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Concepts and Issues in
Multicultural Education:
A Conceptual Analysis

Tahir Javed

A Thesis

in

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ABSTRACT

Concepts and Issues in Multicultural Education: A Conceptual Analysis

Tahir Javed

This thesis is a conceptual analysis of some of the central concepts in the field of multicultural education; the analysis focuses on the notions of "culture," "multicultural," "common culture," and "ethnicity." The analytical approach adopted in the thesis involves clarifying the meanings of these terms, examining their interrelationship, illustrating how these concepts bear upon major educational and social issues, and drawing implications for policy and program responses by the school and the society.

The conceptual analysis in this thesis illustrates the important role concepts play in theory and practice of multicultural education. It suggests that the work of those involved in the field of multicultural education, at all levels could become much more effective and efficient, if they could divert a part of their efforts towards conceptual clarification: precision and clarity in the use of language, thinking analytically about issues, and treating them with the degree of care and attention that their complexity demands.

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INTRODUCTION

Over the past two decades, "multicultural education" and a complex network of related concepts and issues have been a major focus of enquiry in the field of education. But in relation to the vast volume of literature that the issue has generated, and the amount of intellectual energy it has attracted, the state of education in this area--both in theory and practice--seems to have progressed very little. The present work derives from the belief that a major factor in this lack of progress has been the failure, on the part of the participants, to address the conceptual and definitional problems in a systematic and coherent way; and where some efforts have been made in this direction, they have largely remained ineffective for lack of sufficient rigour, limitation of scope or scale, or a combination of both.

Let us, first, examine briefly the assertion that there has been a lot of activity but little progress in the field of multicultural education. An extensive review of literature in the area reveals that the basic conceptual issues and definitional problems remain unresolved: key concepts such as "culture," "ethnicity," "pluralism," and "assimilation"--separately as well as in relation to education--continue to be used in a confused and ambiguous manner by theoreticians and practitioners alike. This confusion and ambiguity is displayed not only by novices, but is also equally evident in the works of those who are considered experts and leaders in the field. The problem is not merely that the concepts are ambiguous: it is also that they are used inconsistently; there is confusion between descriptive statements and prescriptive statements; and there is lack of sensitivity to the complexity of issues being treated. Given this state of affairs in the realm of theory, it is not surprising to find that educational practices and policies in this area have generally been marked by inconsistent, incoherent, and often self-defeating efforts.

Supporting and illustrating these views with proper evidence will, of course, be a major task of the thesis. At this stage it should suffice to present a small sample of views expressed by some scholars in the field:

> Multiculturalism is a concept whose use is characterized more by currency than consensus .... The issue of multi-culturalism is both confused and contentious. (Young, 1984:412)

> In reviewing the literature on multicultural education, we find that program proponents have provided no systematic delineation of their views; and that all too frequently program statements are riddled with vague and emotional rhetoric. (Gibson, 1976:16)

> Multi-ethnic and multi-cultural education are characterized by much conceptual confusion and a wide range of competing ideologies ... (Banks, 1981:35)

> Multicultural education, as described by many of its advocates, is a labyrinth of assertions and assumptions which need to be examined. (Carlson, quoted by Young, 1984)

> ... immense confusion exists about what multiculturalism and multi-cultural education mean, definitional and conceptual models compete with one another, multiethnic education and other philosophies are proposed as alternatives, and in general, a great deal of curriculum is in a "mess," "muddle," "buzzing confusion."(Bullivant,1981:viii)

Similar views have been expressed by other writers in the field (see for example, Mallea,1978; James, 1982; and Fenton, 1982). Some of them have also made efforts towards conceptual analysis and clarification; however, as noted earlier, due to a combination of factors, the efforts made so far have been ineffective in challenging the conceptual problems. A brief review of such efforts is provided below, together with some explanation as to why these have been ineffective.

Since majority of the concepts used in multicultural education have been borrowed from social sciences, in particular anthropology and sociology, a good part of the attempts at conceptual refinement and clarification is to be found in literature in these two fields. But most of the writers and researchers in the area of

multicultural education continue to work apparently oblivious to the existence of such literature. Works by Kroeber & Kluckhohn (1963) dealing with the concept of "culture"; by Gordon (1964), Barth (1969), Schermerhorn (1970); Glazer & Moynihan (1975), and Anderson & Frideres (1981) dealing with the concepts and issues related to "ethnicity," "pluralism," and "assimilation," can be cited as major contributions towards clarification of concepts and delineation of issues in their respective fields. On a smaller scale, analytical works on the concept of ethnicity by Isajiw (1980), and Manyoni (1978) are also useful contributions in this direction. Unfortunately, theory and practice in the area of multicultural education has, in general, not drawn upon all these and other similar contributions in the social science literature.

Attempts at conceptual analysis have also been made by some writers in education. Works by Beck (1975), Gibson (1976), Pacheco (1977), Mallea (1978), and Young (1984) are examples of such contributions towards the task of clarifying concepts and issues in multicultural education. But it must be pointed out that all the works cited above are in the form of short articles in journals, and as such suffer from the limitations of scale and/or scope--especially considering the magnitude and complexity of the task at hand. Banks' book (1981) provides one of the few examples of conceptual analysis on a larger scale; though useful in many ways, what it offers in quantity is largely vitiated by poor quality.

One can not but help observing, here, that although the work surrounding the theme of multicultural education has attracted considerable input from various sources and perspectives--e.g., sociologists, anthropologists, psychologists, educationists, journalists, and politicians--contribution by philosophers has been conspicuous by its paucity, or virtual absence. One major reason that existing efforts at elucidating the concepts have not gone far enough towards attacking the problems of ambiguities and confusion in multicultural education seems to be that they have lacked the rigour of philosophical analysis.

Essays by Pacheco (1977), Beck (1975), cited earlier, and Wright & LaBar (1982) are good examples of how a treatment of concepts and issues in multicul-

tural education from a philosophical perspective can enhance the quality of enquiry in this area. Likewise, Entwistle's discussion (1978) on the interrelationship of culture and education--although it represents an analysis from the social-class perspective-- provides a useful model for treatment of conceptual issues in the traditition of analytical philosophy.

OBJECTIVE, SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

In view of the above discussion it is suggested that the quality, and thus effectiveness, of enquiries in multicultural education from other perspectives could be considerably enhanced by treating the problems philosophically--in particular through analytical philosophy. In the present paper, using this analytical approach will involve clarification of some of the key concepts in multicultural education, examining their interrelationship, illustrating how these concepts bear upon the major educational issues, and drawing implications from our discussion for policy and program responses by the school.

The discussion in this thesis is organized under four main headings: culture, multicultural, common culture, and ethnicity. All these are major concepts in enquiries in multicultural education, and their analysis and clarification should be of benefit to the various participants in the field: policy makers, administrators, researchers, curriculum designers, and teachers. Let us take a brief preview of the forthcoming discussion.

To observe that the concept of culture is central to any debate on multicultural education, would be to state the obvious: the notion of "culture" is implicit in the very term "multicultural." Many of the controversies in multicultural education arise mainly due to a lack of clarity and precision in using the concept of culture. Chapter 1 of this paper will begin by examining the term "culture" from different theoretical perspectives; in particular it will compare and contrast the anthropological and the humanistic conceptions of culture. Next it will review the several classes of definitions of culture from the literature in anthropology. The

implications for multicultural education will be noted at appropriate points in the discussion.

The discussions in the next two chapters of the paper are closely related to that of the first chapter: obviously, the terms "multicultural" and "common culture" are derivatives of the notion "culture." In chapter 2, the concept of multiculralism is examined as it relates to the individual. A major part of the discussion, here, will centre on the following questions: Is it possible to become multicultural? Is it desirable?

In chapter 3 the focus shifts, from the individual, to the society and its constituent groups or "subcultures." In pluralistic societies, one of the major dilemmas is how to reconcile the diverse goals of constituent groups and individuals with those of the society as a whole. An understanding of the notions of "common culture" and "subculture," and their interrelationship, could be useful in dealing with this dilemma in a competent manner. The analysis in chapter 3 is aimed at developing a clarified and more precise conception of common culture.

Chapter 4 examines the notion "ethnic" and its derivatives, i.e. "ethnicity," "ethnic group," and "ethnic identity." If one takes the literature in multicultural education as a guide, then it soon becomes obvious that these concepts are central to discussions of educational and other social policy issues in a pluralistic society. A part of our discussion in this chapter will be concerned with examining the variety of social groups and categories that are subsumed under the label of "ethnic." Another focus of the discussion would be on the notion of ethnic identity, and the role it plays in formation and maintenance of ethnic group boundaries. We shall also look into the question, whether, and to what extent, the boundary of an ethnic group is a function of a distinctive culture.

In the concluding chapter we will summarize the discussions of individual chapters so as to provide a coherent overview of the whole paper.

CHAPTER 1
<u>THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE</u>

Looking at the terms "multicultural" and "multicultural education" from a purely linguistic point of view, one may readily note that the word "culture" lies at the core of these terms. When the terms are used as conceptual tools for research or for expressing various ideologies and policies, the meaning of the word "culture" becomes crucial. It seems obvious, then, that any attempt at conceptual analysis of "multiculturalism" and the related concepts and issues must begin with an examination of the concept "culture."

"Culture" is an immensely difficult concept to define. Its meaning may differ substantially from one discipline to another: literature, philosophy, anthropology, sociology, and biology. Even when narrowed down to one field, a divergence of interpretations, definitions, and theories confronts us. Given the considerable complexity in meanings and interpretations of the concept, one finds it surprising that in much of the literature on "multiculturalism," "multicultural education," and other related topics, no attempt is made to define culture, or to indicate in which of its several senses the term is being used. It is, perhaps, tacitly assumed by such writers that the meaning of the concept is commonly understood; that there is a consensus on its interpretation(s) among the the users and their intended audience. Such an assumption is unwarranted, however, and has an unsalutary effect on the quality and usefulness of their work: conceptual ambiguities lead to serious difficulties in understanding as well as in practical application.

In this chapter we shall examine the notion of culture from different theoretical perspectives. The various meanings that are given to the term will be analyzed individually as well as comparatively; and their implications for education in general, and multicultural education in particular, will be discussed.

THE DIFFERENT SENSES OF "CULTURE"

The word "culture" like other similar terms--e.g., race, ethnicity, and class--elicits a wide variety of meanings and interpretations. The variation in meanings may be due to differences in the level of generalization, methodological assumptions, theoretical perspectives, the phenomena being described, or the types of definition--e.g., descriptive or normative. It may therefore be profitable, in order to keep our discussion on "culture" within manageable bounds, to draw some initial perimeter around the concept.

As an initial probe, we may begin by classifying the various ways of conceptualizing "culture" into three broad categories: biological, humanistic, and anthropological. Since "culture" as used in biology (and related fields such as microbiology and horticulture) refers to cultivation or manipulation of lower organisms--bacteria, plants, animals, etc.--it is rather easily and clearly distinguishable from the other two senses whose focus is on man. (Note: The terms "anthropology" and "humanism" implicity refer to man.) It, thus, seems that to attempt further clarification of this distinction would be belabouring the obvious. Nonetheless, taking note of the biological usage of "culture" should help us in mapping some of the territory that we are trying to cover.

The distinction between the "anthropological" and "the humanistic" conceptions of culture needs somewhat closer examination[1]. There are two important ways in which this distinction can be drawn. First, "culture" in the anthropological sense is a broad, all inclusive category: "the whole way of life"; the humanistic usage of the concept is a narrower one, applying limitedly to the activities and

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1   For discussion on the distinction between the humanistic and anthropological senses of culture, I have benefited much from the works of Barrow & Woods (1975: 159-163), and Entwistle (1978: 109-113)

products in the sphere of the arts (see Entwistle, 1978: 109). Second, whereas the anthropological "culture" is essentially descriptive and thus neutral, "culture" in the humanistic sense is typically used as a normative concept (see Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963: 22; Barrow & Woods, 1975: 160). In referring to culture as "the whole way of life," the anthropologist includes all the patterns of behaviour, ideas, institutions and artifacts that characterize a society or a social group. There is no implication about the value, desirability or otherwise, of the activities and artifacts being included. "Culture" would, thus, include the trivial as well as the important; acts of crime and corruption as well as those of charity and compassion. In contrast, in the humanistic conception culture is seen as "the conscious ideal of human perfection" (Kroeber & Kluckhohn 1963: 60). From this perspective, it is through cultivation of one's skills and knowledge in humanities--i.e., literature, philosophy, history, the fine arts, etc.--that one can approach such perfection: that is, become "cultured." Poetry, therefore, has more value than pushpin; and reading books is preferrable to playing bingo.

But just any book or any poetry wouldn't do. A further level of selectivity is introduced in the humanistic view of culture which is based on the contention that for each of the different forms of the art, there are certain works which are manifestly superior to others in the same sphere (see Barrow & Woods, 1975: 159). For example, reading Shakespeare is preferrable to reading something from "the mass of letterpress" (T.S. Eliot, 1948: 87); and a Beethoven symphony has a greater cultural value than some modern "pop" song. This view of culture is sometimes referred to as "high culture," although the exponents of this term have not been too clear as to what really is about such culture that makes it "high" (see Entwistle, 1978: 147): that is, is it "high" with reference to the view that it is, suposedly, the culture of the upper class, or are there some higher aesthetic and artistic standards that are being implied? But this is an issue of considerable complexity and to dwell on it would be diverging from the task at

hand: i.e., highlighting the essential distinguishing features of the anthropological concept of culture vis-a-vis the humanistic one.

The descriptive-normative dichotomy between the two senses of culture operates with reference to not only the activities and products as discussed above, but also to the agent--the individual, group, or society--through which a culture is manifested. Whereas in the humanistic sense of culture one may speak of a "highly cultured individual," "the cultured class," or "a culturally advanced society," such expressions would be rather unacceptable in a strict anthropological usage. For an anthropologist, wherever there is human society there must necessarily be a culture; insofar as individuals and groups are constituents of the larger society, they implicity possess at least some part of the society's culture.

Now, it is true that ordinarily the particular sense of culture, humanistic or anthropological, is understood without much difficulty by the context in which the term is applied. In speaking of "a cultural show," "a cultured man," or "the Eskimo culture," one generally doesn't have to formally or explicitly state which of the different senses of culture is being used. Nevertheless, from the perspective of educational theory, and given the special role that education plays in perpetuation of a society's culture, it is important to be aware of these distinct uses of the term "culture," and to be clear about the distinctions.

