera d'arte".

The historical-critical method seems to be also quite applicable to the interdisciplinary multicultural studies programmes (like the Windsor one). The way texts could be used or read has been amply illustrated by various speakers. In the multicultural studies context most work will be read in translation. Whether in the original or in translation, they will be examined for their historical importance, for the contribution they made to human knowledge and advancement, and also wherever possible for their literary-aesthetic value. They will also be read against the backdrop

of Canadian reality: analogies will be drawn between their artistic syntheses or balances of “the many, diverse and precious elements that have gone into the composition of [that] image of sempiternal and universal dimensions,” as Bergin described Italy, and the Canadian multicultural reality, particularly in reference to that vision of Canada as being or becoming a “living mosaic,” a “unity in diversity.”

In general, however, a clear understanding and an aggressive programme of popularization of the unique aspects of Italian culture, of its pervasive humanistic values, that some scholars are already rediscovering, will favour Italian studies not only in North America but in the World. North America has recently discovered that “Arts and Humanities Education Undergirds Japanese Success,” as the title of an article recently announced. The humanities are considered important in Japan not only for their ethical and social goals, but also because they help to develop “the mental capacity and flexibility...to grasp relationships essential in any kind of work.”

Either by way of imitation or by coincidence, two years later a Canadian daily reported that employers were seeking “liberal arts understanding of various cultures and thus a greater “choice of life-styles and cultural traits.”

On the other hand, to oppose multicultural education on grounds that appears too idealistic and impractical is like saying that the humanities are useless embellishments, or that a poet’s vision or ideals are mere fantasies and unattainable. The proponents of multicultural education like Castiglione’s archer, may be aiming high. But they are also seeing clearly the need for “a broader examination or re-examination of the assumptions of education” in Canada.

On the international scene, in spite of what has been written by many about its unique achievements, Italy remains generally unknown as a leader, past or present. Some foreigners, more than Italians themselves, may have indeed come to recognize, according to Giovanni Freddi, Italy's "original contributions...to humanity," and its present privileged position as a meeting point, bridge and balance between east and west and north and south. But there seems to be afoot a revision of history which tends to diminish, benignly ignore or even annul Italy's unique contributions to the humanities and the sciences. Some scholarly studies that deal with western civilization still prefer to "saltare a pie' pari il periodo umanistico" (as Garin notes quoting an Italian historian of philosophy). One book on the *History of the Sciences*, part of required reading in a Canadian University course, dedicates only two paragraphs to the *Trecento- Quattrocento* Italian city-life that unequivocally provided in part the *humus* and *Weltanschauung* for the "rinnovamento scientifico moderno"

Italy's role in science in general also suffered distortions perhaps as a result of changing fashions in cultural history. In any case, be it the "Cartesian stamp on science" which opposed the Galileian and Italian mode of scientific inquiry, Berthold Brecht's drama on Galileo, or most likely the more fashionable views promoted by a resurgence of medieval studies, Italy long regarded as "the cradle of modern science" has today become "the innocent victim of this recent change in outlook." It is perhaps also the result of a more fundamental modern trend: a general "strong incursion of the quantitative and positivistic attitude into the humanities themselves" "has helped to undermine the more comprehensive, wholistic, humanistic approach to human studies, and

thus confirm the split, in Croce's terms, between *conoscenze* (knowledge of facts) and *conoscenza* (wisdom).

Nevertheless, in general and at the more popular level, the image of Italy still perpetuated in the North American media and even in the Italian communities is an unflattering one: if not altogether negative, it is one built on old stereotypes and thus not favouring the growth of Italian studies, multiculturalism or multicultural education.

The student's perception and complaint that Italian literature is too "formal", may be also a hurdle, not made any easier by language graduates" for basically the same reasons: they were "more flexible", had a "broader base of knowledge" and "stronger communication skills" which made them "more capable of assuming management positions" (*Globe and Mail*, February 18, 1986).

Admittedly the strength and even survival of this form of education ought to depend not so much on the fortunes of a particular economy or on capricious marketplace trends as on the intrinsic universal values of the humanities. Nevertheless, such trends now offer the opportunity to "sell" the humanities or make them more marketable, even though caution may be advisable since a reversal of the trend may resume their erosion. Therefore, university experiments with new programmes, such as the Art-Coop programmes to develop the pragmatic humanist, multicultural studies degrees, or any other type of applied humanities, philosophy or literature courses (including Canadian Studies Programmes) may appear opportunistic and have a short life. Whatever short-term benefits they may bring, employment-specific humanities programmes, like the ethnic-specific or crisis-oriented forms of multicultural education, because they are fragmented, superimposed

“packages” often outside the mainstream curriculum, cannot provide long-term answers to the present educational and social complexities.

In order to guarantee the humanities continuity and permanence, and their rightful role in the school curricula and in society, such courses and programmes will have to be placed within a larger philosophical and educational context or base. A long-range strategy aiming at a long-range solution would be to have the humanities, like the ideal inherent in the cultural/intercultural form of multicultural education, permeate the entire curriculum, school system and social structures. Since the goals coincide, this plan would, and definitely should, have the support of the proponents of both multicultural education and of liberal education. The humanities and social sciences which often seem to be unnaturally and unnecessarily divided, as evidenced also by the two separate national forums on basically the same issue, would only benefit themselves and society as a whole by focusing on their clear common goals through the policy of multiculturalism and together shape and implement a much needed national policy of multicultural education.

Literature is by its very nature multicultural, because it reflects reality, the human condition, and presents it in an elegant form, thus responding also to “our human hunger for beauty” and other.

“Culture” is central to multiculturalism physically and philosophically. Multicultural education in its ideal dimension is an ethic, a renewed Paideia, a philosophy and a programme which, like *Studia humanitatis*, aims at the equal development of the intellectual, moral, social and civic faculties of the human person. Italian literature and culture have always been, and continue to be, the richest heirs of the humanistic tradition which even today, in the midst of many contradictions, present “a unique synthesis of values” that may even lead to “higher forms of civilization”.

The Canadian policy of multiculturalism and its offspring multicultural education offer Italian literature and culture a new opportunity to hold a central position in Canadian and North American education and society. But in order for them to play a decisive role, first of all, good translations of more Italian works in all fields must become readily available to scholars and teachers so that they may develop books, manuals, courses and teaching materials for all levels of education; closer contacts, greater interaction and cooperation will need to be established between teachers and

scholars of Italian studies in schools, institutes, associations, scholars and educators that are elaborating, promoting or implementing this concept of education.

Because, like the ancient *auctores* they are “not only sources of technical information[but] are also a treasury of worldly wisdom and general philosophy,” Italian literature and culture can be determinant factors in both this process and in the development of the so-called post-industrial “service” world society. They can be a catalyst in generating what the environmentalists seek, what St. Francis, the patron saint of ecology, intuited, and what the makers of the film “ The Global Brain” have already illustrated: a global eco- synergism- a belief that all life on earth is one and unique, and requires for its “sustainable development” the full participation of all living organisms, all part of the same brain. In brief, they can be a guide in establishing a new twenty-first century TECHNO-HUMANISM for a humanity that will aim to “ excel “, as some French scholars recently said of Umberto Eco, “ dans...la science de l’homme”.

Multiculturalism or **cultural pluralism** is a policy, ideal, or really t hat emphasizes the unique characteristics of different cultures in the world, especially as they relate the one another in immigrant receiving nations.

The term multiculturalism was coined in Canada in the 1960s, but has since spread around the world. It is often used to describe societies characterized by a proliferation of different cultures. Around the world wealthy countries have large numbers of immigrants with their own cultures and languages. This multicultural reality has caused problems in some nation, but also led to cultural exchanges that have benefited both groups (for instance the introduction of different cuisines). The term “multicultural” can also be used to refer to localities in cities where people of different cultures co-exist.

Multiculturalism can also be a prescriptive term which describes government policy. In the dealing with immigrants groups and their cultures, there are essentially three approaches:

Monoculturalism: in the most Old World nations, culture is very closely linked to nationalism, thus government policy is to assimilate immigrants. France, for example is very concerned about immigrants groups adopting French culture.

Melting Pot: in the United States the traditional view has been for a Melting Pot where cultures from all over the world are peacefully mixed and amalgamated. **multiculturalism:** according to this view immigrants, and others, should preserve their cultures which should interact peacefully within one nation. Today, this is the official policy of the Canada and Australia.

No country, both in the past and in the present, has made fully fallen into one of these categories. For example, France has made efforts to adapt

French culture to new immigrants groups, while Canada still has many policies that work to encourage assimilation.

Other countries use the term multiculturalism differently, describing both the Melting Pot, and Canada's Mosaic as being multicultural and refer to them as pluralistic and particular multiculturalism.

Pluralistic multiculturalism views each culture or subculture in a society as contributing with unique and valuable cultural aspects to the whole culture. Particular multiculturalism is more concerned with preserving the distinction between cultures.

Canada has long been the focus of international attention for its success as a multicultural society and, in particular, for its ability to manage its cultural diversity through a federal constitution. Constitutional provisions across a range of areas, including the relationship between English and French Canada; federalism more generally, including the Status of Quebec; language rights; the Status of Aboriginal people; Canada's immigration and integration strategies; constitutional guarantees of equal protection to men and women all tell a complex story of diversity, embracing First Nations, settler communities, and new immigrants, and consolidated through a long and incremental period of constitution building.

Multiculturalism of the Canadian Constitution is divided into two parts. The first addresses the historical evolution of multiculturalism and federalism in the development of the Canadian Constitution. The second part is concerned with the accommodation of diversity in constitutional law and practice. Studies of language policy, federalism, the role of the courts, and the problematic issues raised by the concept of equality

all serve to highlight the ongoing challenges Canada faces not only in responding to such a range of often competing political agendas but also in finding a model of liberalism that can allow it to meet these challenges consistently.

In ideological terms, Trudeau's model of liberalism exerted a strong influence over constitutional development. Forbes explains that Trudeau's ambitions extended beyond accommodating diversity in Canada to a wider vision of a Cosmopolitan world in which Culture should belong to the private realm , with state and society playing a neutral role. Ideally, culture would become a matter of individual choice, which a policy of Multiculturalism would be designed to facilitate.

Implementation

Around the world, important government multicultural policies can include: dual citizenship. government support for newspapers, television and radio in minority languages. acceptance of traditional and religious in schools, the military, and society in general support for minority festivals, holidays and celebrations support for arts from cultures around the world programs to encourage minority representation in politics, education, and the work force.

While multiculturalist policies oppose cultural assimilation, countries as Canada do support structural assimilation. Immigrant groups are still encouraged to participate in the larger society. learn the majority languages and enter the labour force the other country to have most fully adopted Canada's view of multiculturalism is Australia where many of these policies related to multiculturalism are pursued.

Like in the United States, the United Kingdom also does not have an official policy supporting multiculturalism, but it does have a number of programs with these goals.

Multiculturalism, along with other identity politics, has, in part, been so successful because it is a useful tool politicians to win the votes of minority groups. Government money for cultural celebrations or ethnic-specific newspapers can encourage new immigrants to support the government party.

There have been many criticisms of official multiculturalism from both the left and the right. Criticizing these policies can be difficult, however, because they can quickly lead to accusations of racism and xenophobia.

Diane Ravitch argues that the celebration of multiculturalism diversity in America is used to mask hostility toward the mainstream, as

multiculturalism would claim that the mainstream has ignored blacks, women, American Indians, and so on in history.

One of the dangers of pursuing multiculturalist social policies is that social integration and cultural assimilation can be held back. This can potentially encourage economic disparities and an exclusion of minority groups from mainstream politics.

