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Culture or Identity?

Addressing ethnicity in Canadian education

Must recognition in schools of the ethnic pluralism of Canada involve exclaiming at each other's quaintness of custom and a good deal of performing of peculiar dances in rather too colourful costumes? The amount of embarrassment created by this kind of approach can only be equalled by its futility. Buchignani carefully teases out the differences between this cultural approach to recognising ethnicity — establishing what people do — and the approach to their identity — recognising what they think they are. The latter promises a genuine breakthrough to the achievement of a new national myth: a sense of Canadian identity that will be built on the realities of immigrant history and intention and will replace the absurd official historical image of a country occupied exclusively by Britons and Frenchmen. How schools may do this, and how in fact they do not, he illustrates at every step in terms that practising teachers and administrators will instantly recognise as making sense.

Concern over the way in which the schools have addressed ethnicity has grown steadily over the past decade.¹ From across the country has come the charge that ethnicity has been only marginally incorporated into the school curricula.² At the same time it has been recognized that the schools have historically done little to teach interethnic tolerance, to support non-official language training, or to provide instruction about the ethnocultural heritages of students.

Both in response to these critiques and in their formulation an increasing amount of thought, effort, and money is now being devoted to defining and establishing the place of ethnicity in Canadian classrooms. Explicit policy statements on ethnicity have been generated in more progressive (or more pressured) school districts, some of which have had substantial practical effects. The accomplishments of Canadians of various ethnicities are finally being writ-

ten into social science textbooks, special instruction for immigrant children has become somewhat more enlightened, and a few schools have begun to allow their facilities to be used to teach children the languages and cultures of their ethnic heritages.³ All of these are quite positive steps, especially in relation to the past.

Nevertheless, an extensive search of the Canadian literature on ethnicity and education has convinced me that despite rising interest in the subject there exists a great deal of fundamental uncertainty about just exactly how ethnicity should articulate with the educational process. In particular, there seems to be little consensus on the answers to basic questions like “for what purpose,” “why,” and “for whom?”⁴

This led me to the principal theme of this paper. It seems to me that it is impossible for administrators and teachers to generate and sustain really effective programs in this area without having a practical and forward looking philosophy of Canadian ethnicity firmly in hand. Presumably, such a philosophy cannot be constructed out of thin air, but rather should reflect a number of basic empirical considerations: the structure of ethnicity in Canada, basic societal constraints on its expression, the support of basic human rights, the practical demands placed on education, and the ideological objectives of Canadian society (among others).

Each of these areas in itself is a difficult thing to clarify, even if one were free from the further requirement that such a clarification be formed in such a way as to be relevant to education. Therefore, what I would like to consider here is only one aspect of this ambitious program: clarification of the concept of ethnicity as it is applied to Canadian ethnic diversity and as it is used in constructing ideologies of Canadianness.

Such a broad concept of ethnicity is partially philosophical in itself, in the sense that it relates to a vital area of human activity and as such should be constructed in such a way as to reflect philosophical ideas about people's behaviour generally. Moreover, such a concept operates on those who hold it, as a way of seeing part of the world around them; once formulated, it provides the basis for action consistent with it. In this respect, ethnicity is as much an ideology as it is a sociological concept.

What I find problematical about the use of the concept in the schools is that the way in which it is used seems to be destructive of well-intentioned programs built upon it. Presumably, such a concept-in-use should reflect the ethnic reality of Canadian society and should provide a firm basis for the integration of that ethnicity into a national Canadian identity. Unfortunately, as it stands it does not. Moreover, I suggest that the primary weakness of this ideology of ethnicity is that it emphasizes ethnic *culture* and cultural diversity rather than ethnic

identity and identification. The explication of this assertion and an outline of its consequences for education make up the complement of this paper.

The first section addresses the empirical question of whether a concept of ethnicity based on culture reflects the prevalence of cultural pluralism in Canada; I argue that it does not, for a number of factors severely constrain the expression of cultural difference in the Canadian context. The second part provides several reasons why the relative cultural uniformity of Canadian society should *not* lead one to infer that ethnicity is not a vital aspect of everyday life. Rather, it makes the claim that Canadian ethnicity is best looked at as ethnic identity, for such an approach is better in accord with reality and furthermore allows ethnicity to be incorporated more easily into the national myth. My third section presents some direct consequences for education of an approach to Canadian ethnicity based on identity rather than culture.