In educational theory the distinction between the anthropological and the humanistic conceptions of culture may be seen in terms of the difference between the competing ideologies such as conservatism vs progressivism, or elitism vs egalitarianism. Traditionally, the conservatives and elitists in education have been closely aligned with the humanistic view of culture. But to establish a similar link of progressivists and egalitarians with the anthropological culture would require some modification of the all-inclusive anthropological view; for, even the most fervent of progressivists would find it impossible to adopt a strict anthropological conception of culture. For very obvious practical reasons the school curriculam

can only be a selection from the society's "whole way of life." Further this selection must be able to differentiate,

a) the socially dysfunctional from what is acceptable,

b) the trivial from the important, and

c) the inferior from the superior,

with reference to the moral, intellectual, aesthetic standards prevailing in the society. The point that education must be selective because it is necessarily a normative process, is perhaps one of the very few that is likely to find a consensus among educationists regardless of their ideological inclinations. Peters, who has been one of the most persistent exponents of this theme--i.e., education is inherently a normative process--cogently sums up the issue in his following statement (1966:25): "'Education' implies that something worthwhile is being or has been intentionally transmitted in a morally acceptable manner."

Thus, the real dispute between educational conservatives and progressivists is not whether there should be some selection or not, but rather, as to what criteria should be used in making such selection. In general terms the curricular implications of this conflict may be presented as follows: The criteria used by conservatives would strongly favour curriculum selection from the humanities (and possibly the sciences, as well), and their materials would be largely drawn from the "great traditions" of the past: "the best which has been thought and said"; moreover, the selection would be by educationists, and not by the students themselves. For progressivists, the selection criteria would lay no particular stress on humanities; the emphasis would instead be on relevance to the learner's contemporary social context. Some progressivists would also contend that there should be no a priori standards for determining what is important or trivial, superior or

inferior: the frame of reference for curriculum selection should be the needs, interests, and capacities of the child.

With reference to issues in multicultural education, perhaps the most directly pertinent feature of two contrasting views of culture, anthropological and humanistic, may be seen in terms of the cultural relativism of the former, and absolutism of the latter. In a sense, the very terms "multiculturalism" and "cultural pluralism" suggest a relativistic view of culture. Converted into ideological and political stances, the terms evoke arguments over the meanings, desirability, or possibility of implementing ideas such as "cultural democracy," "cultural freedom," and "cultural equality." In the educational context the debate is typically reflected in demands such as follows: "Curricula must reflect equality in the emphasis and time accorded to the study of various cultures"(Aoki, T. et al, 1984: 265); and, "there should be no implicit or explicit hierarchy of cultures in the curriculum" (Robinson, 1984:315).

All these issues are pertinent topics for discussion in this paper, and shall be dealt with at greater length later on. At this stage, however, the point of going through the exercise of comparison and contrast of the different senses of culture has been mainly heuristic: that is, to help draw out the essential distinctive features of culture in its anthropological usage. For it is essentially with reference to culture in its anthropological sense that the debates, discussions, and research on multiculturalism take place. (Although some of the participants may use the humanistic conception of culture as their ideological base.) But "culture" as an anthropological concept is, itself, fraught with a divergence of meanings and interpretations, as we shall see in the following section.

DEFINITIONS OF CULTURE IN ANTHROPOLOGY

One of the most systematic and comprehensive attempts towards analysing "culture" from an anthropological perspective is to be found in the work by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1963). Besides tracing a general history of the word, they analysed more than 160 definitions of "culture" and classified them into six major groups according to their principal emphasis, labelling them as follows: enumeratively descriptive, historical, normative, psychological, structural, and genetic. This classification scheme, with some modifications, provides a useful organising model for our discussion on the concept of culture and its application in the field of multicultural education. The modified classification will be as follows: (1) holistic-enumerative; (2) historical; (3) structural; (4) psychological; and (5) moral.

I. THE HOLISTIC-ENUMERATIVE VIEW:
INCLUSIVENESS OF CULTURE

The distinctive features of definitions in this category are: (a) the view of culture as a comprehensive totality, and (b) a tendency to enumeratively describe various cultural aspects and traits. The prime example of this type of definitions is the following one by Tylor:

> Culture ... is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963: 81)

Let us consider some other examples. According to Leiris,

> Culture ... comprehends all that is inherited or transmitted through society ...(It) includes not only beliefs, knowledge, sentiments and literature, but the language or other systems of symbols which are

their vehicles. Other elements are the rules of kinship, methods of education, forms of government and all the fashions followed in social relations. Gestures, bodily attitudes and even facial expressions are also included, since they are in large measure acquired by the community through education or imitation; and so, among the material elements, are fashions in housing and clothing and ranges of tools, manufactures and artistic productions, all of which are to some extent traditional. (Cited in Kuper, 1975: 149).

For Wallis, culture is

the life of people as typified in contacts, institutions, material objects, typical reactions to situations which characterize the people and distinguish them from other people. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963: 161)

And according to Wallace, a culture consists of

all those customs of community--including language, science and beliefs, arts and crafts, and rules of behaviour in domestic, religious, polictical and economic life--which are passed on by learning from one generation to the next. (Quoted by Lamerand, 1977: 63)

GENERAL COMMENTS: In attempting to convey the complexity and inclusiveness of culture, the holistic-descriptive type of definitions tend to overstress these points to the neglect of other critical features of the concept. Some of the important shortcomings common to this set of definitions are pointed out below:

(1) There is a failure to distinguish social organization and social institution from a general concept of culture; in other words such definitions, if adopted uncritically, tend to confuse "culture" with "society." The two concepts are of course closely related, and in an ordinary discourse, often, the distinction may not matter. But in using the terms, in a somewhat technical context--e.g., discussion on multiculturalism--it becomes important to maintain a conceptual distinction between "cul-

ture" and "society." Whereas "society" denotes a unit for studying human interactions (as compared, for example, with "group" or "community"), "culture" represents the underlying patterns of values, beliefs and ideas which confer meanings to these interactions. Firth has noted the distinction between the two concepts in the following words:

> If ... society is taken to be an organized set of individuals with a given way of life, culture is that way of life. If society is taken to be an aggregate of social relaions, then culture is the content of those relations. Society emphasizes the human component, the aggregate of the people and the relations between them. Culture emphasizes the component of accumulated resources, immaterial as well as material, which the people inherit, employ, transmute, add to, and transmit. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963:269)

(2) In enumerating various aspects and contents of culture, the above definitions also tend to ignore the distinctions between (a) activities and products of activities, (b) material and non-material aspects of culture.

(3) Culture is described as a mere totality (e.g., "that complex whole") of various items ; organization and interrelationship--i.e., patterning--of these items is not mentioned.

The following statement by Gordon (1964: 32-33) provides an excellent example of a definition of culture that is able to avoid the weaknesses, as pointed out above, of the type of definitions cited earlier:

> Culture ... is the way of life of a society ... [It] consists of prescribed ways of behaving or norms of conduct, beliefs, values, and skills, along with the behavioral patterns and uniformities based on these categories--all this we call "non-material culture"--plus, in an extension of the term, the artifacts created by these skills and values, which we call the "material culture."

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: For educational purposes the holistic-enumerative view of culture, with its inherent lack of selectivity, does not seem to be much useful. Both from the practical point of view as well as in respect of the observation that education is essentially a normative process (see discussion on p.10), it is obvious that education can use only a limited portion of the total culture of a society. This point is well underlined in the following comments by Lawton:

> Curriculum is a selection from a society's culture. Certain aspects of our way of life ... are regarded so important that their transmission to the next generation is not left to chance in our society, but is entrusted to especially trained professionals. (Cited in Bullivant, 1981:4)

In view of the limitations discussed above, it is surprising that a number of writers, researchers, and policy making bodies in the field of multicultural education continue to use the holistic-enumerative type of definitions. For example, Tylor's definition has been used in the following works: Saunders (1982:67), The Galbally Report, Australia (cited in Bullivant, 1981: 209), and Gordon (1964:32); Lamerand, in his article (1977:63) has adopted the definition by Wallace; Banks (1981:52) refers to the definition by Wallis, and then offers his own enumerative type of definition of culture; and Banks' definition has, in turn, been used by Young (1984:413).

Bullivant (1981:209)) is one of the very few writers who have taken a critical view of the utility of holistic-descriptive definitions for work in multicultural education. Referring to the classical definition of culture by Tylor, he makes the following comments:

> [The definition] is now completely dated and of little use for a technical understanding of the phenomenon ... Tylor's definition is an overstated, enumeratively descriptive attempt to stress all those aspects of the human condition that are non biological.It was very

much the product of its socio-historical context and to use it in a context that is completely different is tantamount to nonsense.

Burnet, too, questions the relevance of the "totalistic" concept of culture to the policy of multiculturalism in Canada:

> The name [multiculturalism] implies something that is hardly possible: that many cultures can be maintained in Canada. In fact, except for such isolated groups as the Hutterites, no ethnic group brings a total culture to Canada and none can maintain intact what it brings under the impact of the new environment, social as well as geographical. (1979:22) [Emphasis added.]

II. THE HISTORICAL VIEW: CULTURE AS SOCIAL HERITAGE

The principal emphasis of definitions in this group is that human beings have a social, as distinct from their biological, heritage. Every generation in a society comes to possess this heritage--the various patterns of knowledge, artifacts and institutions, accumulated over hundreds and perhaps thousand of years--and then passes it on to the coming generations. It is through this process of acquisition and transmission of social heritage that a society ensures its continuity--in other words, its survival. Some examples of definitions of this type are provided below.

According to Grooves & Moore :

> Culture ... is the social heritage, the fund of accmulated knowledge and customs through which the person "inherits" most of his behaviour and ideas. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963:91)

Malinowski underlines the historical dimension of culture in the following words:

> This social heritage is the key concept of cultural anthropology. It is usually called culture ... Culture comprises inherited facts, goods, technical processes, ideas, habits, and values. (Ibid. : 90)

Winston makes the following statement:

> We may regard culture as the sum total of the possessions and the patterned ways of behaviour which has been part of the heritage of a group. (Ibid. : 90)

And, Gordon (1964: 32) defines culture as

> the social heritage of man, the ways of acting and doing things which are passed down from one generatrion to the next, not through genetic inheritance but by formal and informal methods of teaching and demonstration.

GENERAL COMMENTS: While it is true that a society's culure is, to a large degree, rooted in its past, there could be a danger in emphasizing this too much. To say that a society's culture is all that which has been inherited from the past generations, would be to allow little room for creativity to those living in a present generation. Such a view tends to portray the human being as "the passive porter of a cultural tradition" (Dollard, cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963:94). However, men are not only the carriers and products of culture: they are also producers and manipulators of culture.(Cf. Kroeber & Kluckhohn: 94). A more balanced and fuller account of culture would, thus, refer to both its key aspects: i.e., culture as a social heritage, and culture as an adaptive mechanism.

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: Although the literature in multicultural education does not provide examples of explicit references to the type of definitions under review, emphasis on the "heritage" aspect of culture is evident in

many of the arguments, policy statements, and programs concerning multicultural education. Some typical examples are provided below:

> [Multicultural] education ... recognizes and values the culturally. pluralistic nature of the society. It is an education that encourages people to accept and respect both their own cultural heritage and that of people of different cultural backgrounds. (A resolution adopted at a conference of the National Education Association, U.S., 1975; cited in Bullivant, 1981: 123) [Emphasis added]

In Canada, the Multiculturalism Directorate (Dept. of the Secretary of State) expressed as its main objective, the following:

> to encourage and assist ... the full realization of the multicultural nature of Canadian society through programs which promote the preservation and sharing of cultural heritages and which facilitate mutual appreciation and understanding among all Canadians. (Cited in Bullivant, 1981: 57) [Emphasis added]

The Ontario Ministry of Education stated the following as one of its central goals with respect to multicultural education:

> [To provide each child] an opportunity to develop and retain a personal identity by becoming acquainted with the historical roots of the community and culture of his other origin, and by developing a sense of continuity with the past. (Cited in Shapson et al, 1982:74) [Emphasis added]

And, the following passage represents a policy statement of the Australian government:

> The government accepts that it is now essential to give significant further encouragement to develop a multicultural attitude in Australian society. It will foster the retention of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups and promote intercultural understanding. (Cited in Bullivant, 1981:188) [Emphasis added]

It should be obvious that a view of culture that emphasizes its historical and heritage aspects would be implicit in all programs and policies which aim at maintenance of the cultures of minority groups.

Considering that one of the central aims of education is transmission of a society's cultural heritage from one generation to another, the relevance of this conception of culture to educational purposes can not be denied. Education, in general, must draw considerably upon a society's cultural heritage--the accumulated body of knowledge: language, literature, history, arts and sciences, etc.,--not only on sentimental grounds, but for prudential and practical reasons as well.

In a relatively homogenous society there probably wouldn't be much dispute as to what constitutes the "cultural heritage." But in multicultural societies, with power and status differential among the constituent groups, the issue often becomes a major source of conflict. From the point of view of minority groups, one of their major concerns is that the national society's cultural heritage, as presented in the existing school curricula, reflects an overwhelmingly monocultural perspective--that of the dominant group. Closely related to the above is the concern that if sufficient care is not taken, their cultural heritages will be lost for the younger generations.

It is true that for members of a minority goup their cultural heritage represents something of great emotional value: it reflects their historical roots. Educational efforts towards transmission of this heritage to the young is taken as an indication of the pride that the group has in its past achievements. Preservation of cultural heritage is also important for preserving a sense of group identity among the members. However, for minority group members a concern with their historical culture is likely to conflict with the demands of current living, which requires conception of culture as an "adaptive mechanism." For, culture represents both an accumulation of knowledge and institutions from the past, as well as those

evolved to meet current and future problems of existence. Bullivant's following comments (1981: 4) seem quite pertinent here:

> One of the most intractable problems in education and the cur-
> riculum relates to these twin aspects of culture--the historical and
> the current situational--namely, how to balance knowledge
> presented from the past with rapidly expanding knowledge
> generated in the present.

The dilemma that individuals from minority groups must attempt to resolve is this: They are members not only of their respective ethnic and cultural groups, but also of the larger, national society. Their retention of links with their histori-cal cultures may indeed have certain benefits, but these benefits often must be weighed against the advantages of acquiring the cultural heritage of the larger society. This raises two kinds of problem.

The first relates to the possibility that the cultural heritage (or some elements of it) of some groups might be inimical to the basic-values, beliefs, ideals, or the interests of the society at large. Secondly, even if the cultural heritage of a group is not seriously in conflict with the fundamental values and beliefs of the larger society, its acquisition by the group members can be objected to on pragmatic grounds. There are limits on the amount of resources needed in educating a child: first, resources of the individual himself in terms of the time, energy, learn-ing capacity, and so on; and secondly, resources that the society can afford--e.g., teachers, materials, and facilities. The potential problem in retention of a minority cultural heritage is cogently stated in the following comments by Birrell:

> The persistence of ethnic identity and affiliation may be satisfying,
> but, in continuing this affiliation members· may lack the social
> knowledge required for mobility into positions controlled by the
> dominant groups .... The time and effort required to learn and main-
> tain, ethnic languages· and customs could inhibit the acquisition of
> skills and knowledge which, while in absolute terms are no better
> than ethnically valued ones, are nevertheless more useful in secur-

ing jobs, promotion, influence and the like. (Cited in Bullivant, 1981:238)

III. THE STRUCTURAL VIEW:

PATTERNING & ORGANIZATION OF CULTURE

The definitions in this group provide an interesting contrast to the holistic-enumerative definitions (group I). The emphasis here, instead of upon totality, is on the organized interrelationship of isolable aspects of culture. Thus, culture is seen as an abstraction: it becomes a conceptual model that must be based on and interpret behaviour but which is not behaviour itself. Also, in viewing culture as an abstraction these definitions may be seen as somewhat similar to those grouped as the "psychological" interpretations of culture (group IV). Some examples of the "structural" definitions are provided below.