In Canada, the most noted Canadian critics of multiculturalism are Neil Bissoondath and Reginald Bibby. This is *Selling Illusion : The Cult of Multiculturalism*, Bissoondath argues that official multiculturalism limits the freedom of minority members by confining them to cultural and geographic ghettos. He also argues that cultures are far too complex and must be transmitted through close and being about festivals and cuisine is a crude oversimplification that leads to easy stereotyping.

Bibby, in his *Mosaic madness: pluralism Without a Cause*, argues that official multiculturalism is a divisive force that is reducing national solidarity and unity.

HISTORIC REALITY

Canada has been multicultural from the beginning. When European settlers first set foot on North America, they found several Aboriginal groups with diverse, rich cultures, who spoke many languages. And the settlers brought their own cultures. Most came from the United Kingdom and France, but also included Germans, Chinese, Ukrainians, and others. Blacks have been here for more than 400 years. These settlers – and all who have come since – have shared in building this country. But building any nation is difficult, and Canada is no exception. Aboriginal people, European settlers who were not British or French, and non-European

Canadians learned that they did not have all the rights that other Canadians took for granted.

.....people who have come to this country from an ever-widening area of the world have met the challenges of its geography and its society. They have neither conformed entirely to an established pattern nor fused, as nineteenth- and early twentieth- century writers were fond of forecasting, into wholly new models¹. They have begun to have much in common, in spite of differences of background and region, but they have also kept a sense of distinctiveness, the basis of which has altered with the years. In doing so, they have become Canadians. But building any nation is difficult, and Canada is no exception. Aboriginal people, European settlers who were not British or French, and non- European Canadians learned that they did not have all the rights that other Canadians took for granted.

¹ From Jean R. Burnet and Howard Palmer, authors of "Coming Canadians" An Introduction to a History of Canada's People

The Constitutional and Political Regulation of Ethnic relation and conflicts

The Canadian Policy of Multiculturalism is 25 years old, but the concept is as old as the Canadian Confederation and the ideal is as old as civilisation itself, as old as man's search for identity. In 1865, two years before Canada officially became a country with the passing of the British North America Act (BNA Act), Sir Hector-Louis Langevin, one of the Fathers of Confederation, said:

In (the new) Parliament there will be no questions of race, nationality, religion or locality... The basic of action adopted by the delegates to the Quebec Conference in preparing the resolutions was to do justice to all - justice to all races, to all religions, to all nationalities and to all interests...¹

In the 1930s, the then Prime Minister, Sir Wilfrid Laurier, stated:

For here (in Canada), I want the marble to remain the marble; the granite to remain the granite; the oak to remain the oak; and out of all these elements, I would build a Nation great among the nations of the world.²

Prime Minister Pierre Elliot Trudeau may well have read or been influenced by these statement while preparing the official “Announcement of the Implementation of the Policy of Multiculturalism within a Bilingual Framework”², which he read in the Canadian Parliament on Friday, October 8, 1971. Clearly, all three statements contain *in nuce* the basic principle of a widely applicable law or philosophy.

Trudeau said:

Mr. Speaker, I am happy this morning to be able to reveal to the House that the government has accepted all those recommendations of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism which are contained in Volume IV of its reports directed to the federal departments and agencies. Hon. Members will recall that the subject of this volume is

² Quoted in *The Charter of Rights and Freedoms – A Guide for Canadians*, Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1982, p.29 2 Ibid.

“the contribution by other ethnic groups to the cultural enrichment of Canada and the measures that should be taken to safeguard that contribution”.

Volume IV examined the whole question of cultural and ethnic pluralism in this country and the status of our various cultures and languages, an area of study given all to little attention in the past by scholars.

It was the view of the royal commission, shared by the government and, I am sure, by all Canadians of British and French origin, another for the original peoples and yet a third for all others. For although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly.

The royal commission was guided by the belief that adherence to one's ethnic group is influenced not so much by one's origin or mother tongue as by one's sense of belonging to the group, and by what the commission calls the group's "collective will to exist". The government shares this belief.

The individual's freedom would be hampered if he were locked for life within a particular cultural compartment by the accident of birth or language. It is vital, therefore, that

every Canadian. whatever his ethnic origin, be given a chance to learn at least one of the two languages in which his country conducts its official business and its politics.

A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework comments itself to the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians. Such a policy should help break down discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies. National unity if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions. A vigorous policy of multiculturalism will help create this initial confidence. It can form the base of a society which is based on fair play for all...3

Trudeau's speech was truly a manifesto for a new Canada; and for other pluralistic societies, which include most of the nations of the earth. Indeed, in the last few years, the Canadian Policy of Multiculturalism has been considered as an adaptable model in various parts of the world: from the United States to Russia, from Europe to China, as well as by the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development. Canada led the way in the development of Multiculturalism at the legislative and enshrined in the Constitution of Canada. Section 27 of the Charter of Rights and Freedom states:

“this Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians”.⁴⁵

And with the July 1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act (an Act of preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada), the October 1971 Multiculturalism Policy was established securely in law. In fact, the various principles inherent in the 1972 policy are clearly stated in the preamble of the 1988 Multiculturalism Act.

The Act recognises that “multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity” and the “importance of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians” and acknowledges as well “the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage”. Within its 10 articles, written in both English and French, the law sets out the government’s multiculturalism policy and how it can be implemented within federal institutions and at all levels of society. Among the rights, freedom and in international understanding; harmony; respect; equitable participation and employment; equal treatment and protection under the law; the overcoming of discriminatory barriers; the “acquisition, retention and use of all languages that contribute to the multiculturalism heritage of Canada”³; statistical and historical research. In synthesis, the “importance of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians” is inextricably linked to:

³ *House of Commons debates, Official Report*, Vol.VIII, 1971, published under the authority of the Speakers of the *House of Commons* by the Queen’s Printer for Canada, pp.8545-46. 4. *Constitution Act*, 1982, Part I , 27.

- a) all individual rights and freedoms;
- b) the rights of the aboriginal people of Canada;
- c) the Official Language Act;
- d) the Citizenship Act;
- e) the Canadian human Rights Act;
- f) the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination;
- g) the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

The ideas of harmony, identity and willingness to share (or respect) which were promoted in the Policy find expression in the 1988 Act through the policies, programs and practices the government is undertaking in order to promote understanding, sensitivity and responsiveness at all levels. In fact, in the Act we find a synthesis of both the practical and philosophical aspect of multiculturalism. And because of this it can be considered an example of enlightened legislation, of legislation with a vision.

Multiculturalism, as a policy and as a concept, clearly related to, or sums up, all the needs and aspirations basic to the individual and to the group, as well as to the national and international community. However, “its importance and long-lasting effect”, as Trudeau then understood, have become more concrete in the last 25 years as a result of research in

both the theory and practice of multiculturalism, in its universal aspect
end educational applications.

Theoretical and Philosophical Principles or ideas of Multiculturalism

The philosophical scope and universal applicability of multiculturalism are found particularly in one statement of the Policy just mentioned:

National unity if it means anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own individual identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions.

The key words or phrases are “ **UNITY**”, “**IDENTITY**”, and “**WILLINGNESS TO SHARE**”. They assume a special meaning today, in age of regional and cultural fragmentation throughout the world. **Identity** is the pivotal word-concept of multiculturalism Policy and Act. In the 1971 Policy “confidence in one's own identity” is linked to a “willingness to share”. Strong self-identity is the essential premise for the strength of the group, of the society and for civilized behaviour or interaction with others. The policy, while recognizing the two official languages, states that there is no “official” Canadian culture but it suggests that multiculturalism is the culture of Canada. The 1988 Act adds another dimension: multiculturalism is to be understood by all “ a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity”. What

makes every Canadian different is his or her ethnic identity; what makes the same person the same as any other Canadian is multiculturalism, that is a sensitivity, an awareness that we are all different. The policy and the Act together create a fusion of individual identity and global identity:

The two aspects of identity, one individual and one global, require two simultaneous journeys. One Towards the rediscovery of those elements of ethnicity that makes each individual unique: the study of one's particular culture, of one's past. The other consisting in the study, discovery and appreciation of other cultures; especially the discovery of the common elements that exist among all cultures. The two complement each other : ethnic identity without multicultural leads to ethnocentricity. Multicultural identity without ethnic identity is impossible because multiculturalism is based on confidence in one's own identity. In other words, the firm basis of the study of others cultures is a secure knowledge of one's own culture or ethnicity.

In today's technological globalisation and post-ideological society. Identity has increasingly become a concern of all individuals and peoples. The term "Identity" itself refers to or embraces two opposites: both difference and sameness. Yet the emphasis seems to be more on the difference than on the sameness of humanity. Indeed we are all unique individuals; each one of us has distinguishing physical differences. Yet we all have eyes, two ears, two hands or one nose, one mouth, one head. each one of us has a particular psychological make-up, but we all have common human feelings, emotions, sentiments (love, fear, hate). We share a common journey from womb to tomb: birth – change – death. We may speak different languages and come from different places but we all have a place birth, a language and culture. All societies have social principles, goals, standards, an ethical code or institution that

distinguish them. Their identity may be defined by the value or sets of values expressed by the following three terms: *mores* (traditional values and customs of a social group), *mythos* (value system or distinctive character of a particular people or movement). Individuals and societies may be different; yet research has shown that all individuals and all societies have similar, if not the same, needs, rights and aspirations. Canadian multiculturalism, the Policy and Act, while enhancing the differences, encourages the discovery of the similarities in the culture that make up Canada.

In pluralistic societies or nation-states, identity is inevitably linked to ethnicity. According to some studies by social scientists, the basic components of ethnicity are language, religion, customs as well as relation to the land of origin. They are fundamentally the same elements that partly constitute the basis of every culture and of every civilization. They are common to all societies. Therefore, the components of our ethnicity, of our identity, that is of our distinctive characteristics, are the same elements that give us our sameness as human beings.

Canadian multiculturalism recognizes both aspects of this identity: while defining or reflecting the diversity of Canada or of the world, it aims at unity, promotes the recovering of what we have in common in order to achieve an ideal based on equality, fairness, sharing, respect (all terms repeated throughout the multiculturalism Act). The very elements that form our ethnic and multicultural identity form the universal base of multiculturalism. They link multiculturalism to universal principles, to a time-honoured tradition, to permanent aspects of culture, of civilization, of humanity. Both the Multiculturalism Policy and Act promote the study of languages: the immediate goal is practical – a better understanding of the self and a fuller participation in the affairs

of one's country. But the long-term effect may also be some form of spiritual fulfilment. The promotion of languages study links multiculturalism with the enlightened views held by poets and scholars through all ages about the centrality of language in human life; or language as "the all pervasive conveyer, interpreter and shaper of all human doings" (...) "the most fertile field for the co-operation of the entire community." Multiculturalism renews a tradition, reinforces a universal component of humanity. religion, another basic component of ethnicity and identity, presents greater problems for the realization of the ideas of multiculturalism coexistence. The differences, some say, are not surmountable; the conflicts have been for long too harsh. It is within this realm that multiculturalism will find its greatest obstacle and even fall. But multiculturalism, while providing a response to a particular reality, also presents an ideal, and an ideal always challenges our temporal-spatial limitations, even what often seems insurmountable. The Cuban social-anthropologist, Israel Moliner Castaneda, wrote that "religion is the most important factor in the rise of ethno-awareness, and therefore, that which generates major cultural component. Multiculturalism makes the study of all religion necessary, or at least of those works that have emphasised the common aspects of the major religions of the world. A example of such scholarship is Karen Armstrong's *A History of God* (Knopf :1993): the work describes the similarities in the development and belief of various religions or religious ideologies: Taoism in China Buddhism and Hinduism in India, the rational philosophy of Plato and Aristotle, different concepts of monotheism in Israel and in Iran all developed during the so-called Axial age between 800 to 200 B.C.E. "Common to all these ideologies", according to John Elson, reviewer of the book, "was what Armstrong calls 'the duty of compassion' meaning

authentic religious experiences must be integrated into everyday life”. Multiculturalism, in its promotion of a global view of life, is inevitably linked with the best scholarship; with a type of education that enhances not what Armstrong calls the “belligeranti” “righteousness” of modern monotheism but the fundamental virtues that the three monotheisms generated, particularly “the dignity of the individual”⁴. The policy of Multiculturalism and the subsequent Multiculturalism Act have been a response to a particular reality in Canada. But the ideals and goals expressed are linked to universal themes and world scholarship. They contain principles that are flexible enough to make the policy universally applicable, not just in pluralistic societies similar to Canada but in the entire world which is by its very nature pluralistic. The policy in particular is a manifesto for all of humanity because of the centrality of identity, of both its meaning of difference and sameness.