Cultural pluralism in Canada

It has been frequently claimed that Canada is noteworthy because of the extensive prevalence of cultural pluralism within it; one hears this from academics, politicians, and ethnic spokesmen; every year one is subjected to the thesis *ad nauseam* during Canada Day. Many of these claims have been made uncritically, without thinking them out clearly. Others have been made in a far too ethnocentric fashion, for they fail to address the comparative question: plural as compared to what? Many of the rest have been generated by individuals who are using pluralism as a political ideology, notably to differentiate Canada from the United States and to validate the place of ethnic groups in Canadian society.

All this aside, it is the case that to many Canadians (particularly old-guard Anglo Canadians) Canada certainly *feels* plural. But is it? Let me define cultural pluralism in the following way:

Societies are pluralistic insofar as they are segmented into corporate groups that frequently, though not necessarily, have different cultures or subcultures; and insofar as their social structure is compartmentalized into analogous parallel, noncomplementary, but distinguishable sets of institutions.³ Cultural pluralism is that variety of pluralism which stems from the tendencies of ethnic or regional groups to generate parallel institutions reflective of their cultural heritage.

Few social scientists would have any fundamental objections to this definition. By such criteria, Canada is not a particularly plural country, at least by world standards. The obvious exception to this statement is naturally the major division between anglophones and francophones, which is an example of substantial cultural pluralism. However, this fundamental division in Canadian society *per se* tells one very little about the prevalence of *ethnic* pluralism, despite the cons-

tant use of these primary groups in analogy with ethnic groups. This is because the anglophone-francophone dichotomy is a sub-national rather than an ethnic division. Each major "group" has all the basic ingredients for autonomous cultural persistence: charter rights, a geographical locus, an economic base, coercive devices to insure cultural conformity, institutions to insure ideological conformity, and a dominant public language.

By and large, today's Canadian ethnic groups have none of these resources for cultural persistence to any noteworthy degree. Consequently, among these groups the expression of cultural difference in the *behavioral* sense of creating parallel institutions has been severely restricted, with a few obvious exceptions like the Hutterites. Both in anglophone and francophone Canada ethnic groups are minority groups in the true sense of the term, and as such their major public expressions of cultural pluralism have been achieved firmly in the context of majority socioeconomic organization: the establishment of stores catering to ethnic clientele, extensive use of ethnic brokers and middlemen, the maintenance of ethnic social networks, and the support of ethnic language media, religious institutions, and formal organizations. The great reservoirs of behavioral cultural pluralism in Canada remain the home, family, and friends.

Unequal power relations are by no means the only constraints on cultural diversity in Canada, and indeed in the long run they are probably not the most restrictive. At least equally destructive of cultural pluralism is the structure of the industrialized nation state itself, especially its tendency towards rationalization. As the Canadian economy has rationalized it has relentlessly destroyed ethnic-based economic isolates: farming communities, economic entrepreneurship aimed at the ethnic community, ethnic dominance in certain occupations, and ethnic underclasses. The standardizations in education and the media have similarly limited the range of cultural difference by propagating a bland homogeneous repertoire of socially approved values, beliefs, and behaviours; in this, the unification of language, format, and content in national institutional systems has also had a hand.

In Canada as elsewhere these combined forces constantly present these individuals who wish to express their ethnic culture with a decidedly poor choice: either conform to majority practice and lose valued aspects of one's heritage; or continue one's traditional ways and pay the penalty of diminished socioeconomic success. At present, few are willing to take the second option. This tendency towards what might be termed "public" or "integrative" assimilation is so strong that it is far more reasonable to support the thesis opposite to cultural pluralism: that ethnic culture in Canada is primarily class culture, except in the home and in ethnic social networks. This assertion is slowly gaining support, as indicated by the following quotes:

What is the culture of immigrant labour? Hard work, long hours, poor pay, a lot of children, a lot of illness, and premature old age, all of which constitutes a typical working class fate. The language of that experience is incidental.⁶

... the difference between an Italian, an East Indian, both newcomers, and a native Indian, all working for low pay at a lousy job with poor access to facilities and services, is much less than the difference between these three people and the owner of a large corporation or a financial institution.⁷

Many cultures or many identities?