In the words of Kroeber & Kluckhohn (1963: 120),

> Culture is a design or system of designs for living; it is a plan, it is that which selectively channels men's reactions, it is not the reactions themselves.

Redfield, too, emphasizes the organizational aspect of culture, in definining culture as:

> an organization of conventional understandings manifest in act and artifact, which, persisting through tradition charactarizes a human group. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963: 118)

According to Gillin:

> Culture consists of patterned and functionally interrelated customs common to specifiable human beings composing specifiable social groups or categories. (Ibid. :119)

And Willey proposes that:

> A culture is a system of interrelated and interdependent habit patterns of response. (Ibid. :119)

GENERAL COMMENTS: The organization and interrelationship of cultural components implies that insofar as we are interested in understanding and interpreting a culture, we can not look at indvidual items in isolation, nor at the total mass of the contents; rather, what's important is the organization of the various components of a culture--how they are connected to one another. What may be crucial and central in one culture may be a minor feature in another. For example, in societies such as Saudi Arabia, or Iran, religion seems to play a fundamental role in different spheres of individual and societal life; whereas in Canada, the U.S., much of the Western Europe, and the so-called communist countries, where the societies are organized on a more or less secular basis, religion exerts comparatively a minor influence, if at all. The following comments by Kroeber & Kluckhohn (1963: 123) seem pertinent here:

> Each culture is, among other things, a complex of relations, a multi-verse of ordered and interrelated parts. Parts do not cause a whole but they comprise a whole ....

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: No examples of specific reference to definitions of this group are to be found in the literature. However, one may see occasional references to culture as patterns, designs, or systems. This seems rather surprising as the aspects of culture emphasized in these definitions-- organization and integration--seem to have much relevance for educational approaches in multiculturalism.

Referring to some of the observations noted earlier (see above), one may draw some useful recommendations for programs in multicultural education.

Thus it may be suggested that studies of different cultures, instead of picking on individual and isolated items and aspects of a culture, should present these with reference to their proper context--that is, as elements of a whole pattern, and in interrelationship with other parts of that whole. This point is well underlined in the following comments by Wood (1978:10):

> Intercultural understanding is best achieved by appreciating a group's non-material culture. Enjoyment of, and/or participation in, a group's songs and dances provides only a limited insight into the day-to-day life of a culture. In addition , focussing on the non-material aspects of an ethnic culture reveals them to be dynamic and ongoing entities rather than static museums of folk arts imported from the home country.

IV. THE PSYCHOLOGICAL VIEW:

(a) Culture as a Problem-solving Device

(b) Culture as Knowledge/ Learning

The definitions labelled as "psychological" may be divided into two sub-groups: (a) those viewing culture as a problem-solving device; and (b) those which emphasize acquisition of a culture through learning --i.e., "concepts," "models," or "standards," etc. As we shall see in the definitions reviewed below, some fall under (a), some under (b), whereas some others contain emphases common to both (a) and (b).

Ford has posited that

> culture, in the form of regulation governing human behaviour, provides solutions to societal problems. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963: 106)

[type a]

According to Kluckhohn & Leighton :

> Any culture consists of the sort of habitual and traditional ways of thinking, feeling, and reacting that are characteristic of the ways a particular society meets its problems at a particular point in time. (Ibid. :107)

[type a]

Lapierre defines culture in the following words: ➤

> A culture is the embodiment in customs, traditions, institutions, etc., of the learning of a social group over the generations. It is the sum of what the group has learned about living together under the particular circumstances, physical and biological, in which it has found itself. (Ibid.,:112)

[type a & b]

According to Opler:

> A culture can be thought of as the sum total of learned techniques, ideas, and activities which a group uses in the business of living.(Ibid.:112)

[type a & b])

Kluckhohn offers a concise statement: "Culture consists in all transmitted social learning."(Ibid.).

[type b]

Goodenough in his following statements, underlines the point that culture learning is essentially a cognitive process :

> Culture consists of "concepts" and "models" which people have in their minds for organizing and interpreting their experiences.(I.E.S.S., : 538).

[type b]

And:

> A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know or believe in, in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its members .... Culture, being what people have to learn as distinct from their biological heritage, must consist of the end-product of learning knowledge, in the most general, relative, sence of term. (Cited in Bullivant, 1981:3)

[type b]

GENERAL COMMENTS: Definitions in this category (IV: a & b) provide a useful contrast to those in group II; in each group there is emphasis on only one aspect of culture to the exclusion of other. Whereas definitions in group II stress the historical dimension of culture, those in group IV emphasize the importance of culture in terms of the present and possibly the future of a society. In general, the "psychological" definitions tend to be abstract, formal, and conceptualistic : Behaviour, observed social relations, and material artifacts may provide the raw data for a construct of culture but are not themselves considered the constituents of culture. Rather the patterns, norms, rules, and standards implicit in the behaviour, are considered as constituting a culture. In these respects, they are quite similar to the "structural" definitions (group III; see pp. 21-23)).

Insofar as these definitions point to the fact that culture is, among other things, a set of techniques for adjusting both to the external environment and to other men, (type a), they are helpful. However, one should not overlook the point that culture also provides the background against which problems are perceived as "problems." In other words, culture creates needs as well as providing means of fulfilling them. This point tends to be disregarded by definitions which stress only

the problem-solving aspect of culture. It would be apt, here, to relate the following comments by Dorothy Lee:

> Culture is not ... "a response to the total needs of a society" but rather a system which stems from and expresses something had, the basic values of the society .... Only in part is culture an adaptive and adjustive instrument. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963: 111)

Referring to the definitions that view acquisition of culture solely in cognitive terms, (type b), it may be noted that Goodenough's semantic and conceptual theory of culture bears a resemblance to Kroeber's pattern theory. Taken as a working hypothesis, the cognitive conception of culture offers a promising program of research, the results of which should improve cross-cultural understanding. Taken as a definition of the nature of man or as a general theory of human culture, however, it seems somewhat one-sided and narrow: it fails to take into consideration the affective dimension of man (Cf. Singer, in I.E.S.S :540).

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: The psychological conceptions of culture have been quite popular with proponents of bicultural and bilingual programs (see Lambert, 1984; and Banks, 1981, for example). Among other writers in the field of multicultural education Bullivant (1981), Gibson (1975), and Hamalian (1979), all use the definitions by Goodenough as their model.

In the context of educational theory in general, the conception of culture as an adaptive mechanism would suit the progressivist approach that puts emphasis on the educational relevance of contemporary societal problems. With reference to education of minority cultural groups in a multicultural society, this dimension of culture may be better appreciated in contrast with the "historical" conception (see pp. 16-20). An education that emphasizes contemporary social problems would require that much of the educational programs should, instead of focusing on a minority group's cultural heritage, be concerned with developing competen-

cies needed for success in the larger society--that is, the language(s), social skills, and knowledge related to the common culture.

The conception of multicultural learning as an ability to operate competently in multiple cultures is quite useful insofar as the cognitive aspect of culture is concerned; but the main drawback is that it does not take into account the emotional and moral force of culture. For, one may learn to operate competently in more than one culture, but one also needs to identify with some social entity that bears a culture. Moreover, one's sense of belonging to a cultural group involves also, to a greater or lesser degree, some acceptance of its values, beliefs and behavioral norms. (See the discussion in the next section; also note that this issue is discussed at length in chapter 2).

V. THE MORAL VIEW: THE PRESCRIPTIVE FORCE OF CULTURE

The common feature of definitions in this category is an emphasis on the prescriptive dimension of culture. Thus, culture of a society, or a social group, is not merely something that may be acquired through learning, but also one that carries a moral force (prescriptive and proscriptive) for its members. Let us consider some examples:

According to Titiev:

> The term [culture] includes those objects or tools, attitudes and forms whose use is sanctioned under given conditions by the members of a particular society. (Cited in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1963: 98)

Gordon (1964: 32) defines culture as:

> prescribed ways of behaving or norms of conduct, beliefs, values and skills, along with the behavioral patterns based on these categories.

Schermerhorn (1970: 80) underlines the normative dimension of culture in the following words:

> Culture signifies the ways of action learned through socialization, based on norms and values that serve as guides or standards for that behavior.

And acccording to Schwartz & Jordan (1980: 52) culture is

> the sum of the morally forceful understandings acquired by learning and shared with the members of the group to which the learner belongs.

GENERAL COMMENTS: This group of definitions is useful in pointing out an important aspect of culture--i.e., prescriptive--that tends to be overlooked by definitions of group III (structural) and IV (psychological). Thus, culture includes not only the behavioral patterns (observable from actual behavior) but also the ideal patterns. Ideal patterns define what the people of a society would do or say in particular situations if they conform completely to the standards set up by their culture. Behavioral patterns on the other hand are derived from observations of how people actually behave in particular situations (Kluckhohn, 1954:66).

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: These definitions help point out the drawbacks of those arguments and research models used in the field of multicultural education, which assume that one can be multicultural in the sense that one "is equally comfortable in two or more cultures." It is true of course, that a person may, with some effort, develop competence--i.e. acquire knowledge, skills and understandings--in more than one culture. But the important question is this: Do the different cultures, which one becomes "competent" in, carry equal moral force for the individual? Indeed, one may develop "competence" in another culture without feeling any moral obligation to follow the prescriptions of that culture--

for example, an anthropologist studying another culture. Here one may also question another presumption underlying many of the policies and programs in multicultural education that learning about different cultures promotes respect and tolerance of cultural differences. There is much evidence suggesting that "competence" in another culture may coexist with, or even contribute to, feeling of hostility or dislike towards that culture. One may cite a few cases as examples: Hindus and Sikhs in India, Catholics and Protestants in Nothern Ireland, Jews and Palestinians in Israel and the Occupied Territories; by having lived together for centuries, these groups may know a lot about each other without having too high an opinion of each other's culture.

CHAPTER 2
THE MEANING OF "MULTICULTURAL"

One of the major points of argument in the field of multiculturalism, par-
ticularly in the educational context, is the meaning given to the term "multicul-
tural;" that is, what is involved in being, or becoming, multicultural? Proponents
of multicultural education typically express " acquisition of competencies in other
cultures " as a major goal; a number of desirable outcomes, for the individual as
well as for the society, are presumed to follow from this. In contrast, critics dis-
miss the very notion "multicultural" as conceptually absurd, contending that "one
can fully belong to only one culture" (Mazurek, 1979:29).

A closer examination of the conflicting viewpoints suggests that both the posi-
tions are based on different interpretations of the concept "culture"; much of the
dispute on the desirability or practicality of promoting multiculturalism through
education may, thus, be explained in terms of differences in conceptualizing cul-
ture.

The view that one may acquire competencies in different cultures, has its most
obvious, and logical, link to what was identified earlier as the "psychological" con-
cept of culture. Goodenough is one of the chief exponents of this interpretation
of culture; according to him:

> Culture consists of the various standards for perceiving, evaluating,
> and doing that (a person) attributes to other persons as a result of
> his experiences of their actions and admonitions." (Cited in Gib-
> son, 1976:15)

And,

> A society's culture consists of whatever it is one has to know, or
> believe in, in order to operate in a manner acceptable to its mem-
> mbers. (Cited in Bullivant, 1981: 3)

From this conceptual perspective being multicultural--that is, acquisition of competence in different cultures--becomes a matter of ordinary human experience:

> A person may not only attribute different systems of standards to different sets of others, he may also be competent in more than one of them--be competent, that is, in more than one culture. (Cited in Gibson 1976:15)

The considerable influence of Goodenough's interpretation of culture is reflected in a number of works on multicultural education. For example, in her analytical work Gibson (1976:15) describes multicultural education as the "process whereby a person develops competencies in multiple systems of standards for perceiving, evaluating, believing and doing." Gibson's view is adopted almost verbatim in the following statement by NCATE :

> Multicultural education is preparation for the social, political, and economic realities that individuals experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters. This preparation provides a process by which an individual develops competencies for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving in different cultural settings (National Association for Accreditation of Teacher Education, Washington, D.C; quoted by Bullivant, 1981:126).

Bullivant(1981) and Hamalian (1979) also have adopted the psychological concept of culture, as noted earlier (see chapter 1, p.23). But even apart from these specific examples, the view that acquisition of competence in more than one culture is both possible and desirable, is indeed a central assumption of much of the programs and initiatives that come under the rubric of "multiculturalism"; as such, these too may be seen as subscribing to the psychological concept of culture.

However, a fundamental difficulty that seems to have received little attention by proponents of multiculturalism is the considerable ambiguity surrounding the notion of "competency in culture." For, taken as it is, this expression begs a number of questions: What does "competency" imply? How is it to be assessed? What levels of competency are desirable? Which practical?

Starting with the first question, "competency in a culture" may imply any of the following: knowing; knowing and practising; knowing and believing; knowing, together with belief and practice. Let us elaborate on this observation.

First, one who is able to communicate in the language of a cultural group, and has acquired a considerable level of knowledge and understanding of its history, traditions, customs, values, etc., can justifiably be considered as being competent in that culture. However, one may only know, but neither practice nor believe what he knows. For example, an anthropologist may have a great deal of knowledge in, and about, different cultures; but such knowledge does not require that he must also adopt the beliefs and practices of these cultures.

Another case may be that of a person who not only is knowledgeable in a particular society's culture but also acts and behaves according to its norms and rules. However, this does not necessarily mean that he has adopted--that is, internalized--the beliefs and values of that culture. Overt actions are not always true indicators of one's internal beliefs. A person may be acting out of fear of persecution, or social pressures to conform: he may be a spy or a secret agent, or an anthropological researcher trying to gain some insight into a society's culture by posing as one of its members.

Third, the observation that external behaviour does not necessarily reflect one's values and beliefs, also implies the reverse: that one may not practice what he believes. Similar motivations and circumstances, as noted above--e.g., fear of persecution, social pressures, etc.,--may contribute to such a situation.

Finally, a person's competency in a culture may encompass all three elements: knowledge, belief, and practice. For someone who is born and brought up within a particular cultural community, indeed this would be the form of competency normally expected of him. In the case of an outsider, an example might be that of a religious convert, who may not only acquire knowledge about another culture but also adopt its beliefs and values with a view to practice.