The Policy of multiculturalism has generated a variety of community activities and programmes in the past twenty-five-years. Particularly multicultural education, has a concept and in practice, has continued to grow in scope and in depth. Already in 1981, Keith McLeod identified the three forms of multicultural education that had “been most commonly suggested or implemented in Canada”. He defined them as:

1. The *ethnic-specific* (i.e. ethnic schools, ethno-cultural programmes, including language courses to promote cultural continuity and development, and to counteract assimilative forces;)

⁴ . Alan B. Anderson and James S. Frideres, *Ethnicity in Canada: Theoretical Perspectives*(Toronto: Butterworths, 1982), pp. 36-37

2. *The problem-oriented* type, subdivided into two forms :

a) Specific programmes to meet perceived needs or assimilation or integration of people of diverse backgrounds;

b) Anti-discrimination programmes, usually crisis orientated;

3. The *multicultural/intercultural* type of multicultural education. Walter Temelini (Ph.D. in languages, Literatures, and Cultures at the University of Windsor, Ontario, Canada) in his research in the 1980s, centred on the third type of multicultural education for a variety of reasons:

1. The emphasis that the multiculturalism Policy and Act placed on research and the study of culture and languages; not only the official languages but also and above all the “heritage” or “international” languages.

2. The humanistic orientation of the cultural/intercultural type of multicultural education: “In its ideal form”, in the view of McLeod and other Canadian educators and education

theorists, it was developing into “an ethic”, a new approach to, and a theory of education, if not a modern philosophy of the “Universal Man”, or more appropriately in today’s context, of the well-rounded human being. It was slowly assuming the meaning of *Paideia*, “respect for more values and that gracious blend of learning and urbanity which we can only circumscribe by the discredited world ‘culture’ “as Erwin Panofsky defined “culture” relating it both to classical *humanitas* and to the Erasmian *studia humaniora*. Multicultural education, as he attempts to

show in one of his articles, both as a philosophy and as a programme, is an *aggiornamento*, an updating of the aims and goals of liberal arts educations, of *studia humanitatis*⁵, which are given that name, wrote Eugenio Garin quoting Leonardo Bruni, “perchè formano l’uomo completo”, “because they form the complete man”. In brief both aimed at forming a knowledgeable, thinking and sensitive human being.

3.The vision of a renewal of the social relevance of the study of language, literature and culture within a multicultural society; the belief that the integration of an enlightened legislation and education would lead to a higher form of civilisation (also elaborated within an article)⁶.

4.The universality or wide applicability of this new socio-educational philosophy and program. The result was the Multicultural Studies Program at the University of Windsor.

How Does Multiculturalism Benefit Canadian Society?

- Canada’s multiculturalism policy helps us make the most of our diversity
- **Economically**, it makes us stronger and more competitive.
- **Socially**, it makes sure everyone can feel at home in Canada and bring people together as equal and active citizens.
- **Culturally**, it broadens our perspectives and contributes to our distinctive Canadian identity.

⁵ Walter Temelini, “literature and culture in a multicultural Society”, in eds.pp.42-57.

⁶ Eugenio Garin, *L’Umanesimo Italiano* (Bari Laterza, 1958), p. 45.

- **Internationally**, it strengthens Canada's reputation and influence in the world.

Dr. Barbara Ward, British economist and writer, described Canada as "the world's first international nation." As the world becomes more and more obvious –there are more opportunities for all Canadians to contribute and for all to benefit.

There are many **economic** reasons for respecting Canadian diversity. Getting rid of discrimination gives employers more access to the skilled employees who will be increasingly in demand as the population grows older. For example, in international and Canadian markets, knowing different styles of negotiating, subtle cultural differences, or different languages could be crucial.

Various **social** policies for handling diversity, including assimilation (conforming to the majority), and integration (equal membership in a common society), have been tried in countries with people of different origins. The Economic Council of Canada looked at several of them in its February 1990 report *New Faces in the Crowd*. The report concluded that the integration policy used for the multiculturalism policy works better than assimilation or other models.

The **cultural** advantages of diversity include choice, variety and innovation. Artist from different backgrounds – like many of the recent recipients of the Governor General's Award for fiction, for example–brings new insights and techniques to our cultural legacy.

The University of Windsor Multicultural Studies Program

The innovative and unique Multicultural Studies Program developed in the last ten years at the University of Windsor (Ontario, Canada) is presented as a widely applicable socio-educational philosophy and practice. Both content and goals give the Program its unique features: the emphasis is on the study of languages, literatures cultures and civilization in the context of Canada multiculturalism and world pluralism. The Program unites the traditional, language based humanities and the evolving practise-concept of multicultural education; it incorporate their common aims: to develop informed, Thinking and sensitive individuals within a diverse but harmonious society. In brief, the Program is a welding of tradition and experience, theory and practice, specific skills and philosophical principles: For these reasons, it can be applied, with appropriate adjustments, to every local situation as well as to the global reality, characterized by diversity, pluralism or fragmentation and simultaneous technological, commercial or globalization. The main emphasis is on the common aspects of peoples and societies in order to promote understanding and respect as well equitable material and social self-fulfilment.

The centrality of language in human life

Language is the essence of humanity, ranging from the very base of human biology and instinct (Pinker, 1994) to the ongoing search for the ideals of universal understanding and peace; it is, on the one hand, the unrivalled system of human expression (Eco, 1995) and humanity's "richest art form" (McLuhan, 1964), and on the other, the vehicle of a specific culture, unique outlook or world view. Language, above all, is the moulder and the sum of the self, of our individual identity and collective heritage. The very nature and centrality of language make language and education discourse; it incorporates all disciplines—arts, science and technology. Nevertheless, language also has its inherent limitations. However comprehensive or magnificent the invention, language can also be a havoc-producing blunt tool; or a double-edged sword that speaks the same language. Therefore, in any human communication or interaction, and first the learning-teaching process, knowledge of language must be accompanied by a clear awareness of the limitations, ambiguities and particular prejudices inherent in every language (especially in idiomatic expressions). Awareness is particularly required in cross-cultural communication, in multilingual, multicultural or intercultural situations, which is of course the case of the present global village, as well as of most countries in the world.

Consequently, for the sake of greater clarity and mutual understanding, the terms in the title of this presentation need to be explained. Their meaning needs, first, to be contextualized within their particular historical, cultural framework; secondly, both terms and meaning need to be linked to today's local and global experience; more specifically to

the reality variously described as the increasingly interdependent, technological, pluralistic or multicultural global village. The aim is to show the relevance of Humanistic Multicultural to be issues, strategies and goals of our rapidly changing world: The proposed strategy, presented in the title by the doubly modified “studies” , aims to be all-comprehensive and widely applicable on grounds of the very centrality of language in human life: in personal identity and interpersonal relations, in conscious citizenship and in participatory democracy, in general and fruitful human interaction and especially in the learning-teaching process throughout the course of human development.

Historical, cultural context of “Humanistic Multicultural Studies”

. **Multicultural Studies** refers specifically to the innovative and unique B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) Degree in Multicultural Studies developed in the last ten years at the university of Windsor. While unique and innovative for its emphasis on world languages, literatures and civilizations, the program is also quite flexible to be, *mutatis mutandis*, a widely applicable, universal, socio-educational philosophy and practice, because of its very content, process and goals.

. **Humanistic**, from humanist and humanism, is used here in its amplest, comprehensive sense, as first elaborated on borrowing from Roman classical text (14th- 16th centuries) and as transmitted to present times through the humanities or liberal arts; in synthesis, humanistic refers or pertains to all that is human: to humanity, in its constituent parts and as a whole; it includes a new consciousness of the autonomous self (Petrarch) and renewed interest in and awareness of the outside world.

The word *humanist*, from the Latin word *humanista* (*Italian Umanista*), was coined by fifteenth-century Italian university students to designate a teacher of the new *studia humanitatis*, literally the “studies of humanity” or the humanities; in the Renaissance, then, the word humanist indicated simply a teacher or scholar of classical Greek and Roman texts. But here lies the very beginning of the Renaissance cultural revolution, which spread with the humanities from Italy to Europe (Proctor, 1988). It was, above all, a language/literature-based revolution; and it centred on human renewal through the re-appropriation and adaption of the best models of *humanae litterae*, humane letters, or *studia humanitatis*, as they were aptly called because they make human

beings perfect. The specific subjects which pertain to life and moral character included grammar, rhetoric, poetry, history and moral philosophy. The five subjects weld communicative skills and artistic creativity (taste, aesthetics) with knowledge of the past and appropriate behaviour in all human activities.

They encapsulate prudence or wisdom: memory of the past guides one to properly think, speak, act in the present for a better future, one's own and posterity. Grammar, the "first science", and rhetoric, the art of speaking and writing well, provide technical training along with aesthetic sensitivity (poetry) and objective analysis (literary, historical criticism). The five subjects reflect and enhance balance or unity of the intellectual, sensorial and emotional faculties, or participation of reason and feeling and imagination, of the intuitive and empirical approach to reality and life: their aim is the highest degree of human perfectibility: intellectual, moral, psychological and social. The adjective "humanistic" carries into multicultural studies the entire tradition with its basic strategies and goals; a tradition which represents "wholeness" in very respect. The simultaneous emphasis on individual and global values to today's social and educational needs and aspirations:

. **Multicultural**, literally referring to many (multi) cultures, and thus to diversity of national or ethnic origins, languages, customs, traditions (heritage) and religions, derives specifically from *multiculturalism* (a term which first appeared in 1962), but here is used with specific reference to the 1971 *Canadian Policy of Multiculturalism* ("Announcement of Canadian Policy of Multiculturalism Within Bilingual Framework," House of Commons,

Ottawa, October 8, 1971) restated in the 1982 *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (Section 27), and amplified in the *1988 Canadian Multiculturalism Act* (“ An Act for the preservation and enhancement of multiculturalism in Canada,” House of Commons, Ottawa, July 12, 1988).