In short, there cannot really be a Canadian multi-culturalism, strictly speaking; substantial cultural pluralism in public life cannot be maintained by members of ethnic groups without incurring liabilities which most individuals do not wish to accept. Moreover, it is not difficult to see that if it were to exist, extensive cultural pluralism would be dysfunctional to Canadian unity, for it would create barriers to ethnic participation in the larger society; the worldwide experience of cultural pluralism indicates that in its more substantial forms pluralism and inequality are closely linked.⁸

There are therefore strong empirical reasons for deemphasizing the cultural component of the concept of ethnicity. Using such a culture oriented concept, ethnicity becomes something marginal to Canadian society — a thing that has lost its battle for existence and, thus defeated, has withdrawn into the private sphere. Such a concept does not help us to understand very much. Besides, it is not in accord with the reality of ethnicity.

An acknowledgement that Canada is not and cannot be a highly plural society should not lead one to the nearly universal error of earlier sociologists, who believed that the ultimate fate of ethnic groups in industrial society would be total assimilation and amalgamation with the majority. Again, I believe these misconceptions arose primarily from an uncritical association of ethnicity with culture, particularly material culture: ethnic culture was what one *did*. Both history and more recent theoretical work (done largely by anthropologists) have invalidated such a perspective by demonstrating the primary importance of the ideological component of ethnicity.⁹ In this newer perspective, ethnicity is first of all what people think they *are*: an identity based upon a recognition that they share a certain heritage with others.

Although it is not within the bounds of this paper to discuss the nuances of this perspective on ethnicity, it is relatively easy to show that its use has immediate consequences for understanding ethnicity in Canada, and that some of these consequences are of direct relevance to the educational system. First of all, the use of ethnicity as identity rather than culture salvages the place of ethnicity in Canadian society. This is because innumerable studies have now clearly shown that material culture (what one does) and ethnic identity (an aspect of

who one is) are almost completely separable entities. Ethnic identity is a very resilient thing, and can persist despite radical changes in culture; to claim that Canada is not particularly plural in a cultural sense says very little about the prevalence of pluralism in the identity sense. Indeed, despite relative cultural uniformity a broad diversity of ethnic identities flourishes in Canada.

Perhaps what I mean by this separation between identity and culture can best be demonstrated by a hypothetical example. Consider, for instance, a Serbian from Yugoslavia who immigrates with his family and gets a job in Toronto. He and his family are instantaneously dropped into a socioeconomic context (read: *culture*) that is different from what they experienced in Yugoslavia. They may not act very differently at home, but they certainly must do so elsewhere. Nevertheless, because they have had to suppress, say, half of their Serbian ways of doing things in a few months' time does not mean that they are then only 50% Serbian. The change in culture may question their identity and force them to make alterations in it, but its demise is hardly automatic.

In addition to being more in accord with the facts, an identity orientation towards ethnicity also generates a more optimistic theoretical framework for integrating the relationship between ethnicity and ideologies of Canadianness. As mentioned, it has been frequently charged that the persistence of ethnicity is disfunctional to Canadian unity and to the creation of a strong Canadian identity (both of which are supposed to be fostered by the schools). If one considers ethnicity to be an expression of cultural difference this may well be true, at least to a certain degree. It is only reasonable that individuals who differ among themselves in basic values and behaviours face more fundamental problems of communication and association when they come together than if such differences did not exist. Identity differences need not lead to similar problems, for identities need not be oppositional and indeed, can be complementary. Ethnic identity is not always in the forefront of people's minds. Its use is contextually specific, and ethnicity is only one of many identities that a single person may have at the same time.

As such, ethnic identity and a Canadian identity are not necessarily exclusive of each other. Given that each is constructed in such a way as to not deny the other, both can be fostered at the same times; such additivity does not exist between ethnic culture and Canadian culture.

Ethnicity and education for Immigrant children

Much of the foregoing discussion may seem to those actually involved in education as something of an elaborate play on words. What possible implications could an accentuation of ethnicity as identity have for solving the practical problems which educators face in the schools? This can be easily demonstrated, given that one first considers the variety of demands which ethnicity places on primary and secondary education.