Having outlined the different levels of competency with respect to a culture, we now come to the other questions: How do we assess the level of cultural com-

petency? Which level is desirable? Which practical? Here, it must be pointed out that the context of the present discussion is that of a multicultural society; the "cultures" that are being referred to are not mere abstractions, far removed in time and distance, but are those represented by some real, living communities and social groups existing within the larger society. In assessing one's competency in the culture of a particular group, a number of considerations would become important. It would be important to know, for instance, whether the individual is a member of--born and brought up in--that group, or an outsider trying to become competent in a second culture; the relative status of cultures--whether it's the culture of a subordinate group or that of a dominant group--would be a relevant consideration, too. As to whether, and how much, competency in other cultures is desirable, that would obviously depend on the particular goal orientation of the society--or a subsocietal group--with respect to intergroup relations: for example, assimilation, integration, pluralism, or segregation.

If competency in culture is interpreted in the first sense--i.e., knowledge-- then the proposition that one may become competent in more than one culture seems to be a valid one. One may learn to speak different languages, become knowledgeable in the history, traditions, customs, and values of different cultural groups--the only limits being the individual's capacity to learn, and the resources available.

But, if the meaning of competency is to be extended to include practising and believing--besides knowing--then this would require a corresponding shift in the conception of culture from the psychological concept to the moral (or normative) one. In the latter interpretation, a group's culture is not merely a program for problem-solving, or a pattern of knowledge, but also a system of beliefs and values that carry moral force for members of the group. As a member of some particular cultural group, one does not merely learn its culture: one must also live as a representative or bearer of that culture; and, one must participate in, at least some of, the various activities of the group, assume roles and statuses, rights and obligations; futher, in general, any level or form of organized social life necessari-

ly involves the members' sense of identification with, as well as some degree of loyalty and commitment to, the group they belong to.

With this broader and more inclusive interpretation of the terms "culture" and "competency," it becomes necessary to re-exmaine the meanings and implications of the notion "multiculturalism" as it applies to the individual, that is: Is it possible to become multicultural? Is it desirable? As can be expected, the views on the issue are conflicting and apparently contradictory.

Let us begin with the views of those who contend that the idea of "a multicultural individual" is not a viable one. A good example of this position comes in the following statement by Young (1984:425):

> If different cultures possess, and are distinguished by, different sets of fundamental values and beliefs and values then the acquisition of a second culture implies an inherent value conflict and makes little practical sense.

Mazurek (1979:29) takes a similar position:

> The whole notion of multiculturalism is conceptually absurd because if the concept "culture" has any meaning at all, an individual can fully belong to only one culture.

Whether or not one agrees with the views presented above, one should find them heuristically useful. Many writers and researchers on multiculturalism often present a rather simplistic view of acquiring cross-cultural competencies. They seem to ignore the very real possibility that in the course of becoming "competent" in other cultures, an individual may have to deal with values and beliefs which are contrary to the ones he originally held; and that going through such experiences may present certain psychological problems and dilemmas to the individual. Let us illustrate this point with some examples from th literature.

According to Lambert (1984), becoming bicultural is simply a matter of "knowing thoroughly the languages involved, feeling personally aligned with both the

groups, and knowing how to behave in the two atmospheres" (p.250). And follow-
ing is his description of biculturalism[1]:

> The children acquire a second social over-coat that seems to in-
> crease their interest in dressing up and reduces the wear and tear
> placed on either coat alone. (P.249)

Banks (1981:28) describes the bicultural individual as one who is bilingual and
is adept at cultural-switching behaviour:

> [He] is as comfortable within the adopted culture as he is within his
> primordial culture. Each of the two cultures is equally meaningful
> to the bicultural individual.

The views by Lambert and Banks on bicultural competence can be justified to
the extent that there may be situations where the two cultures have lot more in
common than their differences; and where the differences are in minor aspects,
or in matters other than fundamental beliefs and values: e.g., languages, tastes
and styles in food, dress, music, etc. In such cases it is conceivable that a person
may become equally adept in, and feel really comfortable within, the two cultural
milieux.

However, in a society such as Canada, where a number of groups representing
diverse cultures coexist, it would be rather naïve to extend that assumption to all
groups. There may be at least some groups whose core values and beliefs are in
conflict with those of some others. Fundamental elements of religious faith and
practice; moral precepts relating to freedoms, rights and duties; values and beliefs
affecting attitudes towards basic social, political, and economic institutions and

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1   When referred to as a social ideology or an educational approach, the term
"biculturalism" is distinguishable from the term "multiculturalism".
However, for the purpose of discussion in this chapter, the two terms could
be used interchangeably, the difference being simply that of the number of
cultures that the terms imply (i.e., bi- and multi-).

processes,e.g., forms of government, law, science and technology, the free enterprise economy, and education; ideals concerning one's private as well as social life, e.g., family, marriage, and occupational career, all represent areas of potential conflict between different cultures.

Therefore, in discussing cross-cultural competence it is important to note whether, and how much, are the cultures alike or different in terms of fundamental values and beliefs. For example, one can not be a competent monotheist, polytheist, and atheist at the same time, as one may be competent in different languages[2]. Likewise, it is one thing to be knowledgeable about societies that practise cannibalism, or offer ritual sacrifice of human lives to gods, and quite another to also participate in, and morally approve, such practices.

It may be useful, as well as relevant, here to note that Lambert's comments, quoted above, were made with reference to his research on the socio-psychological effects of the English-French bilingualism on children from English families in Canada. Viewed within this specific context, his statement about biculturalism would appear to be quite valid. But, an important point to note here would be that the English and French cultures in Canada do not really differ that much, qua cultures; that, much of their differences can be explained in socio-political and geo-political terms; and that, they share much in terms of fundamental values and beliefs: looking from a broad perspective, they both belong to the Western European civilization through which they share the profound influences of Christianity and the Greco-Roman traditions in arts, philosophy, and other intellectual fields. The fact that both the English and the French enjoy special status in Canada as the "charter groups"; and that, of the two, the English have numerical as well as socio-political dominance, should also be important considerations in assessing the implications of Lambert's findings.

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2   The significance of this point may be better appreciated by referring to the following comment by Goodenogh on the notion of cultural competence: "Just as individuals can be multi-lingual, they can also be multi-cultural". (Quoted in Gibson, 1976:16)

In light of the observations made above, one may not have much to dispute with Lambert's depiction of biculturalism as "acquiring a second social over-coat." However, these observations also serve to put considerable limits on the instructive and illustrative value of Lambert's study for bicultural and multicultural education in general[3]. The bilingualism and biculturalism (in Canada) of a child of the English cultural origin--secure in the knowledge of the status and privileges that his group affiliation endows him with--can hardly serve as a model for a child from a subordinate minority group. Similarity or dissimilarity of groups in terms of their cultures, physical appearance, and their relative socio-economic and political status, are all important factors in achievement of multi-cultural competency, and the related notions of cultural assimilation, pluralism, integration, etc..

However, in pointing out some limitations in the views expressed by some of the proponents of multicultural concept, it should be that similar problems--i.e., ambguities, simplistic assumptions, one-sided treatment of the issues, and faulty logic--are to be found in the works of those who take the opposite view. One common logical mistake lies in turning a conditional statement into an unqualified one, without providing any justification. That is, a proposition might be introduced asserting something as "true" under some specific conditions; but in the arguments following the proposition, the limiting conditions are ignored. As an example consider, once more, the following statement by Young:

> If different cultures possess, and are distinguished by different sets
> of fundamental values and beliefs, then acquisition of second cul-
> ture implies inherent value conflict and makes little practical sense:
> (1984:425)

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3   The criticism here is directed to Lambert's specific comments, as quoted, and not to his views in general. His notions of "additive bilingualism" and "subtractive bilingualism" are based on the acknowledgement that different cultures (and languages) enjoy different statuses in the larger society (see Lambert, 1984:246).

The use of the conjunctive "if," in the above statement does seem to make it a conditional proposition; logically, its corollary can be stated as follows: If different cultures do not possess ... different sets of fundamental values and beliefs then acquisition of a second culture ... does make practical sense. Interpreted in this way, the proposition would be consistent with the observation we made earlier that existence of different cultural groups does not necessarily imply that they are all different in fundamental values and beliefs. In some cases they may be, in others they may not.

However, judging from his other comments preceding the ones being scrutinized, this is not what Young intends to say; there he expresses his position as follows:

> To maintain that a person can be equally comfortable and committed to two different cultures is incompatible with the definition of culture used in this paper. (1984:425)

The definition of culture that Young is referring to is the following one by Schermerhorn, according to which culture is

> A pattern of fundamental beliefs and values differentiating right from wrong, defining rules for interactions, setting priorities, expectations and goals. (Cited in Young, 1984:413)

Thus, the logical flow of Young's argument seems to be constructed as follows: (1) To say that two cultures are different, implies that they possess different sets of fundamental beliefs and values. (2) Since biculturalism involves acquisition of two different cultures, it implies acquisition of two different sets of fundamental beliefs and values. (3) This creates a situation of value-conflict for the bicultural individual. Conclusion: biculturalism makes little practical sense.

Now that we have got the logic of Young's argument clarified, the question still remains: is it a good logic? To put the problem more explicitly, supposing we agree with all the basic premises of his argument, should we also accept his conclusion that, because of the inherent value-conflict it implies, "acquisition of a second culture ...makes little practical sense."

One problem, here, is the ambiguity of the expression, "makes little practical sense." It seems to imply impracticality or impossibility, but may also suggest undesirability. Let us examine both possible interpretations.

IS MULTICURALISM POSSIBLE? We have already posited, earlier in the present discussion (see p. 36), that one can not hold two contradictory beliefs-- e.g., be an atheist and a theist--at the same time. At the sociological level, i.e., taking religion as a social institution, one can not be, for example, a believing and practising Hindu, and a believing and practising Muslim simultaneously: It is hard enough to be a competent follower of one: to follow two would indeed be impractical. Thus far Young's thesis remains tenable.

But what, it may be argued, if one is able to merge two cultures so that he adopts some values and beliefs from one, and some from the other? For example, one may adopt the values and beliefs pertaining to political and economic spheres from one culture, and adopt those pertaining to religious faith from another. We can not rule out such a cultural merger on grounds of impracticality. In a culturally diverse society, or in situations of mixed--i.e., inter-cultural--marriage--, this is what many individuals do experience. What might be questioned, however, is, whether the term "multicultural" should apply to such an individual: Rather than acquiring two cultures, the person has created, for himself, a new culture by combining the two, the argument would go. And it seems to be a tenable argument: The way the term "multicuralism" is usually conceptualized by its proponents and exponents, it implies continued existence of distinct cultures; from such a perspective, conceptually as well as ideologically, multiculturalism is opposed to fusion or merger of cultures.

Therefore, Young's assertion remains valid: multiculturalism (at the individual level) is impractical insofar it is interpreted as being a fully participating and believing member of two groups with different sets of fundamental beliefs and values.

However, one must note that Young's critique is addressed to only one specific interpretation of multiculturalism; it should not be taken as a general rejection of the notion, and the attendant policies and programs. From reviewing the literature on multiculturalism and multicultural education it becomes obvious that majority of the proponents of multiculturalism do not interpret the term "multicultural" in the way indicated above--i.e., "fully belonging to two cultures." The most common educational initiatives in this area are of the "bicultural education" type, designed to produce learners who have "competencies in, and can operate successfully in two different cultures" (Gibson, 1976:13). Insofar as the programs in bicultural education are directed at students from minority groups, the objective is generally to enable the students to preserve, or develop, their competency in their native cultures while they are acquiring the "common culture." As the program proponents see it, the objective of becoming competent in a minority culture need not be in conflict with the objective of acquisition of competency in the common culture. The two cultures are seen as distinct spheres of activity, with some area of overlap. Competence in the common culture, in general, implies competence in the official common language, essential skills and knowledge required for participation in the area of secondary group relationships --i.e., occupational and civic life. (The notions of secondary group, and primary group, relationships are taken from Gordon, 1964:32, 35, 243.) Programs aiming at retention of competence in minority cultures usually emphasize the language, and those elements of culture which are required for operating in the area of primary group relationhips--i.e.,family life, intimate and informal relationships, and the activities and institutions of one's ethnic community. Bicultural education for students belonging to the majority group--or those whose culture is the same as the mainstream culture--usually focuses on bilingualism, and some apprecia-

tion of the minority cultures. Besides the bicultural programs there are also educational approaches, intended for all students, which aim at developing better understanding and appreciation of different cultures in the society. In such programs, the competence in other cultures is intended only at the level of knowledge and understanding, rather than acquisition of beliefs and values. (For a detailed discussion of the different approaches in multicultural education, see Gibson, 1976.)

In short, as we can see, none of the educational approaches mentioned above is aimed at developing individuals who can "fully belong" (see Mazurek, 1979:29) to two or more cultures. If the notion of multicultural competence is interpreted in these limited terms then, ceteris paribus, it is indeed an attainable objective.

The point which the above discussion clearly underlines is that in using the concepts "multicultural" and "bicultural" one ought to make clear, explicitly or implicitly, the particular sense in which the terms are being interpreted.

IS MULTICULTURALISM DESIRABLE? Whether or not acquisition of cultures with different sets of beliefs and values is desirable, would depend on answers to the following two questions: (a) What is the locus of desirability: the individual, the minority cultural group, or the society at large? (b) What is the desired outcome: assimilation, pluralism, integration or segregation?

Obviously, answers to these questions are likely to vary from one particular case to another. However, in general, from the viewpoint of educational experience for the individual, exposure to value-conflict is not necessarily harmful; indeed, experiencing value-conflict may be seen as an essential part of the individual's development as an "educated person." But whether value-conflict is useful or harmful, depends more on how the conflict is resolved than on any particular outcome. In other words, it matters less that an individual becomes bicultural, multicultural, remains monocultural, or gets assimilated into another culture; what matters more is whether any of these takes place at the individual's own pace, and through his own intelligent and relatively independent choice.

It seems to be relevant, here, to have a brief look into the notion of "marginality." Gordon (1964:56) defines a marginal man as "the person who stands on the borders of two cultural worlds but is fully a member of neither." This definition of the marginal man seems to be supporting the view of those who consider the notions biculturalism and multiculturalism to be impractical or as conceptual absurdities. From their perspective, one who acquires more than one culture doers not become "the multicultural person" but rather becomes "the marginal man." As to whether or not cultural marginality is desirable, the responses may diverge from one extreme to another—the divergence owing more to the viewer's particular ideological perspective than to any objective criteria. For example, consider the following two descriptions of the marginal man. In Park's view, the marginal man is

> the individual with the wider horizon, the keener intelligence, the more detached and rational viewpoint ... always relatively the more civilized human being. (Quoted by Lambert, 1984:247)

In contrast, Gordon (1964:57) does not appear to be so favorably impressed with the marginal man's personality:

> Frustrated and not fully accepted by the broader social world he wishes to enter, ambivalent in his attitude toward the more restricted social world to which he has ancestral rights, and beset by conflicting cultural standards, he develops, according to the classic conception, personality traits of insecurity, moodiness, hypersensitivity, excessive self-consciousness, and nervous strain.