Canada is the only country in the world with an official Policy recognizing cultural pluralism within the frameworks of two official languages, and whose Constitution or Official Languages Act in no way “ abrogates or derogates from any rights or privileges acquired or enjoyed with respect to any other language” (Preamble, 1988 Act). Some central themes in the official policy statements (1971, 1988) refer to languages: linguistic duality and linguistic diversity; the aim is to harmonize the equal status of the two official languages and the right of minority languages, particularly the languages of the Native Peoples; the need to learn or know at least one of the official languages, English or French, in order to achieve full civic participation and fulfilment as well as global competence and vision, since both are also world languages; the simultaneously equal emphasis on the material and cultural wealth resulting from the retention or recovery of all the languages spoken in Canada; particularly the relation of mother tongue to identity, respect, sharing and thus to national unity and international harmony. The policy’s vision may not yet be completely reflected in the practice of multiculturalism; nevertheless, the policy remains an enlightened milestone in the very recognition of a statistically, demographically based, concrete, specific reality: the complex linguistic and ethno-cultural diversity of Canada; and since Canada is a microcosm of the world (besides the official languages, at least 100 different languages are

spoken at large), the Canadian policy is a model for world diversity. The universal scope of Canadian multiculturalism is further evidence by the fact that policy itself, while responding to a specific national reality, also reflects both traditional universal principles and a number of fundamental phenomena and experiences, some distinct, some interconnected: diversity or ethnicity; immigration and increasing pluralism; technological globalization, standardization or ever assimilation and opposing tribalization or fragmentation with concomitant segregation, discrimination and conflict – the fundamental issue of every community, society and nation at the turn of the twenty-first century.

Multicultural or intercultural education, as elaborated in Canada in the last 25 years, in the ideal form transforms multiculturalism from a policy and law into “an ethnics that pervades the educational or school system” (McLeod, 1981). It is this form of multiculturalism and multicultural education that is most closely linked to the humanities and has become one of the “partners” in developing the University of Windsor Multicultural Studies Program (Temelini, 1987). But the harmonizing-pivotal principle was already present in the 1971 Announcement: “confidence in one’s own individual identity” (i.e., language and culture) is closely related to “respect” (for oneself and for others), to “national unity” (or group or human harmony) and to “willingness to share”. The principle reflects a classical and social setting of Canada and the world is characterized by diversity, especially by multiplicity of languages. Multicultural education or any form of education must above all emphasize the common aspects of this diversity in order to achieve some form of unity or harmony.

Instead, while multiculturalism and multicultural education have been expanding both spatially and conceptually to become a universal strategy, there has been a simultaneous proliferation of various forms of education and programs (cross-cultural, trans-cultural, global, anti-racist, whole language, education for respect, education for peace and so on), subjecting even education to harmful fragmentation. In fact, there would be no need, today, for any other form of education if the traditional humanities or liberal arts education had not been slowly eroded, since the scientific and industrial revolution, to be replaced by a variety of forms of education lacking the fundamental “unifying focus” that the humanistic tradition once provided and can still provide in post-modern times. The strategy described here is a balance of tradition and experience, theory and practice to make our past live. Our future lies in the re appropriation and adaptation of our past: in the West our common tradition is formed by the humanities. Knowledge of the self and security in one’s identity leads to knowledge of others.

The university of Windsor B.A: Degree in Multicultural Studies: global strategy and vision

The University of Windsor B.A. (Bachelor of Arts) Degree in Multicultural Studies is a program and widely applicable socio-educational philosophy and practice which can indeed cultivate the mind, spirit, sensitivity and judgment required as we approach the 21st century in our pluralistic. technological global village.

The program that has been developing since 1986 in the diversified department of Classical and Modern Languages. Literatures and Civilizations, is indeed an old tradition in both Canada and the world it is the result and balance demographic, social and legislative realities of Canada, its increasing diversity, its inescapable multicultural characteristic and its measures or responses at various levels to the new evolving realities. Specifically, the Program is also based on:

1. recent government policies and legislation aimed at promoting more harmonious relations among all Canadian groups and individuals (1971 *Policy of Multiculturalism*, 1982 *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, 1988 *Multiculturalism Act*, etc.);
2. new developments, in both theory and practice in the area of education or schooling (Heritage of International Language and Cultural Enrichment Courses and Programs, Trans cultural or Interdisciplinary Research and Programs, and Multicultural or Intercultural Education in general which complement legislation in the building of a more solid multicultural awareness and identity);

3. the various activities in the community at large (multicultural associations, publications, conference, workshops ,etc.);

4. basic ideas and guidelines confirmed by research, such as the common goals and roles of the humanities and multicultural education/studies, above all the formation of well/rounded and enlightened individuals in a diverse but harmonious society (i.e. Multicultural aware and sensitive human beings).

The multicultural Studies Program, while relating all of the above activities to each other, links them to the traditional study of languages, literatures, cultures and civilizations of the world, past and present. In other words, the study of the humanities is placed within a Canadian and International context.

The Program is open to the entire university and community at large, and the students enrolled in the Multicultural studies courses include a cross-section of both communities of:

a)three core courses:

Foundations of Civilization (a study of the origin and meaning of civilization, including an examination of the values and achievement of the earliest civilizations of the Mediterranean and the Orient , in the context of the Canadian multicultural reality and policy);

Perspectives on Multicultural Studies (guided readings and discussion with a faculty tutor on topics specifics to the students' areas of concentrations);

Seminar in Multicultural Studies (a study of the contributions various cultures have made to today's civilizations and the influences they have exerted upon each other. Topics include cultural interaction and multiculturalism);

six course in a single area of concentration, consisting of four course in the same language and two courses in its civilization);

four additional civilization courses outside the area of concentration which may include The Classical Tradition and Universals of language.

The introductory course (Foundations of Civilization) explores and establishes links between present-day multicultural Canada (its diversity viewed as a microcosm of the world pluralism) and four ancient cultures and civilizations (the main shapers of Western tradition and identity). This is done by reading and discussing specific texts: on one hand, the Canadian Multiculturalism Policy (1971), the Multiculturalism Act (1988) and various articles on the concomitant evolving concept of Multicultural Education, and on the other four ancient literary texts ("epics" – The epic of Gilgamesh, The Odyssey, The Aeneid, The Bible), each viewed as a synthesis of the civilization that produced it. The objective is to establish the close relationship between the practical and philosophical values and goals concretely expressed in Canadian Multiculturalism_ Policy, Theory, Practice _ and the struggles and achievements of those ancient civilizations.

To sum up, here are three final comments.

First, the definition of multiculturalism provided for an Italian dictionary by Prof. Walter Temelini: “ **Multiculturalism**” .Adhering/pertaining to or participating in different cultures.

Policy aiming at recognising, within the same country, the cultural and linguistic identity of each of its ethnic components” (Temelini).

MULTICULTURALISM : A DEFINITION

multiculturalismo (-s) s. m. Appartenenza o partecipazione a diverse culture ♦ *part.* "Politica volta a riconoscere, all'interno di uno stesso paese, l'identità culturale e linguistica di ciascuna delle componenti etniche" (Temelini). [Comp. di multi- e culturalismo].

Multiculturalism. Adhering / Pertaining to or participating in different cultures.

♦ *PART.* "Policy aiming at recognizing, within the same country, the cultural and linguistic identity of each of its ethnic components (Temelini)."

Le Monnier

Il dizionario della lingua italiana

DI GIACOMO DEVOTO
E GIAN CARLO OLI

Second, the full meaning of **Multiculturalism** which is in the word itself:

MULTI– a prefix meaning many, different, diverse; in other words all of us together – the Canadian reality, World pluralism, the human race.

CULTURAL – an adjective deriving from culture, which comes from Latin CULTUS, CULTURA – or anything cultivated, grown – that is, cultivation, the caring that all individuals and societies dedicate to everything that is theirs, entrusted to them or held in common, from the backyard orchard or the earth to the family, home, religion, language, arts, or things of the mind – from material to intellectual endeavours and achievements, especially the outlook and the civilization that result from them. The central unifying force is culture in the widest sense: Culture is again “us”.

ISM – a suffix indicating a distinctive doctrine, practice or school – the pattern of “three” again appears – doctrine or belief – practice- school, the same based and strategies of Multiculturalism- belief – practice – school –“us” once again. the pattern of three in the word is a key to remember the three basic aspects or manifestation of multiculturalism:

. the three words or phrases in Trudeau’s speech:

“**Unity**”- “**Identity**” – “**Willingness to share**”;

. the three stages in the political development of multiculturalism:
Policy (1971) – Constitution (1982) – Law (1988)

. the three functions – modes in the societal process of multiculturalism: Reality – Canada is statistically a pluralistic society; Strategy – programs devised at all levels to respond to that reality; Goal – recognition of linguistic and cultural identity of all ethno cultural components;

. the three levels of society through which it is implemented:

Governments – municipal, provincial, federal institutions; Community - management, labour, media, professional, etc. associations; Schools/Education – from primary to university: students, teachers, texts, curricula, etc. ;

. the three steps in its evolution as a widely – applicable concept

- idea: Policy (or Theory – political, social, etc.) ; Program (or Practice – adaptation of policy according to various conditions); Philosophy (or ideal – well-rounded human being and world citizen; pursuit of human values: respect, fairness, equality).

The last three echo the first three: “National unity” ; “Individual identity” ; “ willingness to share, “or the essence of multiculturalism. Thirdly, a recent development is the application of this socio-educational philosophy in the development of a curriculum for the training of translators and interpreters at the University of Matanzas in Cuba. In spite of the long and arduous journey the Canadian policy has travelled quite far in the last 25 years.

Media and Multiculturalism: Public and Ethnic or Heritage Language Media – Canadian Strategies in a Global Society.

Culture, communication, and community are closely interrelated. As realities, instruments, and goals, they interact at various levels – in the individual, in the group and in the society as whole. their main link is communication. Particularly in a diverse environment with favourable conditions for the clashing of cultures, the survival and growth of the individual, the community, and the nation itself. Often depend on efficient communication.

In Canada's complex diversity, the role of the media is pivotal. All media – the general mass media in the official languages, the multilingual media, the native media and the ethnic or heritage language media – are important instruments of cultural retention and of acculturation/integration. Their functions are to encourage cross-cultural sharing, to diffuse intergroup differences, and to “bridge” chasms. They are, so to speak, “tools” of multiculturalism – mirrors of the Canadian multicultural reality, and above all, moulders of the multicultural vision of Canada as defined in the concept “unity in diversity” . Studies show that the Canadian media have been fulfilling many of these important roles – some more, some less.

The ethnic media are among those that have been performing them better than others: The “ heritage languages media performs a creditable service. Already in 1977, The Report of Canadian Consultative Council on Multiculturalism pointed out the ethnic press as “an obvious example of how media can support the development of cultural diversity. For almost 200 years the ethnic press has spoken to groups in their own

languages, sharing their concerns and thereby reinforcing their sense of a common heritage in a new land. The concept of ‘unity in diversity’ is very appropriate”.

Not all Canadian mass media are committed to these important acculturating/integrating functions; they “perform less well” in this area. One of the reasons may very well be the confusion surrounding the meaning of terms *media* and *multiculturalism*. The uncertainty becomes more evident when the terms are either used as adjectives, or with other adjectives. In such expressions as “multicultural groups”, “multicultural immigrants”, or “ethnic media”, both adjectives “multicultural” and “ethnic” often tend to suggest a sense of separate and less importance, quite opposite to the equal partnership principle underlying multiculturalism.

The terms – *media* and *multiculturalism* – need to be briefly defined and illustrated in order to have a better understanding of their inter-relationship and roles. Media is the plural of medium, a Latin word aptly means the middle; it refers to something or someone that holds a middle position, an intermediate state; an intervening thing through which a force acts or an effect is produced; any means, agency or instrument. By extension, it refers to a link, bond, tie; it can also suggest carrier, transporter, communicator; anything that carries a product, that transmits a message, an idea, a reality, a truth from one point another. Evidently then, the more adequate the transporter, the more secure the product it carries; the better the communicator the clearer the message; the more knowledgeable the interpreter the more complete the reality or truth. The content is strictly linked to the form. The medium is not the message. The one must efficiently serve the other.