For a long time the schools did not think it appropriate to foster ethnicity, and their practical role was largely restricted to assimilating immigrants and other "ethnic" children to majority practice. The process was brutal and direct, and worked well enough in providing children with an entry into Canadian formal education. At the same time, it was frequently decimating to the self-concept of children involved, and their inability to perform to "Canadian" expectations instantaneously often led to their stigmatization by others. Such psychological and social aspects of ethnicity were rarely considered. Indeed, the curriculum, being British-oriented, taught *all* children to be cultural schizophrenics, detached as it was from their own everyday experience as Canadians.

Today's schools are faced with an extremely wide array of goals and demands relating to ethnicity. Teachers now feel the need to pay more attention to the social and psychological integration of immigrant children. The federal Multicultural program and the concomitant rise of Canadian studies have required educators to reevaluate the place of ethnicity within many aspects of the curriculum. On top of these is frequently added pressure from ethnic interest groups for the schools to address the specific linguistic and cultural needs of their particular communities. This complex set of forces in motion operates in an enormous variety of school situations, and hence can only be addressed here at a fairly general level. Still, there are a number of places within these three broad areas where a change of emphasis in what constitutes ethnicity can have decided effects.

Consider the needs of immigrant children. Clearly, the meeting of their specifically educational needs must take first priority, for if this is not accomplished the ethnic backgrounds of these children will be transformed into long-term class liabilities. Although far more attention is now being devoted to programs for assisting immigrant children in achieving the same level of linguistic and academic competence as other children, the widely differing school performances of children from different national backgrounds testifies to a success that is incomplete.

It would seem that the schools have done less well in incorporating immigrant children socially and psychologically. Initial linguistic barriers and a lack of familiarity with the school setting often push children toward ethnic social exclusivity and the tendency is frequently magnified by peer intolerance. Such ethnic encapsulation can last for life if left unaddressed.

I believe that teachers far too commonly explain these problems in cultural terms; the explanation is not justified by the facts. To be sure, school situations around the world are not everywhere the same: North American education is much more interactive, more verbally oriented, and less formal than it is elsewhere, and the changeover to these conditions is not always easy. But this sort of cultural argument simply won't do as an explanation for why immigrant students often associate socially with "their own kind." Rather, this is an identi-

ty question, explainable only with reference to both minority *and* majority children. Culture doesn't cause social cleavages, identity differences do. Majority group children refuse to extend their notions of who constitutes "us" to include immigrant children. Sensing this, the latter fall back on their ethnic identity as a rationale for associating with others of the same ethnic origin — many of whom they would not commonly associate with in a less polarized situation.

Incorporation and identity: teacher's solutions

What can be done? Obviously, anything that restricts inter-ethnic communication increases the likelihood of minority group isolation and stigmatization. A logical conclusion to draw from this is that everything possible should be done so that immigrant children quickly achieve a mastery of the relevant national language. I believe this is so crucial that the establishment of short-term curricula for new immigrants which concentrate *solely* on decreasing language difficulties would have benefits that far outweigh what little these same children would learn in normal classes during their first few months in Canada.

Secondly, if divergent identities are at the heart of the problem teachers must be willing to address the fact, and manipulate these identities in such a way as to provoke mutual *identification* between minority group children and others. To date, this has been chiefly done by teachers operating in a cultural mode, by teaching about the "cultures of immigrants." My own experience with introductory social anthropology courses has been that this approach to intergroup tolerance is fraught with difficulties, especially when teachers cannot be expected to have the in-depth knowledge of other cultures necessary to pull it off. I have found it virtually impossible to teach about the diversity of cultures *per se* without emphasizing *differences* in the minds of students; teach the diversity of cultures uncritically and one fosters prejudice rather than eliminates it.

Besides, of what relevance is this exercise of teaching the "cultures of immigrants"? As commonly taught, "cultures of immigrants" usually refers to a few inaccurate, traditional ideas about the source countries of immigrants. Such traditional (usually historical) cultures are in no way reflective of the goals or experiences of today's immigrant child in Canada.¹⁰ For example, teachers with a bit of social conscience who wish to create a degree of understanding among majority group students of their ethnically Chinese peers tend to think in terms of material on stereotyped, traditional Chinese rural villages which exist only in the minds of textbook writers. The contemporary immigrant child from super-urban Hong Kong will know little more about such things than his or her Canadian-born peers.