Both the above descriptions of the marginal man are equally plausible; a search for evidence in the real life is likely to yield instances of both sets of characteristics. In order to make a general statement in favor of, or against, either possibility, one would have to consider the particulars of the case: e.g., the individual's upbringing and training, his life experiences, the relative status in the larger society of the cultural group he belongs to, the socio-political atmosphere prevailing in the society, and so on.

OTHER ISSUES CONCERNING MULTICULTURALISM: Another major issue in the debate on the concept of "the multicultural individual" is concerned with its implication of carrying multiple identities; the issue of divided loyalties and ambivalent feelings is also raised in this context. Since these issues are closely tied to the notion of ethnic group, perhaps it would be more profitable to treat them later as part of the the discussion on ethnicity.

In our discussion in this chapter, we have looked at notion of multiculturalism as it applies to individuals. Since, many of the important issues in the field of multiculturalism involve problems of intergroup relations, it seems important to analyse the concept of multiculturalism also in terms of its implications for the society and the constituent groups.

Central to such an analysis would be the concept of "common culture," and its relation to the notion of "subcultures." In the next chapter we shall examine the concept of common culture, and consider the implications, in light of our anlysis, for social and educational policies and programs.

CHAPTER 3
COMMON CULTURE

Since, descriptively, the term "multicultural society" implies a context where a number of minority cultural groups coexist within the political framework of a national government, a major part of the practical and theoretical endeavours in the field must contend with the following dilemma: How to reconcile the divergent claims of the constituent groups with the claims of the national society as a whole? Transposed to the educational context, the problem becomes that of striking an appropriate balance between the educational goals of minority cultural groups on the one hand, and those of the larger society on the other. The following is an example of the terms in which the issue is typically proposed:

> The goal of the curriculum should be to help the child to learn how to function effectively within the common culture, his or her ethnic culture, and other ethnic cultures. (Banks, 1981:70)

One major difficulty in dealing effectively with these imporant issues is the considerable confusion surrounding the meaning and implications of the concepts that are central to a proper understanding of the issues. In the discussion to follow, we shall analyze the notion of "common culture" as a way of demonstrating how conceptual problems create serious difficulties in treatment of social and educational issues.

The term "common culture," as used in the above-statement, is representative of a variety of terms that are often invoked, and used interchangeably, in debates on multiculturalism. Among the terms that are frequently used in the literature as alternatives to "common culture," are the "mainstream culture," "core culture," "dominant culture," "majority culture," and "universal culture." Sometimes expressions such as "the larger society," "the wider system," or "the mainstream society," although not making any explicit reference to the notion of culture, are also used to convey meanings similar to the terms mentioned above.

Now, a varied terminology, per se, is not what causes the problem : "nomenclature is relatively unimportant so long it is consistent," as Gordon (1975;98) has remarked. Serious difficulties in interpretation and understanding arise when key terms are used in a loose, unreflective manner: a word having more than one connotation may be used inconsistently to convey different senses as it suits a particular line of argument; or, different terms, apparently related but carrying different emphases and shades of meanings, may be used indiscriminately as synonyms, and thus unwittingly cause considerable confusion. The problem of ambiguity and inconsistency involving the term common culture, and other related terms, are to be found in the works of both the theoreticians and the practitioners, and are reflected further in form of conflicting educational goals, incoherent curricular programs, incompetent research designs, and contradictory findings.

Anyone engaging in a conceptual analysis of the term "common culture" must contend with the following questions: In what way is the "common culture" common? Is it common in the sense of : (i) being widespread, general, and frequently observed (e.g., the maple tree is a common sight across Canada); or (ii) being shared by, or belonging to, more than one (e.g., Canada and the U.S have a common border)?[1] Furthermore, with respect to the latter sense, is a culture "common" by virtue of common participation, or, because it represents contributions of different cultural groups? Also, What aspects and elements of culture are circumscribed by the society's common culture?

Going through the literature on multiculturalism, one discerns three distinctive, but closely related, ways in which the term "common culture" and its alterna-

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1   There is another sense of "common culture" which is invoked, typically, in the literature dealing with educational issues relating to social class differnces : that is, "the popular culture", or "mass culture", as contrasted with "elite culture" or the "high culture." However, this interpretation does not seem to be of much relevance to the present context of discussion.

tives are used (see the summary table on p.47). Let us examine these in some detail.

First, common culture is interpreted as representing the common area of involvement and participation by different subcultures in the society. The emphasis, here, is on those areas of societal activity that are imperatives for existence of any society organized as a nation-state. This is well illustrated in the following remarks by Entwistle (1978):

> Any conception of community which transcends the small locality requires some conception of a common culture (p. 129) .... If only at the level of daily life in the market place there is common involvement in large numbers of economic, social and political institutions (p. 128)

Bullivant's following comments (1981:232), though not explicitly using the term common culture, may also be used to illustrate the emphasis of this particular sense of the term:

> Certain common institutions essential for well being and smooth functioning of the nation state as a whole must be maintained : common language, common political system, common legal system, common market system and so on.

It should be noted that under this interpretation of common culture, the focus is mainly on institutions and activities in the public arena. Let us denote this as "common culture I(a)."

A variation of the above interpretation takes place when its scope is widened to refer both to the public and the private spheres of social life. The following passage from Berry provides a useful illustration:

> Any society, if it is to survive , must have a considerable agreement among its members as to basic ideals, goals, values/ mores, and beliefs. An aggregation of individuals, or of groups, each speaking its own language, worshippinng its own gods, practicing its own sex mores, following its own peculiar customs with respect to food, dress, recreation, and government would not be a society at all. (Quoted by Wood, 1978:29)

TABLE 1

THE DIFFERENT MEANINGS OF COMMON CULTURE

I DISTINCTIVE CHARACTERISTICS:	II	III
- Commonality, Sharing	- Prevalence, Popularity	- Dominance, Centrality
- Universality	- Majority	- Majority or Universality not necessary

EMPHASIS ON:

- Those aspects and elements of culture within the larger society, which the subcultures have in common.	- The culture which is prevalent--i.e., followed by a majority of the society's population.	- Culture of the dominant/core group that serves as the standard for other groups.

SCOPE:

I(a)

- Focus mainly on the area of public life.	- Covers both the public and the private areas of life.	- Covers both the public and the private areas of life.

I(b)

- Includes cultural phenomena relating both to the area of public

as well as private life.

TERMS TYPICALLY USED:

- Common culture, shared culture, universal culture	- Majority culture, mainstream culture, general culture, common culture	- Dominant culture, mainstream culture, core culture

Even where a society's constituent groups represent a wide divergence of cultures, unless it is organized on a strictly enforced policy of segregation, the process is likely to affect culture not only in the area of public and civic life, but also in the the area of private life. It, therefore, seems reasonable to offer a conception of common culture, I(b), which is similar to commom culture I(a), in that they both stresss commonality and sharing between subcultures, but covers a broader spectrum of life.

The second major, distinctive interpretation of common culture refers to those aspects of and elements of culture that are widespread, pervasive, and followed by a majority of the the society's population; let us identify this as "common culture II." This sense of common culture is exemplified by Bank's following description (1981:78) of the American universal culture :

> [It is the culture] that every American regardless of his ethnic group, shares to a great extent. This culture includes American creed values as ideals, American English, a highly technological and industrial civilization, a capitalistic economy, and a veneration of materialism and consumption.

There is an important shift of emphasis here. Whereas in common culture I (both a & b) the focus was on that area of the national society's culture which represents the overlapping of subcultures, common culture II emphasizes pervasiveness and popularity with respect to the population in general. In other words, criterion in the former is that of commonality between groups, in the latter it is prevalence with respect to the majority of individuals in the society, regardless of their group attachments. Thus, from among the different aspects and elements of subcultures in the larger society, we look for the ones which are most widely adopted across the society--that is, those cultural phenomena which form the societal norms. The sum total of these modal elements of culture would form the common culture, in its current interpretation. This common culture may include traits that are held in common by the various subcultures, but would not be restricted to only these items: it would include also items that are not common to

all cultural groups, but nonetheless are followed by, or adopted by, a majority of the society's population. For example, in broad terms, Christianity, a western European heritage, and "white" racial features, may be considered as prevalent in Canada, but can not said to be common to all the cultural groups. In the literature on multiculturalism the terms that are frequently used to represent the sense II of common culture, are: the "majority culture," "mainstream culture," "general culture," and "dominant culture."

However, in a subtle but important shift of emphasis, the above mentioned terms can be, and indeed are, sometimes used in the sense of being the "culture of the dominant group," where dominance implicitly refers to socio-political power, rather than numerical majority. We shall denote this as "common culture III." Of course, where the dominant group is also the majority, it would be rather difficult to distinguish between common culture II and common culture III; yet, it is important to recognize the difference in emphasis between the two. In one, the focus is on a widespread, popular adoption and observation of cultural elements, whereas in the other the stress is on the relative status of subcultures in the society. The point--about the relative status of subcultures--is well underlined in the following comments by Gordon (1964:72), where he refers to the context of a national society in which a number of subsocieties coexist, but

> one of the subsocieties and its way of life is dominant by virtue of
> original settlement, the preemption of power, or overwhelming
> preponderance in numbers.

Having outlined the different interpretations and applications of "common culture," we are now in a position to examine some further ambiguities related to the notion. One major source of ambiguity concerns description of common culture in terms of it being the area of shared culture, or the area of common participation for all the groups and individuals in a society. Consider the following examples:

> Without shared meanings about large areas of experience, social life would be impossible." (Entwistle, 1978:129)

> While ethnic groups have some unique cultural characteristics, all groups in America share many cultural traits". (Banks, 1981: 71)

Ambiguity arises here because—besides the fact that by definition "sharing" implies "having in common"--with reference to common culture, there are at least three possible senses of "sharing" which one may fail to distinguish. To share a culture may imply either, or a combination, of the following : (a) common participation, (b) common acceptance, and (c) common contribution. In the literature on multiculturalism, one finds that generally no attempt is made to distinguish the three dimensions of "sharing a common culture," or to examine their inter-relationships.

Thus, in light of the above, we may propose the following as the moot points in our discussion of common culture:

(i) Whether participation in some common institutions necessarily implies acceptance of the underlying values, ideals and beliefs?.

(ii) Different groups, and individuals, may display different levels of participation in the common culture.

(iii) To the extent common culture implies common participation and/or common acceptance, does it also imply common influence?

PARTICIPATION AND ACCEPTANCE

Let us draw upon some examples from the literature. From Entwistle's discussion of the notion of common culture, the following two remarks may be pertinent to the issue under consideration:

> If only at the level of daily life in the market place there is common involvement in large numbers of economical, social and political institutions.(1978: 128)

And,

> Daily life in the market place depends upon common acceptance of conventions and institutions of many kinds .... The law is commonly understood and largely accepted across social class, as are moral norms which give the law its acceptance. (1978:129)

One may find it difficult to dispute the view that common participation, across social groupings, in certain basic societal institutions is a necessary basis for any society's functioning as a nation state. Also, in general, participation and involvement in a common activity would indicate some acceptance, together with understanding, of the underlying rules and principles, on part of the participants. However, one may overstress the point of sharing and commonality to a neglect of differences between subcultures, both in terms of participation and acceptance. In particular, one has to be careful in drawing too tight a link between participation and acceptance. It is indeed debatable whether one's obedience to a law, or conformity to a behavioral norm, necessarily indicates one's acceptance of their moral underpinnings. Also, acceptance in the sense of agreeing to obey the law in general, should be distinguished from acceptance in the sense of approving the particular laws. At the risk of belaboring the obvious, in any society, at any given time, there are bound to be some laws that are controversial: approved by some, opposed by others. Yet, in general, both the supporters as well as opponents would subscribe to the authority of law.

The main source of ambiguity, here, seems to be the notion of "acceptance". Generally, "acceptance," connotes agreement or approval, but may also be used in situations where one disagrees with certain terms and conditions, yet "accepts" them for prudential reasons (e.g., accepting "under protest," or accepting an offer that "one can not refuse"). The point seems to be of particular relevance to multi-cultural societies, where subordinate groups must learn to live with the power of the dominant group whether they like it or not. It, therefore, seems to be a valid observation that the mere fact of participation in common institutions, or an apparent conformity to the societal norms, does not necessarily imply their approval by the participants.

Having noted some reservations with regards to a conception of common culture which implicitly correlates common participation in basic institutions of the society with the participant's acceptance of the values and beliefs that such institutions represent, it must be acknowledged that for any society to continue functioning as a society, there must be " a considerable agreement among the members as to basic ideals, goals, values, mores, folkways, and beliefs" (Berry, cited in Wood, 1978:29). The important point is to realize that a "considerable agreement" should not be equated with unanimity: unless one wishes to advocate a static and monolithic view of common culture, some allownce must be made for disagreement and differences among the participating members.

DIFFERENT LEVELS OF PARTICIPATION

Somewhat closely related to the points discussed in the preceding section, concerning participation in common culture, is the observation that there may be, quantitavely as well as qualitatively, different levels of participation. Participation may be active or passive; competent or incompetent. Thus with reference to any common activity, it may be asked: does participation in the activity constitute a common experience, even if different participants may have been involved at different levels of participation? One may think of almost any example of a common activity or event, say a major-league baseball game, and observe how it encompasses different levels and forms of participation. Thus, in a baseball game, the players, the umpire, coaches, spectators, broadcasters and reporters, are all related to the same event, albeit at different levels of participation. Furthermore, within each level of participation, the participants would possess, and display, varying degrees of skill, understanding and interest. From this analysis, it can be argued that participation in the same event does not constitute a common experience for participants at different levels of involvement.

The argument does, indeed, look plausible. However, it should be noted that, in a sense, it is related to the subjective conception of culture, whereby every individual develops a "personal culture"--i.e., that part of the totality of a society's

culture which a single person internalizes (cf. Entwistle, 1978:132). From this perspective, since no two individuals have identical personal history, or the same accumulated body of experiences, every person has a unique culture.

As a justification of the subjective conception of culture, one may agree with the dictum, that "the wise and the fool see not the same tree"; however, to stress this point too much would be to reject any possibility of a shared experience even for the most commonplace activities and affairs--e.g., dining together, going to a picnic, reading a book, listening to a song--where one ordinarily speaks of "sharing an experience." Taken to its logical conclusion, this would make any conception of community and social life impossible: for, social life is made possible only when people living in the same area share understandings over a wide range of experience (cf. Entwistle 1978:129).