Multiculturalism, the other term of reference, relates specifically to a reality, a policy, a law; and more generally, to a programme, a philosophy, an outlook. Firstly, the reality is the Canadian diversity:

the fundamental characteristic of Canada is DIVERSITY. Secondly, the policy refers to the 1971 official recognition of this reality by the government of Canada; a policy entrenched in law through the 1988 *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*. Thirdly, the programme refers to all those activities, strategies and structures put in place in the last two decades to implement the policy at the governmental and community levels. Finally the philosophy of multiculturalism is “the development of a rich and balanced personality” in all Canadians”: and this means broad views, multiplicity of interests, a sensitivity for human problems, a ready disposition for dialogue and exchange of views” – in brief “a multicultural human being”. All the Canadian media, in order to adequately reflect and serve their particular community and the country as a whole, need to be fully aware of multiculturalism, of its particular and universal aspects, of its origin and development – as a concept, as a policy, as a philosophy. This development can in fact be reduced to three or four historical moments or stages:

1. the “B and B” Commission Report of 1970.
2. the Announcement of the Multiculturalism Policy, 1971.
3. Section 27 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, 1982, and the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, 1988.
4. Community and school response to multiculturalism and its elaboration as an educational and social philosophy in the 1970s and 1980s. While difficulties and tensions continue to exist, the vision of

Canada as “one great nation enriched by two official languages and many cultures “has become more widely accepted since 1970, the year of appearance of the Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism; of particular importance is its Volume IV: The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups, which examined the whole question of cultures and ethnic pluralism in this country and the status of our various cultures and languages (Canadian Culture, House of Commons, Friday, October 8, 1971).It was from this very document that emerged the official Policy of Multiculturalism, announced by Prime Minister Trudeau to the House of Commons on Friday, October 8, 1971. Trudeau’s speech was a manifesto for a new Canada, It is just as significant today, if not more, amidst the confusion spread by both the constitutional debate over the Meech Lake Accord and the language controversy. It is fitting to remember and reflect upon at least a few of Trudeau’s statements:

“ A policy of multiculturalism within a bilingual framework itself on the government as the most suitable means of assuring the cultural freedom of Canadians. Such a policy should help break down discriminatory attitudes and cultural jealousies. National unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one’s own individual identity, out of this can grow respect for that of others and a willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumptions. A vigorous policy of multiculturalism will help create the initial confidence. It can form the base of a society which is based on the fair play for all” (House of Commons, Friday, October 8,1971).

The policy which Trudeau wished appended to Hansard (the official published report of proceedings in the British parliament) “in view of its importance and long-lasting effect”, received immediate support from

every party. The then leader of the opposition, Robert L. Stanfield, felt sure that “...this declaration by the government of the principle of preserving and enhancing the many cultural tradition which exist within our country will be most welcome... The cultural identity of Canada is a pretty complex thing...

Multiculturalism in no way constitutes an attack on the basic duality of our country. What we want is justice for all Canadians, and recognition of the cultural diversity of this country... We will look forward most anxiously to the implementation of these principles” (House of Commons, October 8, 1971).

Similarly David Lewis, Leader of the New Democratic Party, expressed his party’s commitment to the policy, emphasizing its importance for Canada:

“ It is with a deep appreciation of both aspects of our Canadian cultural life, official bilingualism and multiculturalism, that my party warmly supports the principles set forth this morning by the Prime Minister...

The diversity of cultures across the land is a course of our greatness as a people... When the majority in a society is as cruel as majorities have often been, not only are minorities crushed but the spirit of that society, the soul of that society, is destroyed” (House of Commons, October 8, 1971).

With the support also of René Caouette, Leader of the Social Credit Party, it was clear that the Parliament of Canada was united, in the words of David Lewis, “in its determination to recognize the value of the many cultures in our country”.

The policy received further support throughout the seventies from all Provincial government as well from the diverse communities. In 1982 the basic principle of the policy was enshrined in the *Constitution of Canada*: Section 27 of the Rights and Freedoms states: “ This charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians. “ Finally, with the July 1988 *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, the October 1971 Multiculturalism was established securely in law.

A important aspect that is often overlooked, specially by the media is that multiculturalism is a policy and a law for all Canadians, not just for the “ethnic” groups or immigrants. Trudeau made it clear in his 1971 speech to the House of Commons:

“...there cannot be one cultural policy for Canadians or British and French origin, another for the original peoples and yet a third for all others. For although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is the other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly...

The government will support and encourage the various cultures and ethnic groups that give structure and vitality to our society. They will be encouraged to share their cultural expression and values with other Canadians and so contribute to a richer life for us all” (House of Commons, Friday, October 8, 1971).

The 1988 *Multiculturalism Act* stresses time and again the same aspect:

. “Multiculturalism is a fundamental characteristic of the Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage...”

. “Multiculturalism is fundamental characteristic of the Canadian heritage and identity...and...it...provides an invaluable resource in the shaping of Canada’s future...”.

The principles and goals are explicit. They are part of Canada, politically, constitutionally and legally. Moreover, both the ideals and the government’s commitment to them are equally explicit in the preamble of the *Multiculturalism Act*:

“...the government of Canada recognizes the diversity of Canadians as regards race, national or ethnic origin, colour and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society and is committed to a policy of multiculturalism designed to preserve and enhance the multicultural heritage of Canadians while working to achieve the quality of all Canadians in the economic, social, cultural and political life of Canada...”

The last part of the statement makes clear also the double goal of multiculturalism: the integrity of each heritage and “ the equality of all Canadians”.

In the body of the *Act* itself, the government of Canada defines and emphasizes its commitment to the principles and goals of multiculturalism with a series of paragraphs that begin with such words as: “recognize” “promote” “Acknowledge” “ensure” “foster” “preserve”

“share” “advance” “collect” “make use of” “carry on” “facilitate” “assist” “provide support to” etc...

The target of the government is both the federal institutions and the community at large. The terms, some of which are repeated two or three times, make the plans, the course of action, and the intent quite clear. They present a challenge. They outline a vision, an expectation of more dynamic forward-looking society, “even though words may, at times, be contradicted by deeds (like budget restrictions and cuts).

Nevertheless, there is no turning back. Multiculturalism is a *de lure* part of Canada. Presently, the challenge for all Canadians is to transform this government policy, this Canadian ideal enshrined in law into a *de facto* Canadian reality, into a working philosophy, a mode of life, of thinking and of acting. The need for leadership, action and foresight is perhaps greater today than in 1971 when Robert Stanfield urged the government “to give those principles life and meaning”.

The issue of implementation of policy/law at all levels in Canada still presents some difficult problems, due partly to diversity itself, partly to jurisdiction, partly to some persistent apprehensions about the policy (e.g. “programmed cultural ghettonization”). Nevertheless, the means to achieve the goals are not lacking. They are all clearly in place within our society; the three strategic areas are: government, school, and community, acting independently, and especially in coordination and cooperation.

The Federal and provincial governments are generally committed to implement the multiculturalism policy throughout their institutions.

Democratically elected government can also be reminded of their responsibility to provide leadership and, funds to promote the ideals of multiculturalism in all areas of the community. Through cooperation, they can establish an on-going awareness-creating process among all Canadians, especially in key groups such as business and labour, the schools and the media. Their role is to ensure that multiculturalism is expanded from an institutional policy to a general Canadian attitude, from legislation to education.

Education or schooling is, in fact, the second important means by which multiculturalism can be converted from theory to practice, into a general Canadian art of life. In the last few years, various forms of multicultural/intercultural education have been implemented, although not uniformly, throughout Canada, and with many benefits. Some Canadian educators have been elaborating a form of multicultural education that is becoming an ethic principle. Others have shown that this form of multicultural education and the humanities or liberal arts education have common aims. Various multicultural studies programs have been established in various universities. In at least one case, the program consists of an updating of the traditional program based on the study of languages, cultures and civilizations. The interdisciplinary study of these subjects within the Canadian multicultural context provide broader horizons and enhance practical goals.

“Multicultural education”, in the title of a journal, is aptly defined as “the Road to Understanding”.

In its ideal form, it increases the understanding of the interaction and balance of timeless human values and more modern practices and needs, pertaining to an expanding technological society. Thereby, it encourages the development of well-rounded enlightened

individuals in a diverse but harmonious society. The aim is therefore, to make multiculturalism an integral part of the education or school system, from kindergarten to university, from teachers and students to administrators, from classrooms and extracurricular activities to research. Multiculturalism will have to diffuse the entire curriculum and education process, both in and outside the school.

Multiculturalism will, thus, form a bridge: ensure the community of school and societal values, prepare the multicultural citizens of the future.

The third means to transform multicultural policy into dynamic citizenship is the community at large, involving all its infrastructures: from the ethno-cultural communities and clubs to local, provincial/territorial and national multicultural associations (such as the (Thunder Bay Multicultural Association, the Ontario Multiculturalism association- OMAMO, the Canadian Council for Multiculturalism and Intercultural Education – CCMIE, etc.); from the police to professional, recreational and health organizations, and above all the media. All have an important function in making all Canadians at least multicultural aware.

The media, however, have a pivotal role. They are essential links for the three strategies and for the numerous goals of multiculturalism at various

levels. Thereby, the government policy and Act will not simply become admirable monuments, and the commitment superior declarations.

The work in the community structure will not remain isolated; its effects will be channelled to society which may benefit from it.

The training in the schools will be able to fill both spiritual and material goals.

Multicultural education will ensure tangible social rewards. Through scrutiny, debate, challenge and criticism, if needed, multiculturalism will continue to develop, inspire new ideas and perhaps even creative solutions to some of our problems. Multiculturalism itself, continuously channelled through the media, will not remain static, locked in ethno-cultural ghettos, empty rhetoric, matter without force or remaining. The well-informed media will be able to transform it into an all-Canadian spiritual and social force.

The responsibility of the media to multiculturalism and to Canada has been frequently emphasized. A report, quoted also in a 1985 article on the media, argues that the advance of communications technology brings with it a threat to both the various ethnic groups within Canada and to national identity itself. “however”, it points out” the multiculturalism policy of Canada clearly distinguishes us from the melting-pot society of the United States, our main source of assimilation by media (Equality Now). To protect itself, Canada must protect multiculturalism, and the media plays a strategic role in this safekeeping:

“...Multiculturalism and multi-ethnicity compromise an essential feature of Canadian identity. Therefore, the definition of this feature by the media is strategically important in defending our national identity as well as building our national unity” (Equality Now).

Identity, survival and growth of group and nation are issues that concern all Canadians. They depend on a clear understanding of multiculturalism especially by the Canadians mass media. Canadian diversity is not an invention; it is reality statistically demonstrable. It is a diversity based on language – and linguistic diversity includes not just the official languages but the numerous native and heritage languages spoken in Canada; it is also a diversity based on race, religion, culture, national and ethnic origin, as well as on geography.

It is a diversity that can indeed at times be the cause of crises. But it can also be the source of great vitality. No Canadian can afford to deny or ignore this fundamental characteristic of Canada. Multiculturalism is for all Canadians! Not just for the ethnic or immigrants groups.

The expression “multicultural groups” or “multicultural community” used not infrequently, even by the media, to refer to non-English, non-French or non-Native Canadians, is both misleading and divisive. It perpetuates the notion of “us” and “them”. In fact, Canada as a whole, or any area thereof, is definitely “multicultural”.

Each of its different components can be referred to as cultural, ethnic, linguistic, racial or religious group or minority. Each group, large or

small including the English, the French and the Native – falls under one category or another.