It would be far more reasonable if teachers would disregard this fascination with culture and concentrate instead on the rationality and universality of people's thoughts and actions as they make their way *here*, in Canada. Accentuate

the thought- and decision-making process of immigrant individuals. Teach immigration as a rite of passage which both today's immigrants and the ancestors of virtually all others have had to go through. I would suggest that this could be best done by concentrating upon extremely personal accounts like biographies and autobiographies, all of them of people's life in Canada. Teachers should keep asking students the most ethnocentrism-reducing question of them all: "What would *you* do in such a situation?" Moreover, bring distinguished members of various ethnic communities into the classroom; cultures are *things*, and teaching about them inevitably leads to a certain degree of detachment from human affairs, whereas bringing adult ethnic group members into the classroom forces people to associate ethnicity with *people*. Dramatic devices such as role-switching also contribute to a reduction of ethnocentrism.¹¹

At the same time, I believe that teaching about the poor treatment of ethnic minorities in Canadian history should be approached very carefully. Too often, these sagas of subordination are given without the social context that is necessary for them to be understood. Too often, the moral point of such tales seems rather designed for teachers than for children. Moreover, it is reasonable to expect that such tales have the potential for generating unwarranted paranoia among immigrant children; remember that, typically, when it is told that the Chinese were required to work for little pay under dangerous conditions on the CPR, it is rarely stressed that this happened over four generations ago.

Expanding the national myth

At a more general level, perhaps the area most affected by whether one takes an identity or a culture approach to ethnicity is that of the "official" history of Canada. By official history I mean the national origin and development myth, rather than real history. As it stands, much of what passes for history in the schools is actually official history, which despite its errors and omissions is not altogether a bad thing. While national myths of this sort are inevitably parodies of history at best, they serve important definitional and legitimation functions. They are origin myths which validate the present by glorifying the reconstructed past. As such, they inspire collective identity and national identification among those included in the saga.

Unfortunately, they are usually constructed in the image of the powerful, and therefore tend to shut the less powerful out. In Canada, the traditional anglophone version of the official history has severely diminished the role (and participation) of francophones and of anglophone ethnic minorities — some 60% of the total population. Worse still, the long-term colonial relationship between Britain and Canada further distorts traditional anglophone official history by making it very difficult to formulate an "autochthonous" origin myth — even for anglophones of British origin.

There is little disagreement about the necessity of drastically altering this anglophone official history. Because the schools spend a good deal of their time teaching aspects of it, they could and should play a substantial role in its modification. National unity aside, simply consideration of ethnic relations in the schools makes this necessary, for the traditional official history and its attendant version of Canadian identity deny the validity of the ethnic identities of a substantial proportion of many school populations.

There are several ways in which this modification could be done by altering current teaching materials or by teaching with old materials in a slightly different fashion. In either instance, a conscious attempt should be made to create and foster an image of the anglophone Canadian. This would help to eliminate the past identification of anglophones with Anglo Canadians, which inevitably led to the characterization of Canadian society as one of British and French people. It would also help to create a firmer nationalism by stressing the specifically Canadian aspects of Canada's past as opposed to glorifying all that was British in it; this was something that American manufacturers of national mythology were able to accomplish over a hundred and fifty years ago — to the extent that present-day American television dramas about the American Revolution methodically distinguish “Americans” from the “British” in language, dress, station, and temperament. To be sure, the absence of a successful revolution in anglophone Canada's past makes this a bit more difficult, but the colonial relationship between Canada and Britain could easily serve the same function of distinguishing historical Canadians from the British.

As far as incorporating ethnic groups into the official history is concerned, the above are necessary preconditions for its success. No national myth which confounds anglophones with the British, or confuses elite British-Canadian rhetoric about the prevalence of “British institutions, law, and order” with what was happening in the towns and on the farms, can do anything but negate the place of ethnic groups in the history of anglophone Canada. Beyond these preliminaries, I believe that it is vital for teachers to modify their basic approach to Canadian history in one crucial area. In Canada as elsewhere, school history has characteristically been “Big Man, Big Event” history — a chronicle of the exploits of those few Canadians who rose to national prominence in one fashion or another. Such an approach automatically emphasizes the roles of the British and French, the upper class, and males. In order to bring the conditions of ethnic groups (and women) into the official history it must be far more of a social history than it has been. By this, I mean that far more emphasis must be placed on how people of various origins came to be in Canada, how they earned a living, and how they articulated with others.