The way to avoid such an absurd conclusion would be to avoid confusing common experience with identical experience. Let us go back to the analogy of a baseball game; it was used to suggest that with differences in levels of participation, and in talents and interest of the participants, the notion of common experience would be untenable. However, one may also point out that there are many things that all the participants must hold in common in order to make possible the baseball game. For example, some minimum understanding of the basic rules of the game, the notion of winning and losing, the meanings of various symbols--the different dresses distinguishing the players from the nonplayers, and the home team from the visitors, the umpire's gestures--are shared by all. All the participants must understand their respective roles, the interrelationship with those of the others, and the statuses and expectations that are attatched to each of the roles in terms of, what constitutes an acceptable behaviour, and what are the limits within which each must stay. Of course, much of this is taken for granted; and one does not appreciate how much understanding is shared by the different participants, until one meets someone who is a complete stranger to the game of baseball--as well as to the socio-cultural context in which a game is taking place--,and invites him along to the stadium.

Putting the issue in the context of a multicultural society, we may conclude from the above discussion that it is important to recognize the differences in levels of participation between the different cultural groups; but the fact of different levels of participation does not, in itself, obviate the notion of a common culture. What may be worthy, however, of investigation in the multicultural society would be whether there exists a strong and persistent correlation of certain levels of participation with some specific groups; and whether, and how much of the differences can be explained in cultural terms. Some intimation of this point can be found in the Canadian literature on multiculturalism, and social sciences in general, which points to a strong and persistent correspondence between ethnic group attachment and the society's class structure (see Porter 1975, for example). However, the important point from the perspective of multiculturalism, as we have already noted, is whether, and to what extent, the correspondence can be attributed to cultural differences rather than structural, or some other, inequalities—for example, the period of settlement, the socio-economic background of immigrants at the time of arrival, and so on. Of course, the distinction between what's attributable to culture, and what to social structure is not always clear. However, it is important to maintain the distinction, so as to keep the issues in proper perspective.

DIAGRAMMATIC ILLUSTRATIONS: The discussion relating to the different levels of participation in the common culture by different groups, may be illustrated by referring to the diagrams by Entwistle and Banks (reproduced as diagrams 1.1 and 1.2 respectively; see p. 55). The diagrams by both the writers are remarkably similar, showing subcultures as distinct spheres of cultural phenomena that overlap with each other in the area of common culture. In neither of the diagrams is there any attempt to depict the differences in the level of participation by different groups; all subcultures are shown as equal participants in the common culture.

DIAGRAM 1.1

WORKING CLASS CULTURE

COMMON CULTURE

OTHER SUB CULTURE A

OTHER SUBCULTURE B

DIAGRAM 1.2

SUBCULTURE A *
(ETHNIC SUBSOCIETY A)

COMMON CULTURE
(UNIVERSAL AMERICAN SOCIETY)

SUBCULTURE D
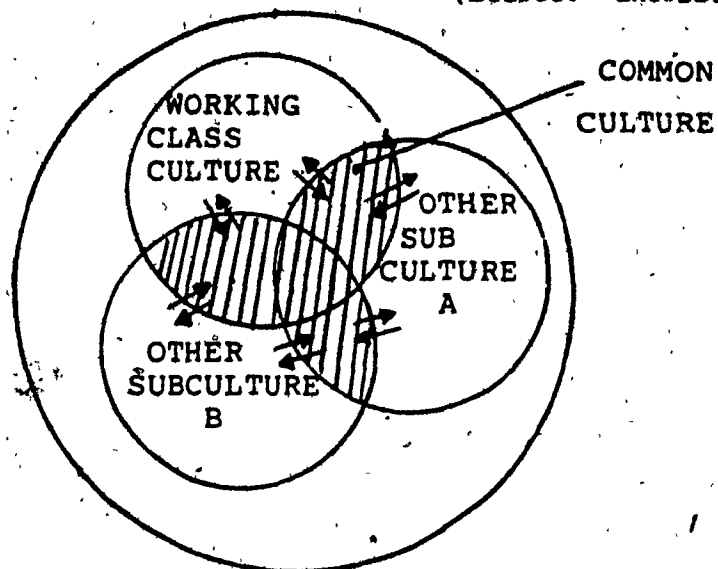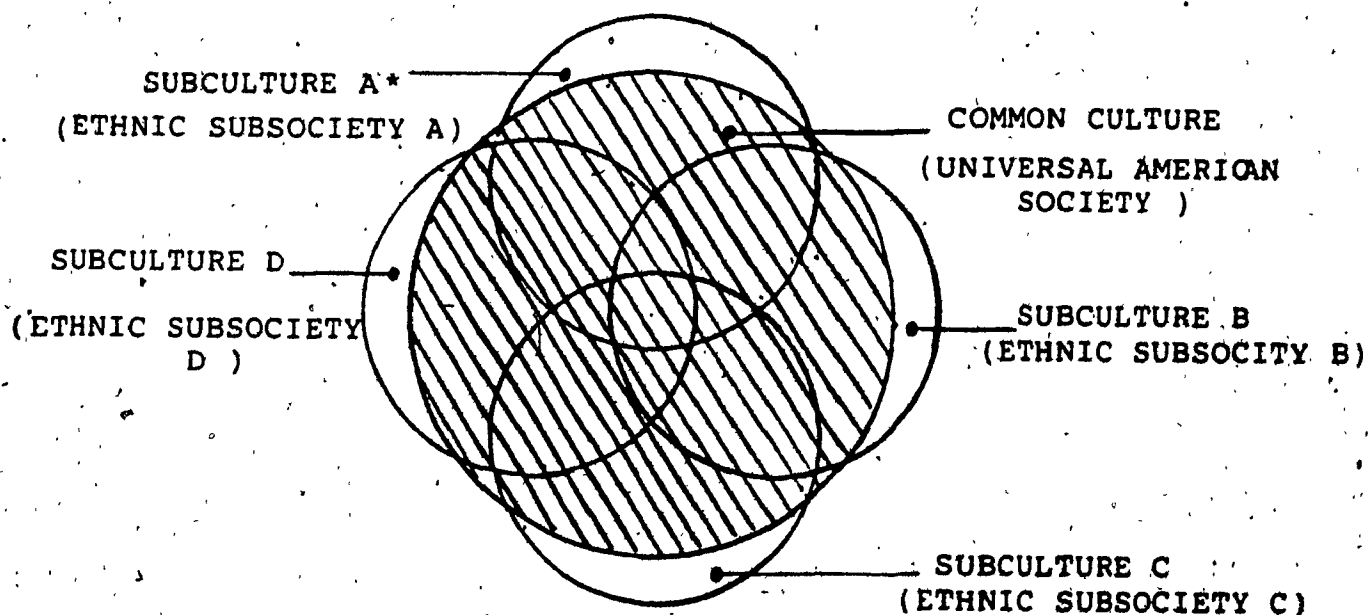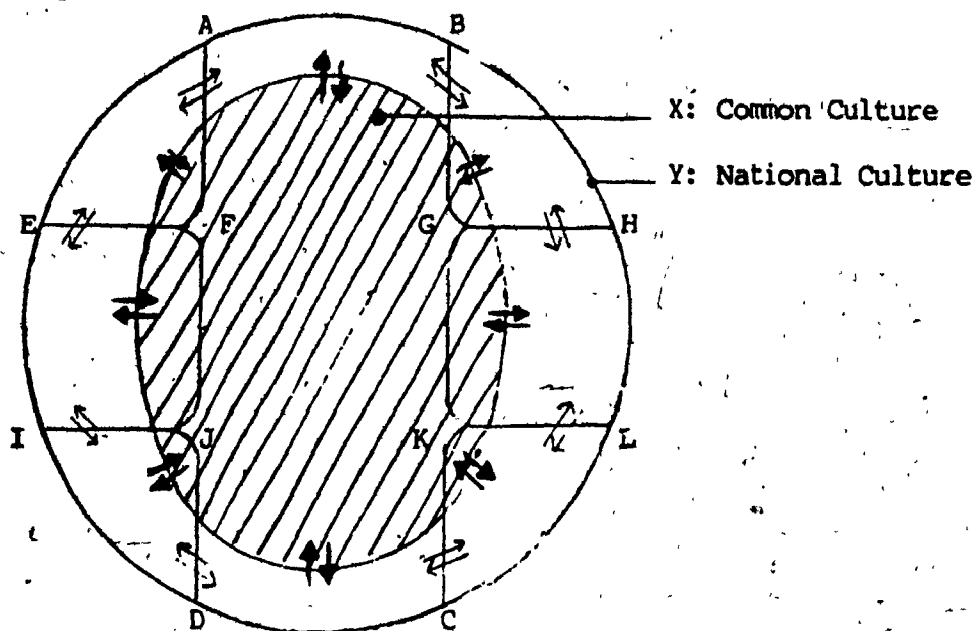(ETHNIC SUBSOCIETY D)

SUBCULTURE B
(ETHNIC SUBSOCITY B)

SUBCULTURE C
(ETHNIC SUBSOCIETY C)

* Note: The terms actually used in the original
   diagram by Banks are shown in the parenthesis.

DIAGRAM 1.3

Participation of Subcultures in the Common Culture

INDEX:

X (The shaded elliptical area): represents the common culture.

Y (The area circumscribed by circle Y): represents the national culture, or, the whole culture of the society. The white areas in the circle show participation in the area exclusive to a subculture; the shaded area indicates participation in the common culture.

ABCD: The area enclosed within this boundary represents the Dominant subculture. Members of this group participate mostly in the area of common culture; very little of their activities take place in the subcultural area.

AEF, BGH, CKL, and DIJ: These depict minority subcultures whose members participate less in the area of common culture, and more in the area exclusive to their particular subculture.

EFJI and GHLK: Minority subcultures whose members have comparatively a balanced level of participation in the common culture and their respective subcultures.

⇄ These bidirectional arrows indicate that the boundary between the common culture and the subcultures is permeable on both sides in terms of mutual influence.

⇄ These bidirectional arrows indicate the mutual influence between subcultures.

However, in a society constituted of a variety of cultural groups, there are bound to be some variations in the level of participation from one group to another. In general, a group whose culture is relatively more congruent with the mainstream culture, is likely to have a higher level of participation in the common culture, than a group whose culture deviates considerably from the mainstream. Furthermore, in comparison to those from the latter group, individuals belonging to the former group are likely to have a higher level of participation in the area of common culture than in the area exclusive to the subculture.

Diagram 1.3 (p. 56) attempts to illustrate the relationship of subcultures to the common culture, taking the above mentioned observations into account.

COMMON CULTURE AND SUBCULTURES:
PARTICIPATION, OR INFLUENCE?

In our discussion, earlier (see pp.44-49), concerning the different meanings of common culture, it was noted that the term "common culture" is often used alternatively with the "mainstream culture"; and in turn, the mainstream culture is referred to interchangeably with the terms such as the "dominant culture" and "core culture." It was further pointed out that the latter three terms are sometimes interpreted as the "dominant group's culture" (cf. Gordon, 1964:72). This identification of mainstream culture with the society's dominant cultural group raises some important questions: If it is the dominant group's culture which is reflected in the cultural mainstream then in what sense can one talk of the notion of common culture as a "shared" culture? What is it about the common culture that is being shared by the subcultures—participation, or contribution, or both? In the literature on multiculturalism one finds a divergence of views with respect to these points. Let us look into some examples.

Entwistle (1978: 127-128) sees the relationship of mainstream cultures to the tributary cultures as a reciprocal one, whereby the tributary cultures both feed

the mainstream and exist as currents mingled within it. This reciprocity of influence between the mainstream culture and subcultures is shown in diagram 2.1 (see P. 59). From this diagram—looking at the number of arrows going in each direction, from the subculture to the mainstream, and vice versa—it may be inferred that the subculture's influence on the mainstream culture is equal to the influence that it receives from the latter. This seems to be rather untenable position[2]. A more reasonable view would be that a subculture is subject to far greater influence from the cultural mainstream than the influence it exerts in return.
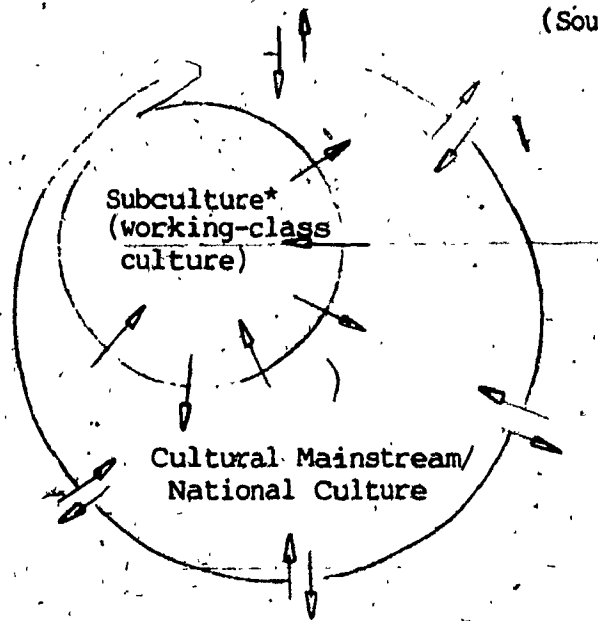
Another relevant observation can be made by referring to Entwistle's other diagram (see diag. 1.1 on p.55) where he depicts mutual influence of subcultures on each other, as well as their relative influence on the common culture. Here, too, judging from the diagrams and his related comments, Entwistle somehow seems to overlook that different subcultures with differential socio-economic and political status in the society, are likely to wield different degrees of influence on the mainstream culture: a similar observation would apply to their reciprocal influence on each other.

Banks (1981:78) in describing the process through which the common culture develops in the U.S., uses the notion of "multiple acculturation." Taken as a theory, the notion suggests that in the development of a society's common culture, the dominant group has the greatest influence; but, minority groups also contribute considerably to the common culture; each of the subordinate subcultures influences the dominant group's culture, as well as cultures of the other minority groups. It is through these complex series of acculturations that the society's common culture evolves; the process is an ongoing one (cf. Banks, 1981:79). This position is depicted here in diagram 2.2 (see p. 59).

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2   It should be noted that Entwistle's analysis refers to subcultures as a category based on social-class divisions, rather than ethnicity. However, even in the case of social- class subcultures our point remains valid that the mainstream's influence on subcultures would be much greater than vice versa.