In a sense, every Canadian can be said belong to a group or minority, or colloquially “we’re all ethnics”. But together we’re multicultural. We are equally multicultural “universal” human beings.

The media, particularly the media that serve Canada coast to coast, need to view and promote multiculturalism as a unifying force, as a goal for all Canadians.

The acknowledgement of national diversity entails recognition of media diversity: the existence in Canada of media in all languages – official, native, heritage languages. They are all necessary. They help keep alive the languages, cultures, traditions of groups, as essentially parts of Canada. But in order to further enrich the groups and Canada, the media need to have also a clear view of their multiple roles and of Canadian common goals. Therefore, on the one hand, the Canadian public media in the official languages need to become more responsive to the multicultural nature of Canada, and more committed to their acculturation/integration functions; and on the other hand, native and ethnic media cannot serve only as instruments to maintain or strengthen a particular ethnic identification. The common goal is to enhance the other element in the Canadian formula – “unity” of Canada.

Multiculturalism offers also a window on the world. The terms itself is becoming widely used in various countries to describe their particular pluralistic society and their social objectives. The Canadian policy, the first in the world, is often taken as a model, or as a term of fundamental,

if not most influential, global characteristic and concern. Thus to be aware of the Canadian reality – multi-ethnicity and multiculturalism – is to have automatically a world perspective.

The media in Canada, indeed in the world, cannot afford to ignore this pervasive reality. Multiculturalism/multi-ethnicity are clearly becoming the natural and inevitable products the media have to continuously deal with. The multicultural/ethnic mosaic, if not the main message, has to be at least part of the message the medium transmits. The content of the media cannot but be viewed more and more in the light of the multicultural reality, of the ideal of “unity in diversity”, both in Canada and in the world. By increasingly interacting the various functions and a multicultural view, the media may help reduce ethnocentricity or the tendency toward linguistic and cultural fragmentation, locally and nationally. They will, in, fact, contribute to the development of multiculturally sensitive citizens, to nation-building, and truly serve and benefit the communities. As a result, the media themselves, especially the newspapers, may be strengthened, both as a means of communication and as commercial enterprises.

The media can fulfil their many roles and aims by simply participating in the evolvement of multiculturalism into a social and educational philosophy. By their very nature, the media are all pervasive. They also combine and satisfy two basic features of human needs and activity: the practical and the ideal or spiritual. They balance what an ancient Roman writer called “the useful and the agreeable”. As commercial enterprises, they sell a product for profit. As a means of communication, they provide information; their product is knowledge, their goal is also “educating” the public. The two functions need to be equally balanced in

order to continue to offer, as it were, “profitable enjoyment” and “pleasurable education”, and a high standard reasons, more influential, they shape our thoughts and lives; they mould citizens and governments. It has been said that one of the main reasons for the collapse of the ancient Roman Republic, after its territory expanded the city-state, was the lack of newspapers. “The government at Rome could, hardly, communicate with anybody of its citizens elsewhere” in Italy. It was not possible, as it is today, to have a “more or less honest and thorough ventilation of public affairs through the press”.

The media, therefore, are also responsible for the health of democratic governments and organized societies. An interesting comparison emerges. Canada is as vast as was ancient Rome at its furthest expansion. Canada society is (as was ancient Rome) made up of various groups. Unlike ancient Rome, infrastructure the media can reflect and network the diverse groups; not to enhance the diversity but the similarities, the common traits that lead toward a more harmonious unity.

As multiple bonds, the media can interact with various levels of society. They can influence them, while safeguarding their essential characteristics. The intermediary role of media between culture and The Canadian ethnic media, by keeping their particular heritage simultaneously contribute to Canada’s multicultural development.

The Canadian public media safeguard the integrity of the nation by reinforcing the linguistic duality and the cultural and ethnic diversity, that is, multiculturalism.

It is clear that the media hold a key position in the interrelationship of culture, communication and community survival and growth: The media are known to have been used by various groups for a myriad of reasons

related to well-integrated citizenship and cultural assimilation. It has also been argued that the Canadian mass media “can also assist: multicultural groups develop intergroup tolerance by group security”. To do so, one way would be to implement one of the suggestion made to them regarding the expansion and quality of information / content: “This content should ne aimed at developing favourable self-images, and presenting a message of acceptance and the tolerance for Canada’s cultural mosaic. A greater part of their message need to deal with multiculturalism. On the other hand, according to some findings, the ethnic media are clearly committed to both their particular groups and to the multicultural vision of Canada.” The heritage language newspapers are performing an important task in helping heritage language groups retain their ‘ cultural rights ‘ . The information in the heritage language media encourages the three conditions necessary for inter groups tolerance, thus they serve all Canadians.

The ethnic or heritage language media, without any particular mandate, constitute vital links in the Canadian multicultural mosaic.

They are bonds among individuals and groups. They are channels between the group and the host country, and between the latter and the country of origin.

They are the keepers of language, culture, traditions and values which are the base of identity, citizenship and participating in the lager society, because they fulfil these various roles and needs, often generously and spontaneously, the can, in a way, serve as models for other media.

Unfortunately, however, like the communities they serve, they are frequently relegated to secondary status. They do not enjoy the general recognition they often deserve, even among other media. It seems, therefore, that even among the various Canadian media, there is a need

for a medium, a link. The natural link can, of course, be, and is, multiculturalism, if and when will be considered a policy, a program, a philosophy for all Canadians, indeed an ideal for every citizen of the world.

The Humanities and Multicultural Education

Multiculturalism, education, and the humanities: What do they have in common? What role does each one have in the development of the individual, of society, of the global village? How can a state policy – vague, misunderstood, opposed by many, yet hailed as a afar-reaching program – become part if our education system? Why are the humanities under siege, progressively losing their rightful place in our education system? should they have any major role in our modern society? What relationship is there between the humanities and multicultural education? A clear and comprehensive view of the philosophy, programs, and goals of each system will help us determinate their value – at the personal, social, and intellectual level – and to establish, as , well, the degree of relationship that exist among them.

The opposite is also true; a narrow and short-sighted interpretation and application of each system will restrict and distort their potential and foster compartmentalization and confusion at all levels. In this attempt to explore these questions, Walter Temelini (University of Windsor), puts some issues and possible suggestions

Recent studies and developments in the area of multiculturalism have been having some positive and very probably long- lasting effects on our education system; such as the progressive thinking and programs in teacher training, curriculum

1. The new theories as well as practice in multicultural education may very well represent a new beginning, a renewed vigor and in life for the humanities both in Canadian schools from kinder garden to university and in our society as a whole. This may be a unique opportunity to place the humanities on the same often replacing them. This may also be an opportunity to clear the humanities of that unwarranted reputation as mere ornaments, as window dressing, as easy options courses, the first to go in hard times. This may be a unique chance to restore to these subjects their values as integral parts of human and societal growth, as essential to education as well as to multiculturalism.

2. The rapidly evolving Canadian society, and its complex diversity, present a challenge that the humanists may want to share with the social scientists and others. In fact, Temelini ventures to say that the teachers and / or researchers and scholars in this field cannot afford to neglect the challenge if these subjects, the bases of our civilization, are to survive in the age of technology.

Multiculturalism and languages

The centrality of language in human life is thoroughly reflected in the Canadian Multiculturalism documents – in the 1971 Policy Announcement, in the 1982 Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and in the 1988 Multiculturalism Act (and was also characteristic of the 1867 B.N.A. Act.). Some of the recurring themes relating to language or languages (particularly in the 1971 and 1988 documents) include: official linguistic duality and linguistic diversity: the aim to harmonize the equal status of the two official languages; the rights of minority

languages, particularly the languages of the Native Peoples; the need to learn or know well at least one of the official languages, English or French, in order to achieve basic civic participation and fulfilment as well as global competence and vision. Both of our official languages are also world languages. The documents emphasize the material and cultural wealth of all the languages spoken in Canada; they illustrate, above all, the particular relationship among mother tongue, identity, respect and sharing. The multiculturalism policy's vision may not yet be completely reflected in practice; nevertheless the policy is, above all, the official recognition of the demographic reality. The complexity of Canada is a microcosm of the world; consequently living as Canadians helps us to live globally. Multicultural living or citizenship at all levels must start with the full awareness of the diversity in Canada and aim to bridge the gap between the policy (de jure reality) and its practice (de facto reality). Languages should no longer be seen as issues but as fundamental tools and means. Multicultural citizenship includes a socio-educational philosophy or vision closely linked to the traditional, language-based humanities. They have a common aim: to develop informed, thinking, critical and sensitive individuals who are, thereby, able to achieve material and spiritual self-fulfilment in a diverse and harmonious society. Linguistic education and awareness of linguistic diversity (and of different cultures and ways of thinking and doing) are essential in the process of attaining a multicultural-humanistic goal as all forms of human activity hinge on language. The pivotal principle which was already present in the 1971 Announcement closely relates « confidence in one's own individual identity » i.e. language and culture) to « respect » and to « national unity » (or human harmony) and to « willingness to share ». The educational and social setting of Canada and

the world is characterized by diversity, particularly by multiplicity of languages. There are at least 5,000 languages in the world. Multicultural living or citizenship needs to take account of diversity and make suitable provision for it (including the linguistic education of children). Education, however, equally should emphasize our commonalities. Multicultural education in Canadian schools needs to pay attention to the fundamental multicultural nature of the Canadian heritage and identity with appropriate adjustments for local realities and concerns. A good place to start is to respect language, the essence of identity and humanity.

Government Policy

Multiculturalism is first of all a state policy. It was a response to the finding of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, specifically on the Fourth Book: The Cultural Contribution of the Other Ethnic Groups. It was an official recognition of a particular Canadian reality: the substantial presence in Canada of diverse groups, other than native Canadians and Inuit and the two so-called founding peoples, the English and the French; a society composed of different races, creeds, traditions, languages, and cultures. Though officially bilingual, at least in theory if not in fact, Canada had no official culture; it came to be seen as a nation of many cultures, a multicultural nation. This wealth was worth saving, worth developing in order to create, in the long run, a Canadian culture, a civilization, which would be the result of a synthesis of all these cultures.

While recognizing a fact, the policy held out a promise, pointed to a goal, to a social and cultural idea: to a nation as a beautiful work of art, a mosaic, to unity in diversity. It was also the launching of a unique Canadian experiment a comprehensive process. This promise, ideal, and process were clear in Trudeau's speech to the House of Commons on October 8, 1971, when Parliament adopted the policy.

National Unity, if it is to mean anything in the deeply personal sense, must be founded on confidence in one's own personal identity; out of this can grow respect for that of others and willingness to share ideas, attitudes and assumption. A vigorous policy of Multiculturalism will help create this initial confidence. It can form the base of a society which is based on fair play for all.

But, something happened to the policy and the ideal as they rolled down Parliament Hill and across the nation. With little planning and little reflection, the policy gathered layers of meanings, often contradictory, as it moved quickly along the way of implementation. It became entangled in the programmatic world, in the small realities, of the ethno cultural communities and groups. It was stretched and distorted beyond recognition by multicultural operators who in some cases built an industry around this policy. It was becoming for some a multi-headed monster, voracious and threatening. It consequently fell under heavy criticism, as a political policy, an expressive multicultural, the ethnics, as a negative force promoting further cultural ghettoization, retarding the growth of nationalism, impeding attitudes change and intercultural relationships.