Once again I would claim that an emphasis here upon the cultural aspects of social history would be disadvantageous, for such an emphasis would severely distort the social context of ethnicity to no obvious benefit; after all, Ukrainians

were farmers first, and were only secondarily painters of Easter eggs. In reality, this social history approach to historical Canadian ethnicity is simply another case of what I have already stressed: increasing the scope of "us" so that it incorporates everyone. It is an attempt to construct a historical foundation for a Canadian identity which does not automatically negate ethnic identity.

Multiculturalism and the role of schools

It is a certainty that the schools will be asked to play an ever increasing role in the unfolding of the federal Multiculturalism policy.¹² Already, studies funded by the Multiculturalism Directorate have had direct impact on the ethnic content of teaching materials, and the ideology of Multiculturalism has indirectly resulted in a greater awareness of the importance of ethnicity in the schools. These influences of the Multiculturalism policy have come in areas already dealt with here, so I need not consider them further.

In just the past few years Multiculturalism has begun to have another influence on school curricula which is quite different. This involves the use of the resources of the educational system for the preservation of ethnicity in second generation Canadians. Never before have the schools been asked to perform this role; indeed, their traditional objectives were rather the opposite. As such, the implementation of such programs should be carefully considered. It is understandable that school districts have not rushed to the call.

Although one can never be sure, the literature on this subject seems to indicate that at the heart of this reluctance are two unresolved issues: what is to be preserved and to whom is it to be taught? Once more, I believe that a confounding of ethnicity with ethnic culture is responsible for at least some of this confusion. This is most certainly the case with respect to critiques that have been made of the overall cultural preservation goals of the Multicultural policy. At this more general level, the principal objection has been the impossibility of the task in the light of factors which reduce cultural difference of the sort dealt with in my first section above. It is also claimed that ethnic differences inevitably lead to the perpetuation of ethnic inequality, which in my second section I have shown is only the case if one considers ethnicity to be chiefly a matter of ethnic culture. Perhaps equally prevalent is the conviction that ethnicity is intrinsically reactionary and non-progressive, and that its support therefore gives a greater voice to conservative elements in the population; as Howard Palmer reports, this view defines Multiculturalism as "Fascists dancing in their basements."¹³ While there does indeed seem to be some relationship between political and cultural conservatism among first generation Canadians, there is no evidence that this relationship holds among the second generation.

All of the above worries can be found in discussions of the role of education in preserving ethnicity, but all of them seem essentially unfounded. As more

thoughtful supporters of Multiculturalism have clearly shown, it has never been the objective of the policy to preserve culture *per se*; neither should it be the objective of school programs.¹⁴ Rather, the preservation aspects of the policy are aimed at maintaining culture only insofar as those particular elements of culture support ethnic identity; this should be the objective of the schools, albeit in a more limited fashion.

This still requires the schools to decide what things should be taught towards this end of maintaining (or stimulating) ethnic identity in their second generation students. To this problem there is no easy answer. While it is true that ethnic identity and ethnic culture are separable aspects of life, they are interconnected. Ethnic identity is inevitably focused on certain aspects of culture which stand as symbols of identity and markers of ethnic difference. Language is frequently a principal symbol of this type, but this is not always the case. Out of the vastness of culture each ethnic group selects and defines these significant cultural symbols on their own terms. This means that there are no particular aspects of culture which the schools can assume *a priori* are supportive of ethnic identity. Moreover, some important cultural markers of ethnicity, like familial social relations, can hardly be addressed by the educational system at all.

Perhaps the best route towards sorting out this question is simply to let ethnic communities provide the answers. Some ethnic groups are much more concerned about the preservation of ethnicity than are others, and mechanisms should be available for them to make their views known. Schools should not assume that the simple presence of a large number of students from a particular ethnic group necessarily dictates that such programs should be initiated. Whatever programs are initiated should be designed with the preservation of identity as the goal, rather than functional knowledge, and enrolment in them should not be restricted to children of a particular ethnicity.

Education and ethnicity in the 1980's

Although it is likely that Canadian immigration quotas will remain relatively low for the next half decade (at the very least), this will not lead to ethnicity becoming less of a factor in the educational system. The children of Third World adults who came to Canada between 1964 and 1975 will be working their way through the schools. Immigration quotas for the next decade will in all probability never go below the level of 100,000 people a year, half of whom will be children.