DIAGRAM 2.1

Subculture*
(working-class
culture)

Cultural Mainstream/
National Culture

*Note: the term used in
the original diagram is
shown in the parenthesis

DIAGRAM 2.2

African

Indian

Asian

Anglo-Saxon
Protestant

Hispanic

The
American
Universal
Culture

Southern
and
Eastern
European

Jewish
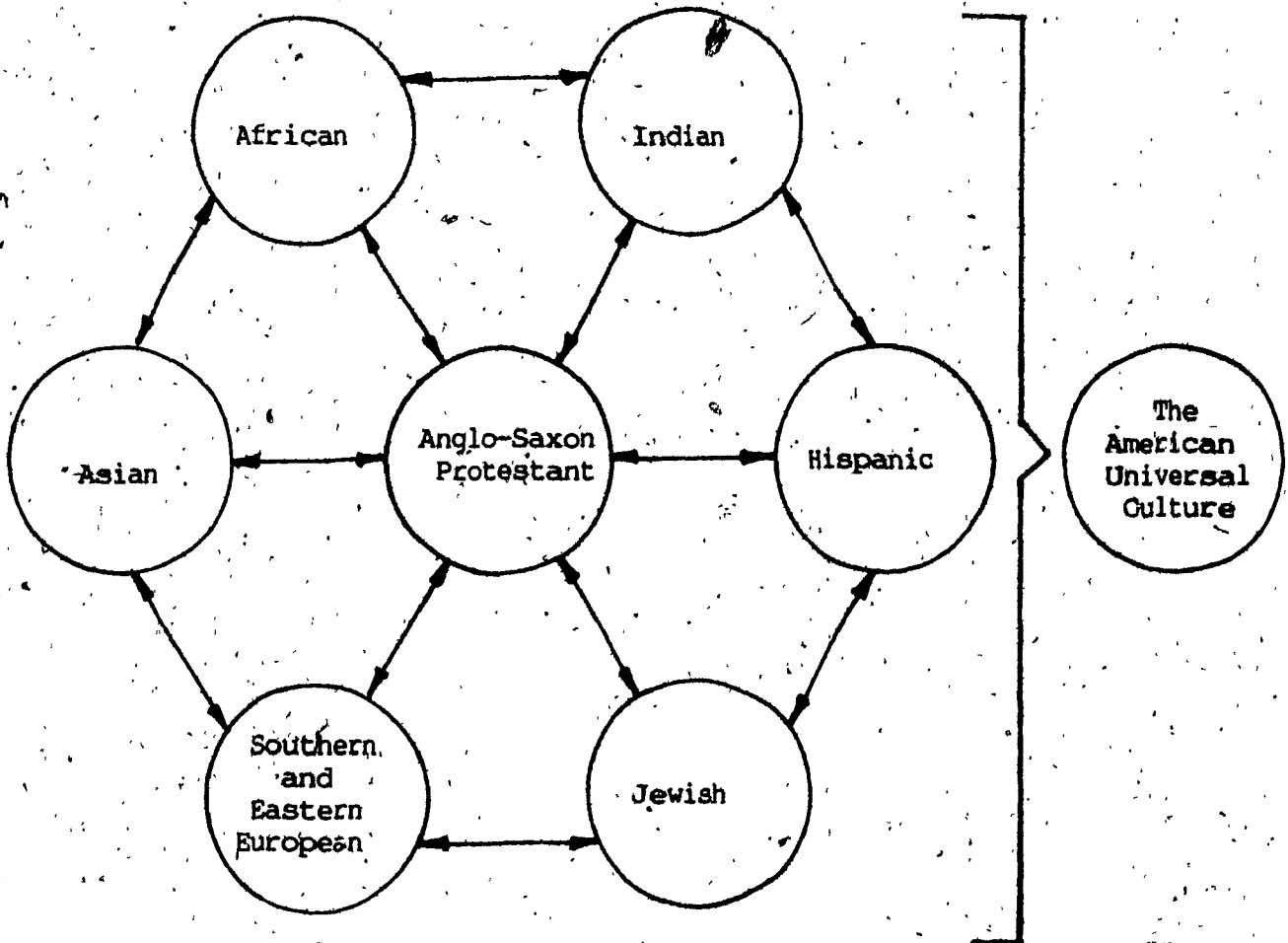
Bank's viewpoint may be acceptable to the extent that in a multicultural society, development of its overall culture would, at least in some measure, be influenced by the mere presence of each cultural group. If one could visualize the society's total culture as some sort of a chemical compound, then it is true that addition or removal of even the smallest element. may start a chain of reactions, thus altering the chemical properties of the solution. However, in context of the issue at hand, the important questions are: (a) which areas or aspects of the society's total culture are influenced by a particular subculture? and (b) how significant is the influence?

Other than repeatedly asserting that minority ethnic groups have made important contributions to the American universal culture, Banks offers little in terms of some concrete examples to support his assertion; where he does provide some evidence, it does not go too far. For example, in contending that the American universal culture should not be identified with the Anglo-Saxon Protestant culture, he makes the following remarks (1981:217):

> While Anglo-Saxon protestants have profoundly influenced our society and culture, other ethnic groups such as Jewish Americans; Black and Mexican Americans have deeply affected American literature, music, arts, and values.

Somewhere else Banks makes the following observation (p. 80):

> The earliest British immigrants borrowed heavily from the American Indians on the East coast and probably would not have survived if they had not assimilated Indian cultural components and used some of their farming methods and tools.

Apparently, Banks does not find it necessary to distinguish between cultural contribution in the area of society's fundamental political, legal, economic, and social institutions--and the underlying beliefs and values-- and contribution in the area of arts, literature, and music. Also with reference to the latter forms of contribution, one must draw a distinction between contribution to the larger-society's

culture by some members of an ethnic group, and influence of the ethnic group's culture on the society. Just because an individual can be identified with a certain ethno-cultural category, whether or not he himself accepts that identity, does not imply that his contribution to the larger society's culture is necessarily a contribution owing to his minority cultural background. For example, consider an individual with a Chinese ancestry who may have become famous as a writer in America. But supposing that this individual is three or four generations removed from his ancestors who first migrated to the new land; he has been been brought up and educated in America, has never been to China, and his books are all written in English, using the historical and socio-cultural background of the American society. To what extent may one be justified in viewing this as a contribution of the Chinese subculture to the American universal culture?

The point of the argument is not to deny the fact or value of contribution of minority cultural groups to the society's common culture but, rather, to identify the limitations of Banks' views concerning the nature and significance of this contribution.

Gordon's position on the issue is clearly indicated in his comments quoted earlier in the chapter (see p. 49). It can be briefly recapitulated as follows: In a multi-cultural society, one of the cultural groups holds the dominant status. It is this group's culture that provides the cultural standard by which other groups measure their degree of assimilation or adjustment. While the dominant group's culture is not free from the influence of minority cultures, such influence is, indeed, insignificant (cf. 1964: 72-73).

In comparison with Entwistle and Banks, Gordon seems to underplay the role of minority subcultures in influencing the larger society's culture. However, his position must be appreciated keeping in view the distinction that he draws between "influencing the cultural patterns themselves and contributing to the development and progress of the society" (1964:73). With reference to the context of the U.S., Gordon suggests that it is in the latter area that the influence of

the minority cultural groups has been most noticeable. In elaborating this view-point he makes the following observation:

> With some exceptions, as the immigrants and their children have become Americans, their contribution, as laborers, farmers, doctors, lawyers, scientists, artists, etc., have been made by way of cultural patterns that have taken their their major impress from the mould of the overwhelming English character of the dominant Anglo-Saxon culture or subculture ... (p.73)

Overall, Gordon's position seems to be well-founded. There is one qualification, however, that may be expressed concerning his view of the dominant group's role in shaping the larger society's culture. In defining his notion of the "core culture" as "the culture of the dominant subsociety (1964:72)," Gordon identifies it too closely with a single cultural group--i.e., the White Anglo-Saxon Protestants. This view seems to present a rather exaggerated role for only one cultural group in influencing the society's common culture; it ignores the process of assimilation which, over the long run, brings at least some members of the minority groups, too, into the society's mainstream or the core group.

One may, thus, propose to make a distinction between the terms "dominant group" and "core group." "Dominant group" should be used to refer to the group which has historically controlled the power structure of the society, and still does. In contrast, the term "core group" should be used to denote that segment of society's population which is most representative of the society's cultural norms. The distinction is subtle, but important. It may be true that the core group would largely consist of members of the dominant group; but only largely, not exclusively. Members of the minority cultural groups also may enter the core group through the processes of cultural and structural assimilation.

Thus, with reference to the contemporary Canadian and American context, it is the core group, in its broader conception, that most influences the cultural mainstream. Other groups, as Entwistle and Banks suggest, do make contributions to the mainstream culture; but in terms of the model being proposed here, any contribution from a group outside the cultural core would have to be first approved and adopted--with some modification, perhaps--before being passed on

DIAGRAM 2.3

The Mainstream Culture: Contribution of Subcultures

The Cultural
Mainstream
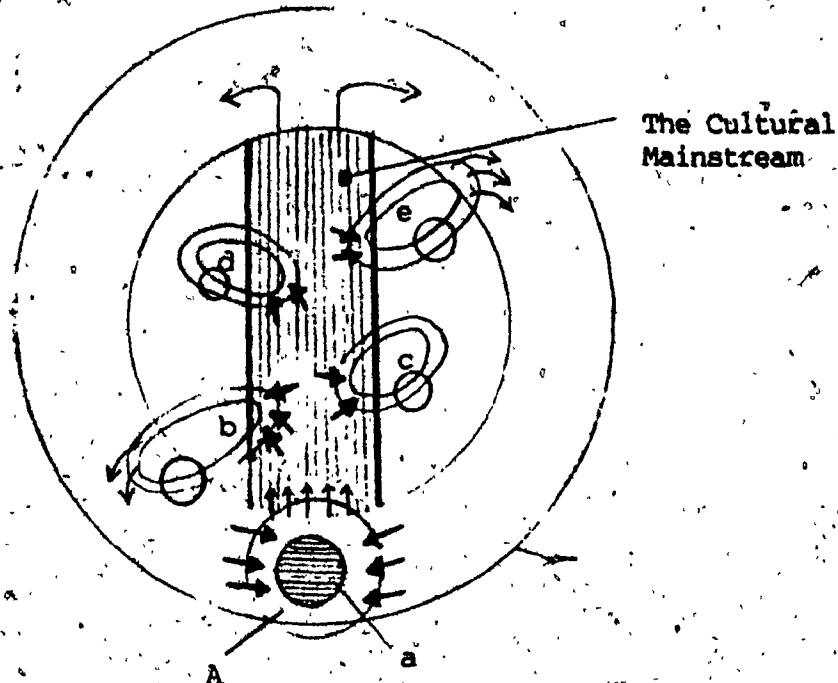
INDEX:

A: The core subsociety.

a : The dominant cultural group.

b,c,d, and e: Minority cultural groups.

⟶ These arrows indicate cultural influence received by a cultural group.

⟶ These arrows indicate cultural influence contributed by a group.

Note: The number of arrows in either direction indicates the relative levels of influence received and contributed.

into the mainstream culture. Diagram 2.3 (see p. 63) illustrates the relationship of the cultural mainstream with the core group, as well as with the dominan. group and other cultural groups.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL POLICY

Our analysis of the term "comon culture" was intended to show the complexity of the concept, the various shades of meaning it carries, and the different ways it is interpreted by writers in social science and education. Now we shall attempt to demonstrate how a clearer conception of common culture can help in resolving some of the major social and educational issues common to multicultural societies.

One major area of dispute in multicultural societies involves the issue of "cultural rights." The notion of cultural rights is related to the argument used by some proponents of cultural pluralism that democratic values grant groups and individuals the freedom to adhere to and maintain their respective cultures. This freedom with respect to culture, the proponents claim, follows from the other rights and freedoms honoured in societies founded on democratic principles: for example, freedom of conscience and religion, freedom of opinion and expression, and freedom of association (cf. Jaenen, 1981:10). This line of thinking is well illustrated by the following comments:

> [Multiculturalism] ... establishes the right of each ethnocultural group to preserve those facets of its unique identity that it regards as important ... (Wells, 1981:4-5)

And,

> In pluralistic society, groups have the right to develop their own identities, life styles and languages, as well as to preserve their own cultural heritages, on a basis of equality with the British-French tradition. (Aoki et al, 1984:269)

But these views are challenged by critics as advocating "cultural relativism": the proposition that all cultures are equally valid. They point out to the serious fundamental problems such a position would entail for society composed of diverse cultures. Torney & Tesconi (1977: 107-108) underline the dilemma of pluralistic societies in the following words:

> If there is no one way of life that can without question claim supe-
> riority over any other, how does one go about resolving competing
> and conflicting values ? What are the criteria for such judgements ?
> If we are to live by the social philosophy of cultural pluralism, it is
> necessary to create some effective principles and means for resolv-
> ing conflicts in values and goals.

And, Craft (1984: 9) offers these comments

> An absence of a core of common beliefs and sentiments--"a collec-
> tive conscience"--may lead to serious disintegration.

The serious questions and issues raised above are indeed valid concerns. However, it seems that much of the difficulties arise from lack of conceptual clarity. Whether and to what extent cultural pluralism becomes seriously problematic depends on what elements are included in the term "culture." The problems of cultural relativism associated with the philosophy of cultural pluralism depend very much on how one interprets the notion "cultural relativism": that "all cultures are equally valid", or, that " all cultures can only be understood from within their own framework of rationality" (Cf. Jeffcoate, 1982: 81).

One difficulty in being too critical of cultural pluralism is that its basic ideological assumptions come very close to those of democratic pluralism. That a policy of cultural pluralism can be justified by reference to democratic values, is underlined by Gordon (1964:240) in his following remarks:

> Structural and cultural pluralism are not incompatible with the
> democratic ideals. . . . . Subsocietal affiliation and participation, so
> far as the state is concerned, are voluntary matters, . . . and the

voluntary selection of structural and subsocietal affiliations, within functional limits, is well within the area of personal choice provided for by democratic values.

It should be noted, however, that Gordon while acknowledging the compatibility of cultural pluralism with democratic values adds an important qualification--the notion of "functional limits." This notion seems to provide the key to resolving the dilemma of cultural relativism: While democratic principles do grant individuals many rights and freedoms, these are not unlimited; some limits are necessary not only for functioning of the society, but also for providing a system under which all citizens are able to exercise their rights and freedoms. But, the question may still arise: if all cultures are equally valid, how do we go about setting the limits ?

It seems that the difficulty can be adequately resolved by referring to the notions of "common culture" and "subculture," and their interrelationship. For as was discussed earlier in the chapter, in its essential sense the concept "common culture" refers to those common institutions--the government, law, the market system, for example--that are necessary for the functioning of a society, and to the core of overarching values, ideals, and beliefs on which such institutions are organized (see pp.45-46). In relation to the common culture of a society, the cultures of its various constituent groups are to be considered as subcultures: The claims of subcultures may be justly subordinated to those of the common culture; and value-conflicts between different subcultures can be resolved with reference to the common culture which provides the transcendental criteria for judgement. Thus, for example, if the principle of "the sanctity of life" is part of the common culture of a society, then the principle of "freedom of religion" can not be used to justify a religious practice that involves ritual sacrifice of human life. Some other moral principles which may be considered in evaluating the demands of subcultures for "cultural rights" could be, for example, the equal consideration for interests of all people, the freedom of association for individuals, and the promotion of common good.