The criticism was partly justifiable and healthy for the policy. It helped to steer it on a more philosophical course. It also brought it to the attention of a larger public, including educators. The policy gained the support also of all major political parties and all the provincial parliaments. However vague or badly implemented, the policy mobilized a large section of our population; it helped the ethno-cultural groups become more aware of themselves and their role in Canada. It helped them to shift from the margin of society toward the so-called mainstream. Perhaps because of the confusion surrounding it, multiculturalism began to be discussed at all levels of society. As a result, it was forced to change direction and to grow in scope in the last 12 years. And it is now being related to every sphere of Canadian and human reality and development: individual or psychological and social, economic and political, linguistic and cultural. It has become indeed in

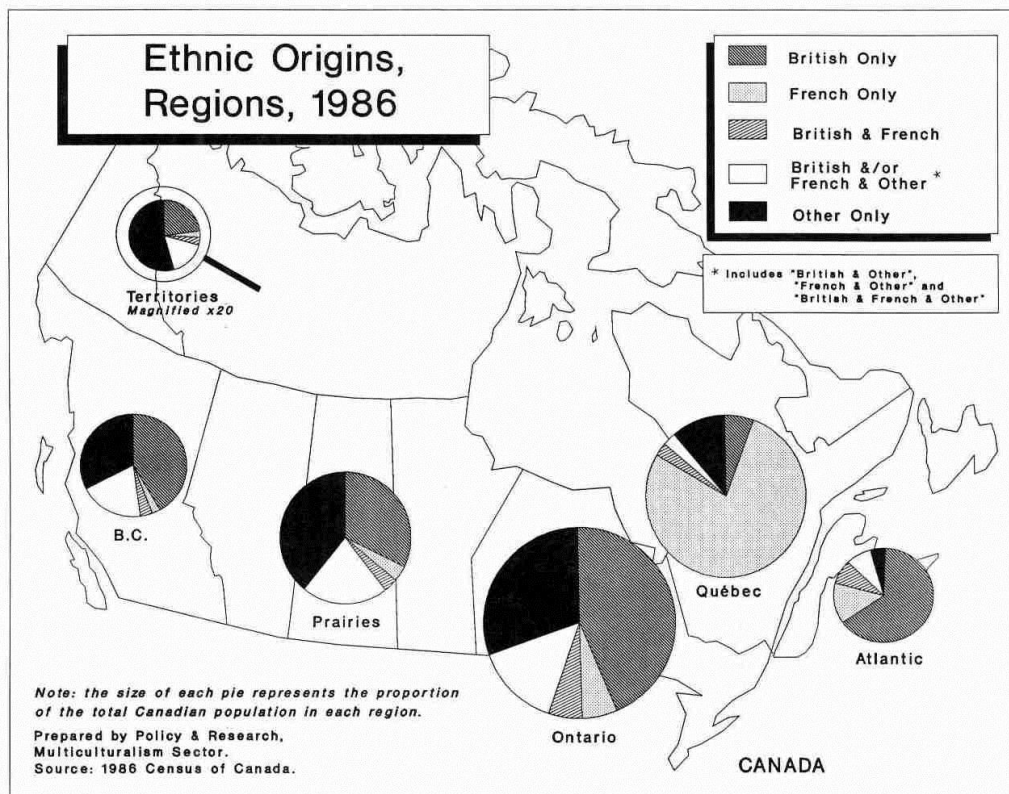
fact in the Canadian society, now entrenched in the Canadian Charter or Rights.

Multiculturalism is here to stay: the process of growth continues: The brochure announcing the recently published book – Multiculturalism in Canada: Social and Educational Perspectives – aptly states:

“Never before has one volume dealt exclusively with multiculturalism and its implications in education and society. And this volume covers multiculturalism comprehensively”.

The 31 chapters do not just relate to ethnic concerns, to minority issues, to the adjustment of immigrants into a new society, in brief to short-term and immediate social or psychological problems. The book deals with the historical and philosophical dimensions of the policy, especially with multicultural education and programs, with cultural diversity and languages, ideologies and multicultural education – all the aspects of man and society. The target is the total development of human being, every phase of his growth.

FACTS AND FIGURES ABOUT OUR DIVERSITY



Multiculturalism as an Educational Philosophy

Multiculturalism from a state is plainly becoming a total education; it is taking on the aspects of a modern philosophy of man. It is indeed pointing to the ideal man; to the classical *vir perfectus*, to the perfect gentleman, to the perfect Court Lady (*Donna di Palazzo*)”, to the Renaissance universal man. The goal of multicultural education is definitely that of creating an aware citizen with a global view of life. One who will believe in and promote an appreciation for cultural diversity, social equality, racial harmony and national cohesiveness, which are basic to a truly free and democratic society.

It is also quite clear that this philosophy and education program coincides almost totally with the program once designed by the classical *Studia humanitatis* (literally, the studies of humanity, or liberal arts). It coincides with the humanistic cultural ideal, which was abandoned as an educational goal in the last few centuries and especially in the last few decades. It is not just the Canadian diversity, this Canadian reality that demands that schools in Canada provide multicultural education. In fact, there would be no need to qualify education with the adjective multicultural, or to reinvent a system if the one that we had, had not been stripped of its human goals.

Education, the type we have been imparting in the last few decades, has had to undergo the same misfortunes, pressures, and distortions that multiculturalism expressed in the early stages. It responded to popular needs and to those of the market place. It began to

emphasize the short-term utilitarian goals. It stressed over-specialization, development of skills for immediate problem-solving.

The mechanical training was put before the spiritual development.

Even the definition in most English language dictionaries puts the educational training aspect before the more traditional meaning of educational which stressed the philosophical, thinking, evaluating or good breeding (Educazione). A further example of this is the debate over the core curriculum or the attitudes of some educators and administrators toward the teaching of literature courses in High Schools. The hodge-podge, overlapping repetitious curriculum and mechanical training could not be adequate for modern man in a complex technological society, especially in a society such as Canada.

Other factors made apparent the inadequacy of this type of watered-down education: the faltering industrial society, the intimidation of big-brother government and big corporations, the high degree of suicides among the young, crimes, drugs, lack of jobs, fear of a nuclear holocaust have engendered a general dissatisfaction about our education system.

The increasing inability to cope with the complexities and the danger of modern life demanded a new approach. Legislation cannot solve education for life as well as for jobs. This search began especially under social pressure, under the fear of a social breakdown due to the increasing racial tensions. Whatever the reasons, social political or cultural, there was a need to built a more just, a more civilized man and society, based on tolerance, equality and fair play: The policy of multiculturalism was an answer to this need.

The recent further development of the policy has influenced our education system in such a way that it has brought it closer to the

program once and still envisaged by the humanities. It really does not matter what it is called: multicultural education, intercultural education, multiculturalism in education, or humanistic education, or liberal arts education: the impact it will have be immeasurable. What is important is that the goals, the strategies and the philosophy are fundamentally the same.

Humanistic Education

Up to this point the policy has been mainly developed by the social scientists. But the humanities can draw support from this experience and development. We may not altogether agree with their initial programs, based on packages or kits for specific groups or events. It is their new definition of multicultural education that humanists must look at.

Multicultural education is preparation for the social, political, and economic realities that individuals experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters.

These realities have both national and international dimensions. This preparation provides a process by which an individual develops competencies for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving in different cultural settings.

This definition could have easily come from a book on the Philosophy of Education, or classical education. It reminds the Introduction in the book by Eugenio Garin, *Educazione umanistica in Italia*:

What is characteristic of the spirit of the whole Humanistic education is the need for the formation of the integral man, a good citizen and, if necessary, a good soldier, but altogether a learned man, a man of taste, who knows how to enjoy beauty and to relish life; one who knows how draw from the world all that the world can offer him. A deeper knowledge makes him master of things so that he may enjoy them; a serene religious vision gives him sense of his human limitations,

and while it opens to him the path of hope, it determines within this limit his earthly mission.

The importance lies in the similarities of two programs. Therefore humanistic education today receives strength and viability from the research of the social scientists. Multicultural education restates in a new context and makes relevant the basic principles and goals of the classical- humanistic tradition: the Petrarch ideal of *Eloquentia Sapientia*; The theme of civic humanism, the goals of culture and learning in society; Croce's distinction between *conoscenze* and *conoscenza* restated by Karl Vossler as knowledge of facts is only a means and a way to understanding or wisdom.

It coincides perfectly with the humanistic views of true culture, of civilized man, of civilized society, still and above all valid today and still enunciated and proclaimed in the most disparate publications here are three random examples of the definition of culture:

1. "Culture is not adeptness in performing or admiring the arts. It is the superiority of our thought, our enjoyment of beauty, our efforts to raise ourselves and others to a higher levels; it implies openness of mind, objectiveness of attitude, a sensitive appreciation of human values, and development of the potentialities all of us have. To expand in this way is to grow up, to become mature.

2. "...culture must be made to bear on the integral perfection of the human person, and on the good of the community and the whole society. Therefore the human spirit must be cultivated in such a way that all there results a growth in the ability to wonder, to understand, to contemplate,

to make personal judgments, and to immediately form man's spiritual and social nature, culture has constant need of a just freedom if it is to develop...also needs the legitimate possibility of exercising its independence according to its own principles... It demands respect and enjoys a certain inviolability, at least as long as the rights of the individual community, whether particular or universal, are preserved within the context of the common good.

3. “(He) speaks of the need of a general culture which, as the classical Paideia, would concern itself with the total and genuinely human development of the human being... an open culture... which does not enclose man within a closed, circumscribed sphere of ideas and beliefs. A learned (cultured) man is a man with an open free mind... able to understand the ideas and the beliefs of other even when he cannot accept them, or recognize their validity... This man will have sufficient mental elasticity to accept the necessary changes required by a world which is rapidly evolving: in typical of scientific research, jealous of his freedom, he will make his historical, philosophical and religious heritage. He will know how to love, mediate and pursue humbly the truth...reject the mercantilistic philosophy of success to learn to leave room for a sense of his existence; leaving room also for feelings and not give himself to the mere cult of the intellect and of efficiency. Learning, everything. When we say culture, we think above all of a cultivation of the mind stressing the potential of love and sound judgment.

There similar views originating from three different target groups. The first is taken from *A Conspectus of Canada*, published by The Royal Bank of Canada, to mark the One Hundredth Anniversary of Canadian

Confederation; the second is from *Gaudium et Spes*: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Vat II quoted in the Assumption University Brochure announcing the lectures in the 1980 Christian Culture Series. The third definition derives from a brief article on culture published in an Italian journal of primary education. (*La vita scolastica: rassegna quindicinale dell' istruzione primaria*). Two things here are quite clear:

1. The individual, social, intellectual goals of culture are the same as those now proclaimed, developed and more and more applied in multicultural education. Multiculturalism is a new name for humanistic education.
2. The views seem to be quite widespread, generally accepted.

What are the Problems?

The first problem, quite well known to us, is fragmentation, compartmentalization of the integral body of knowledge and consequently of education. Second, there seems to be a widening gap, even a distrust, if not resentment, between humanists and social scientists, and scientists in general. The traditional views of culture, of humanistic education, are indeed quite widespread and known, as we have seen, but not applied in the right contemporary context, they are not, as it were, in the mainstream. They are embellishments". The humanities, "writes William L. Bennett, Chairman of the American National Endowment for the Humanities, " are frequently trotted out provide an aura of intellectual authority for a position already decided". Of course, some prefer it that way and use this argument to keep the humanities out of public life just to avoid that they ne used in this manner. In that case there is no argument in favour of a valid role of the humanities in contemporary life. Yet everyone, except the humanistic is saving and applying in the schools and the community what has been traditionally the message and the programs of humanism, at least of a certain type of humanism that did not stop at studying text as an end in itself.