The guaranteed prevalence of the ethnic factor in the schools for the foreseeable future has not been well recognized by educators. Most of today's programs dealing with ethnicity have been developed in response to immediate local issues and consequently are not well integrated with each other; they form a patchwork of goals, needs, and methods. This must change if there is to be any

hope of the educational system realizing its potential for contributing something substantial towards a guaranteed place for ethnicity in the national fabric. Subdivided as the educational process is among ten provinces and innumerable school districts, there seems to be little prospect of integrating such programs in a literal sense, and in any case local conditions vary so much that any single unified package of programs would not mesh well with local concerns. The only thing which should be universal and which would lead to a greater degree of unity of purpose is further clarification of basic issues and the generation of a relatively consistent working ideology of ethnicity.

This paper has addressed the place of identity in such an ideology, but identity is only one factor among many which need further clarification. I have suggested that defining ethnicity cannot be separated from defining Canadianness, and the latter is virtually an open field. The empirical impact of various techniques for fostering interethnic harmony in the Canadian school context are for the most part unexplored. Only slowly are textual materials being modified to give ethnicity a firmer place in them, and materials dealing specifically with the subject are still woefully rare. There is obviously no one approach to these and other questions, but I would make one plea concerning them all: that whatever the specific objective one first go back to basics — to the concepts and objectives incorporated into one's worldview of ethnicity. Without far more work at this level educational programs dealing with ethnicity will continue to function on weak foundations.

NOTES

1. Interest in this subject before 1972 was marginal, at least in print. This makes it tempting to attribute the subsequent rise to the establishment of the federal government's Multicultural policy, which was introduced in the House of Commons on October 8, 1971 (Canada: House of Commons 1971).
2. McDiarmid and Pratt (1971) was the first substantial study to demonstrate that various ethnicities were differentially evaluated in school textbooks. This point now seems universally recognized, and it has just now led to a new generation of school texts which consciously attempt to incorporate ethnicity more thoroughly and accurately into Canadian studies. See Martinello (1976), Doughty et al. (1976), and Munro et al. (1975); they are far superior in this respect to more traditional texts like Stewart and McLean (1974).
3. In a personal communication Dr. Mary Ashworth has told me that her monograph (1975) on immigrant children in the schools was the first to be written in Canada for two generations; now there are a number of books addressed to the subject, including Carey (1974), Wolfgang (1975), Friesen (1977), and Kovacs (1978).
4. More recent works like the collection of papers edited by D'Oyley (1977) are filled with concerns of this sort.
5. van den Berghe (1967:34).

6. Repo (1971).
7. Brown (1976:8).
8. See van den Berghe, op. cit., Rex (1970).
9. Barth (1971) was one of the anthropologists to make explicit the distinction between ethnic identity and culture. This lead is further explored in works such as Epstein (1978), Issacs (1975), and Dashefsky (1976). The rise of the "white" ethnic movement in the United States (Novak 1972; Weed 1973; Stein 1977; Greeley 1971) spelled the demise of earlier assimilationist models of ethnicity.
10. Mavalwala (1977:108-117) in D'Oyley (1977).
11. This sort of approach to intergroup tolerance is stressed in C. Epstein (1968).
12. Multiculturalism has already had a substantial impact on school policy in Metro Toronto. See Toronto Board of Education (1975) and Murray (1977).
13. Palmer (1976).
14. See Burnet (1975a; 1975b) and Palmer (1976).

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Résumé

L'acceptation à l'école du pluralisme ethnique du Canada doit-elle se traduire par un étonnement devant l'étrangeté des us et coutumes de chacun et par l'exécution d'une foule de danses dans des costumes un peu trop bigarrés? La gêne occasionnée par ce genre d'approche n'a d'égale que sa futilité. Buchignani isole soigneusement cette approche culturelle vis-à-vis de l'ethnicité (qui consiste à établir ce que font les gens) de l'approche-identité (qui consiste pour les gens à admettre ce qu'ils pensent être). Cette dernière conduit tout droit à la création d'un nouveau mythe national et d'un sentiment d'identité canadienne qui auront pour fondement les réalités de l'histoire et des intentions des immigrants, et non plus l'image officielle et fautive d'un pays peuplé exclusivement d'Anglais et de Français. Comment les écoles peuvent y arriver et n'y parviennent en fait pas, Buchignani l'illustre fort clairement en des termes que professeurs et administrateurs ne peuvent manquer de saisir.