We would like the point out that the humanists and humanities have been shut up for too long in Academia, buried in rare book rooms, and their valid research in scholarly journals. Teachers of languages have been found to became experts in imparting linguistic skills for tourists or perspective businessmen. Civilization courses have been reduced to slide shows and music appreciation sessions. Literature has been often turned into an esoteric exercise

for highly qualified technicians. The real scope and human message of these courses have been either forgotten or left simply for scholarly conferences, for other experts. Thus, as Garin points out, instead of seeing in human letters an ideal for a new growth, knowledge of literature or “ literary formation becomes corrupt and degenerates in the celebration of the rhetorical ornate...”

This practice has caused the humanities to lose their credibility and role in the education of the integral man and in the community. The humanist’s aloofness from public, his withdrawal, in part due to the socio-political climate, his disdain for the marketplace, his fear of the threats from new, more popular fields have increased this dislocation.

In spite of the pressures – social and financial – there is still a great deal of disagreement and uncertainty over extent and nature of the relevance of the humanities to public life and over what, if any political role, broadly understood, the humanities should play. The most recent debate on this issue has been published in the *Report from the Centre for Philosophy and Public Life*. Both views agree that the humanities should have a role. It’s question of degree of involvement. Bennett writes:

We in the humanities can maintain and strengthen the civilized frameworks for public policy, not by dragging the humanities kicking and screaming into every political debate, but by doing excellent work in the subjects of the humanities themselves. All considered and for our purpose, Douglas MacLean’s answer to Bennett seems more appropriate today. If we lived in an ideal society, where all educated citizens learned and studied values by being cultivated in the humanities, then those who make their living as teachers in these areas might have less of public role to play. I agree thoroughly with Bennett in urging humanities to attend to their primary task of ‘ the cultivation of educated men and women’ as

bringing us closer to such a world. But until that ideal is attained, teachers and scholars of the humanities have a larger role to play as well, in educating not only their students, but their public servants, their politicians, their economists. The goal of the humanities is indeed to educate, but education is an ongoing process. Even – and perhaps especially – the experts need to be educated.

In Canada today, the development and indeed the survival of the humanities hinges on this awareness of their role in society, especially in a multicultural nation. Today, the humanities are in a “perilous state”, just as they were 40 years ago, when Prof. Watson Kinkconnell submitted a memorandum to this effect to the founding meeting of the Humanities Research Council of Canada (HRCC), the forerunner of the Canadian

Federation for the Humanities (CFH). The 1981- 82 President of this federation, Dr. John Woods, recently expressed the same concern:

The last years clearly illustrated how the humanities in Canada lie vulnerable to potential damage on a large scale; together with the Federation, Canadian humanists face more serious challenge than they have known in several years. The dangers, the threats are very real:

For example, the serious reduction in constant dollars of funding for universities, where the great part of humanities research is carried out; the stalling of the difficult federal – provincial negotiation regarding Established Programs Financing; and the escalation of federal intervention in research programs: all these elements have inevitably led to a foul perception of the humanities by non-humanists.

In response to the question of relevance and the “Challenge of Utilitarianism”, Dr. Woods states:

The humanities already play an important utilitarian role in the education process as well as in the advancement of scholarship and knowledge: There is perhaps no perversity in believing that institutional and financial support for the humanities should be proportional to their immediate utility and relevance to the job market. But such intellectual myopia is totally unacceptable. It is indeed timely that we become alert, writes dr. Woods “to the underlying dangers of such a short- sighted philosophy. True as these dangers are for the inhumanities, they are also true for the country.

The 1982-83 President of the Federation, Roseann Runte, in her message speaks of the “CFH under attack”.

There seems to be a general siege, from inside and outside: The SSHRC is threatening the existence for many years, and of the Federation itself. It is not surprising since, until recently, there were no representatives from the humanities on the SSHRC Academic Council.

The humanities are under attack from the government, the media, and the public at large. Government policies based mainly on immediate needs, both political and economic, are diverting funds to the so-called strategic areas and to Canadian Studies Programs.

Funds for independent research in the humanities will continue to decrease: The media are generally not aware of the dire long-term consequences of this development. The public in general is more of new trends developed for them by other schools for the labour market and not centres for the development and formation of the total human being. The humanist’s task is to oppose this growing trend among politicians, media and public, change attitudes or misconceptions regarding the role of the universities, of the humanities in Canada life.

The Humanities Link with Multiculturalism

The perilous state of the humanities is directly related to the development of the policy of multiculturalism. First, the humanities are being threatened and squeezed out at a moment when they seem to be most relevant and most needed, at a moment when multicultural education is being developed, encouraged, and financially supported at all levels. There is an evident contradiction in the ever-increasing funding for multiculturalism, especially for multiculturalism in education (i.e. Heritage Languages, Cultural Enrichment Programs, Multicultural journals, and Conferences). The same government that promote multiculturalism, those same ministers that make up the Cabinet Social Development Committee that approves millions of dollars for Canadian Studies and Strategic Areas Programs for multicultural education are undermining the humanities. This is happening not because the humanities are more irrelevant today but because the humanists have not been sensitized to this issue, to the relationship between the humanities and multicultural education. This type of multiculturalism could become an *Instrument for the Growth of the Humanities* in Canada. The key word in this often misunderstood and misinterpreted word and policy is *culture*. In the last 11 years, many organizations that sprang up across the land to implement this policy put an undue emphasis on Folk Arts (dances, songs, festivals, foods, costumes), and later, on ethnic histories. More recently, Provincial and Territorial Multicultural Association (such as the Ontario Multicultural Association, OMAMO) have been formed to develop what has become now central to this policy – Education. The Provincial and Territorial Multicultural Association

have established a National Council for Multicultural and Intercultural Education (CCMIE) composed of 12 delegates appointed if this Council is to develop an educational system – teachers, text, curriculum-that will reflect Canada’s pluralistic society – socially and culturally.

Above all this objective is to promote a global view of life in every Canadian citizen of whatever origin. This type of multiculturalism promotes that type of learning, those values, that the humanities (poets, philosophers, thinkers, men of letters) have been writing about for the last two- three thousand years: a universal view of life based on knowledge of languages, literatures, cultures, philosophy as well as history, religions, etc., respect for all human beings of every race, colour, and creed (human right and race relations), civic virtues, civilism, or citizenship. There seems to be an inextricable link between the humanities and multiculturalism in education. Multiculturalism – as a policy and as program for Canada – cannot be simply the concern of the social sciences.

The humanists and play a dynamic role in the development of this policy in Canada. They ca take advantage of the newly formed organization to inform the public about the role of the humanities in the development of Canada.

The future

The humanities need a new manifesto. Perhaps, in this age of multiculturalism and of impending nuclear and ecological doom, it would be wise to reread and implement the ideas of Professor Woodhouse and Kinkconnell in their work. *The Humanities in Canada*, written in the year leading to the cold war. In it they defined the pre-eminent national and international task as the replacement of ignorance and brutality by knowledge, perception, taste, and morality. In a word which has become small, the authors noted the need for an intimate knowledge of different peoples and civilizations not only for the sake of mutual survival but also for the enrichment of cultural values. Their manifesto concluded with an exhortation to humanists to play simultaneously the roles of teachers, philosophers, researchers, and artists.

In his 1948 pamphlet, *Liberal Education in the Canadian Democracy*, Watson Kinconnell presented the survival of liberal democracy as dependent on university-level liberal education. Kinconnell felt that the Canadian democracy could only withstand the onslaught of what he called totalitarianism, and invitations to middle conformity, by the full development of individual potential, and he insisted that only liberal education could ensure the political maturity and cultural awakening indispensable to an educated citizenry able to assume its rights and duties within society. These words seem to have more urgency today. They are describing the world of today, the Canada of the late twentieth century. It seems clear that multiculturalism and multicultural education are offering the humanities the avenue and finances to channel the humanities back into a meaningful context – both

social and educational. Within the context of multicultural education we can do in Canada what the President of Yale University has recently described in the *Yale Alumni Magazine and Journal*: (in order to develop a strong humanities curriculum), I am finally thinking of humanities programs – of placing, again, a language that has or will have a hard time by itself, alone, in the context of the philosophy and history and literature and art history of that language...He argues for department structures that might then be able to explore those ways of affiliating with, and thus supporting and drawing support from, the social sciences... “Let the curriculum follow the mind not restrain it”. Humanists in Canada have to start thinking in these terms also. The new structure would not only benefit the humanities but also education and, through multiculturalism, society itself. The humanities in these terms can become along with the social sciences the underlying, the unifying force of multicultural education programs.

It is quite clear that this policy and particular multicultural education is clamouring for the participation, involvement, and commitment of the humanities as citizens, as teachers, as professional scholars. We must above all become involved if we truly believe in the humanistic view of culture:

“ la cultura non deve isolarci; il nostro posto è tra gli uomini, alla nostra attività, qualunque essa sia deve concentrarsi sempre in un rapporto umano”.

Culture must not isolate us, our place is in society, our activity, whatever it may be, must find concrete expression always within a human interaction”.

For a brief span of time, this ideal remained alive in society and engendered the Renaissance man. With the crisis of Italian political

liberties at the end of the fifteenth century, the humanistic program of education progressively failed. Now almost five centuries later, it can re-emerge and have a fundamental role to play in developing the multicultural man- the synthesis of all best aspects of our culture and of our technology. The main ideal of multicultural education coincides perfectly with humanistic education.

CONCLUSION:

Cultivating Multicultural Virtues

A careful examination of the historical context in which the world was first employed sheds lights on the civic humanistic sense in which the concept was originally used.

This approach should open our eyes to see in which way Multiculturalism became what Tully calls a “Constitutive Good” and a “Civic Attitude”, **NOTE.** this non-juridical perspective was articulated by the Canadian Parliamentary debates that established The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism as well as political movement for multiculturalism that emerged in response to the commission’s mandate, reports and recommendations. Multiculturalism is neither simply a rule of law nor derivative of the languages of rights liberalism; thus, the concept cannot be properly understood if it is reduced to this idiom. In this sense, whether the other culture is in the minority or majority is irrelevant because multiculturalism is not exclusively a procedure for according group differentiated minority rights. It is also a virtue in the sense of being an ongoing practise of understanding that in acquired in dialogue and shapes our characters and makes us become better citizens.

Canada’s journey to multiculturalism originated in the context of a national unity crises rooted in our linguistic and cultural duality and its contested definitions of citizenship. The Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism.

What's significant is that this new self-understanding was constituted in dialogue rather than in theory and promoted as a desirable and qualitatively superior form of civic life. In adopting the 1971 Multiculturalism policy, the Federal Government implicitly recognized that it could not remain neutral concerning the virtue of multiculturalism. The aim of the policy was to promote a new way of life presupposing this comprehensive conception of the Good. It was in 1982, eighteen years after Yuzyk's speech, and eleven years after the adoption of the policy, that Multiculturalism was entrenched in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedom.

The civic humanism offers important lessons on how to promote enduring political unity and social stability in a culturally plural state. Education itself is of primary significance in a multicultural society. Civic humanists promote education not only as the essence of virtue (the attainment of the highest human excellence) but also as the foundation of civic life and common good. This humanistic philosophy of education is very significant because it suggests that cultural recognition is "not only a matter of according rights and adjusting certain grievances" (as Stanley Knowles said), but also an attitude that needs to be cultivated and a practise that trains us to value what is both similar and different in others.

Canada in specific has built a country they love, free of much of the violence and oppression that plague many other countries. That is why so many people want to make Canada their home and also the reason why Canada is respected internationally. But Canada has its own problems, including racial tension in some cities, and barriers that still prevent some Canadians from participating fully in society.

These problems can and must be overcome. Multiculturalism and Citizenship Canada is committed to helping all Canadians break down barriers and share in building Canada's future as equal partners.

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