THE EDUCATIONAL DEBATE: In educational context, the cultural relativist argument tends to take this form: "All cultures ought to be represented equally in the curriculum"; or, "curricula must reflect equality in the emphasis and time accorded to the study of various cultures and groups . . . " (Aoki et al, 1984:280). Now, these demands for equality (in curriculum) are obviously deriving their justification with reference to the popular moral dictum that "every one ought to be treated equally." This statement does seem to take its inspiration from the fundamental ethical notion of equality; however it is susceptible to being misunderstood and misused. In ethics, the principle of equality falls under the broader principle of justice. The principle of justice would dictate not only that "equals ought to be treated equally," but also that "unequals ought to be treated unequally " (Cf. Peters, 1966:118). The problem now, of course, would be to decide what are the relevant grounds for differential treatment.

In a multicultural society, the concept of common culture may provide a set of relevant criteria for differentiation between groups. For historical and socio-political reasons different groups in a society are likely to be situated differently in terms of their influence and contribution to the society's development and its common culture. For instance, certain groups would have been responsible for laying down the foundations of the society, for creating its basic institutions, and for providing a set of values and beliefs on which the institutions would operate. In contrast, some other groups would have arrived only recently, and may yet be in the process of settling down. Obviously, given this context, a demand that all the groups and their cultures be treated equally would not be morally justifiable. The claim for an equal treatment of all cultures in the school curriculum is, thus, untenable on ethical grounds (besides being obviously impractical).

What may be justifiably claimed, however, is fairness or equity. The demand for fair treatment may be expressed as follows : "Our public schools should give due weight to the role of all ethnic origins in our country's development, and to the cultures and languages of all Canadians" (Wood, 1979 :59). The demand for

due weight is obviously quite different from one for equal treatment, and can be justified on ethical grounds, although practically it would be quite difficult to allocate the due weights to different groups and their cultures. But one may approach the problem from the other side: If achieving "fairness" that is satisfactory to all groups seems impossible, then one may at least begin by seeking to reduce "unfairness." This would require a reviewing of the curriculum and other school practices so that these are not overwhelmingly and blatantly biased in favour of the dominant group. Bias against minority groups may mean not only that their cultures and contributions to the society are neglected, but also that they are always, and only, depicted in negative light. In Canada, evidence of such bias in text books, and other curricular and extra-curricular activities of the public schools has been reported by several writers (See for example, Aoki et al,1984; Pratt, 1984).

The need for examination of the school curriculum can also be expressed as the need to critically review the culture that is being transmitted through the school: How much of it is indeed the common culture , and how much of it is the culture of the dominant group. Banks (1981: 68), writing with reference to the American context, raises this concern in the following comments:

> The curriculum builder should seriously examine the "common culture" concept and make sure that the view of the common American culture that is promoted in the school is not racist, ethnocentric, or exclusive, but is multiethnic and reflects the ethnic and cultural diversity within American society. We need to redefine what the common culture actually is and make sure that our new conceptualization reflects the social realities within this nation, and that it is not a mythical and idealized view of American life and culture.

The following remarks by Entwistle (1978:114) also seem pertinent here:

> Sub-cultures need to be examined by educationists not so much as exclusive alternatives but, rather, for the relationship they have to the cultural mainstream. This relationship might be sought through examination of the way in which different sub-cultures exemplify, concretely, universal values and principles of social organization. It may also be discovered in the way in which institutions, developed

within a particular sub-culture , have become of relevance to other social groups. ..

In light of our discussion , it seems valid to suggest that the notion of common culture is central to effective treatment of many of the major problems that are faced by the schools in a multicultural society. However, the efficacy of the concept of "common culture" is contingent upon the clarity and precision with which it is used, applied and interpreted. In order to avoid confusion, the concept of common culture should be clearly distinguished from that of the "dominant culture" or " culture of the dominant group." Furthermore, within the notion of common culture itself, elements and aspects that are essential to societal cohesion--e.g. common language,and the common political, legal, and economic institutions--should be distinguished from those that are non-essential--e.g. those to do with matters of tastes and styles. (The distinction between "common culture 1(a)" and "common culture 1(b)" may be useful here--see pp. 45-46). While there can be little compromise in education with respect to the essential area of common culture, the demands for cultural diversity may be accomodated in the latter area. Finally, it should be realized that the culture of a society is in constant interaction with various subcultures within the society, as well as with cultures of other societies. Thus the conception of common culture that the educationists hold be that of an evolving, growing culture, rather than a rigid and static culture.

CHAPTER 4
ETHNICITY AND ETHNIC GROUPS

The notion "ethnic"--along with its derivatives such as ethninicity, ethnic group, multiethnic, etc.--appears as one of the major concepts in the social science literature. As a conceptual tool for study and discussion of subsocietal groups, and their interrelationship, in modern complex societies, ethnicity is often used as an alternative to the concepts of race, culture, and class. But more often than not, the term "ethnic group" is applied rather loosely, both in everyday speech and in social science, as a synonym for a wide range of concepts such as nationality, minority group, immigrant group, visible minority, subculture, and categories or groups based on racial, religious, or linguistic characteristics. With reference to work in the field of multiculturalism and multicultural education there are, broadly speaking, three ways in which the usage of the notion "ethnic" and its derivatives seems to be problematic.

First, there is a lack consensus among social scientists as to the nature, functions, and distinctive characteristics of an ethnic group. A number of different criteria are used by different writers in definitions of ethnic group and ethnicity, causing serious difficulties in clear and consistent understanding and application of the concept.

Second, there is a tendency to confuse the notion of ethnic identity with that of ethnic ethnic group; a closely related conceptual confusion is that between ethnic category and ethnic group.

Lastly, there is a failure to mark a conceptual distinction between ethnicity and culture; the terms ethnic group and cultural group, or multiethnic and multicural, are often used interchangeably as if they were synonymous. With reference to the debate on multiculturalism, the last one--i.e., the relationship of ethnicity to culture--would appear to have the most direct relevance. However, all three problems are closely interconnected and, indeed, the latter two problems could justifiably be subsumed under the first one. Nonetheless, identification of the

problem areas, as above, would be helpful in keeping the discussion properly focused.

DEFINITIONS OF ETHNICITY

There is a considerable disagreement among social scientists on the best way to conceive of ethnicity. In general, the definitions of ethnicity, and ethnic group, can be classified into two main approaches: objective (or ascriptive) and subjective (or situational). A third approach is also used, by some writers, by combining the first two approaches. According to the objective approach, ethnicity is regarded as a fixed characteristic, associated with real or putative common descent, and/or a distinctive culture. The subjective approach views ethnicity as a socio-psychological phenomenon whereby individuals identify themselves and/or are identified by others as being different from others or belonging to a different group (cf. Isajiw, 1980:17). From this perspective ethnicity is, thus, seen as being flexible, adaptable and capable of taking different forms and meanings depending on the situation.

To illustrate these different approaches towards definition of ethnicity, let us consider some examples from the social science literature.

OBJECTIVE DEFINITIONS:

The following definition of ethnicity by Vallee (1975:165) provides a good example of the objective approach:

> In our usage, ethnicity refers to descent from ancestors who shared a common culture or sub-culture manifested in distinct ways of speaking and/or acting.

Blishen, too, takes a similar approach in defining ethnicity:

> Ethnicity of a group refers to descent from ancestors who shared a common culture based on national origin, language, religion, or a combination of these. (Cited in Manyoni, 1978:30)

And, in one of the earlier attempts at a definition, Ware (1931) described ethnic communities as

> groups bound together by common ties of race, nationality, or culture, living together in an alien civilization but remaining culturally distinct. (Cited in Anderson & Frideres, 1981:36)

From these definitions one may discern the two main traits of ethnicity, as emphasised by theorists following the objectivist tradition: common descent and culture. The notion of common descent is somewhat vague, and needs clarification. As Isajiw (1980:21) points out:

> It is not the common ancestral origin as such that is important here, for all human beings ultimately have common ancestry; it is the ancestors or their descendants who can said to have possessed the same cultural traits, as distinguished from persons and their ancestors with different cultural traits.

Perhaps the most pertinent implication of "common descent" for ethnicity is that an ethnic group, in distinction to most other social groups, is by and large biologically self-perpetuating. In other words, membership of an ethnic group is, for majority of its members, an involuntary matter: people are usually born into an ethnic group rather than acquiring their ethnic status through a special act. But the point of "involuntariness" should not be overstressed to the exclusion of any possibility of voluntariness on part of the "ethnic" individual. It is true that one doesn't have much choice in being born to a particular ethnic category: nor does one have much say in the early socialization process that usually takes place through the family. However, staying within an ethnic group, or at least continuing to identify with it, is not so strictly an involuntary act. In a liberal democratic society, and one that is not officially or unofficially segregated along ethnic (racial, or religious) lines, one may choose to disown one's original identity, and per-

haps even adopt another one. The following comments by Horowitz (1975:14) seem pertinent here:

> Ethnic identity is generally acquired at birth. But this is a matter of degree. In the first place, in greater or lesser measure, there are possibilities for changing individual identity. Linguistic or religious conversion will suffice in some cases, but in others the changes may require a generation or more to accomplish by means of intermarriage or procreation. In the second place, collective actions, in the sense of conscious modification of group behaviour and identification, may effect shifts of boundaries .... It is, therefore, a putative ascription rather than an absolute one, that we are dealing with. There are fictions about, and exceptions to, the birth principle for most ethnic groups. Ethnicity thus differs from voluntary affiliations, not because the two are dichotomous, but because they occupy different positions on a continuum.

But reference to the psychological notion of self-identity is what a definition must avoid, if it is to follow the objective approach; indeed, identity is the critical point which distinguishes subjective definitions from the objective ones. Therefore, insofar as one admits the notion of self-identity into the concept of ethnicity, one implicitly acknowledges the element of voluntariness in the matter of ethnic group membership. But one need not dwell too much on the issue at this point, as a more detailed discussion will take place under the section on ethnic identity. Likewise, the relationship of ethnicity with the notion of culture will be closely examined at a later point in the chapter.

SUBJECTIVE DEFINITIONS:

Subjective definitions of ethnicity may vary from one to another in terms of their inclusion or exclusion of some traits, but one common feature of all subjective definitions is the emphasis on the psychological dimension of ethnicity; that is, the sense of common identity that individuals must have in order to be considered as belonging to an ethnic group. This sense of common identity, or sense of peoplehood, or "we-feeling," may derive from one or a combination of several

ethnic attributes such as a common culture, race, language, religion, and nationality origin, or descent from those who shared these characteristics.

A prime example of the subjective approach towards definition of ethnic group is to be found in the following statement by Weber:

> We shall call "ethnic groups" those human groups that entertain a subjective belief in their common descent because of similarities of physical type or of customs or both, or because of memories of colonization and emigration; this belief must be important for the propagation of group formation; conversely it does not matter whether or not an objective blood relationship exists. (Isajiw, 1980:18)

Gordon (1964:24), too, in defining ethnicity as " a sense of peoplehood," and ethnic group as " a group with a shared feeling of peoplehood," underlines the subjective dimension of ethnicity. Similarly, Shibutani and Kwan propose that,

> an ethnic group consists of people who conceive of themselves as being of a kind. They are united by emotional bonds and concerned with the preservation of their type. (Cited in Isajiw, 1980:17)

The subjective approach seems to have certain advantages over the objective approach. Objective definitions may be useful in anthropological study of discrete societies or social groups--a "tribal" society, for example--but would have limited value for enquiries into intergroup relations in modern complex societies, or for study of ethnic groups in relation to the processes of assimilation and integration; in these settings the subjective approach provides a better conceptual tool. The following passage by Hunt & Walker (1974:3) presents a rather effective and cogent case for treating ethnicity as a subjective and situational phenomenon:

> There are a number of factors which lead people to consider themselves (and to be considered by others) as an ethnic group .... [The] test of difference in physical appearance ... , national origin, or religion is not the difference per se, but whether this difference is considered socially significant. Some societies will disregard a rather wide range of physical differences in physical appearance, while others will relate social privileges to rather minute types of

variations. Likewise, some societies will be greatly concerned about the national (or tribal) origins of the people in a given territory, while, to other societies, this will be a matter of indifference. Finally, religious diversity may simply indicate a variation in the interpretation of ultimate reality by various groups within the nation, or it may constitute a rigid dividing line which affects practically every phase of life .... In any case what matters is not the nature of difference, but the intensity of feeling about the importance of the difference, and the way in which the difference is associated with economic stratifications, political power, and other elements of social structure.

THE COMBINED APPROACH:

Some theorists favour a third manner of defining the concept of ethnicity, or ethnic group: that is, to integrate the objective and subjective approaches. For example, Theoderson & Theoderson define ethnic groups as

> A group with a common cultural tradition and a sense of identity which exists as a subgroup of a larger society. The members of an ethnic group differ with regard to certain cultural characteristics from the other members of their society. (Cited in Isajiw, 1980:15)

Isajiw (1980:24) too, uses a composite approach in defining ethnic group as

> An involuntary group of people who share the same culture or descendants of such people who identify themselves and/or are identified by others as belonging to the same involuntary group

Another example of this approach is seen in the following definition of ethnic group by Gordon (1964:27):

> Any group which is defined or set off by race, religion, or national origin, or some combination of these categories .... All of these categories have a common social- psychological referent, in that all of them serve to create, through historical circumstances, a sense of peoplehood ...

One significant advantage of linking together the objective and subjective approaches is that the subjective ethnic identification--the "we feeling, or sense of

peoplehood--is not seen as something purely arbitrary, but as a psychological phenomenon based on one or more from a selected set of objective sociological phenomena: for example, race, religion, language, and national origin. Just any identification based on any sociological category--e.g., class, occupational, age, sex, etc.--would not be considered as "ethnic"; only when the sense of common identity is derived from any of the above listed set of social classifications, may we consider it as ethnic identity.

ETHNIC GROUP VS MINORITY GROUP:

One further question that seems relevant to the discussion on definitions of ethnicity, is whether the concept of ethnicity applies only to minority (subordinate) groups or categories, or also to a majority (dominant) group. Traditionally, the tendency, both in ordinary context and social science, has been to apply the term "ethnic" with reference only to minorities; thus the terms ethnic group, minority group, and ethnic minority are often seen to be used interchangeably. It is, indeed, rare to see the epithet "ethnic" being applied to "majority" or "dominant" segments of society; the dominant group is often identified with the society's "mainstream" and thus excluded from the designation "ethnic group". (Cf. Manyoni 1978:39)

However, such practice seem to be more a matter of convention, or convenience, than conceptual certitude. Logically, any social group or category that satisfies the criteria should be considered as ethnic--being a minority is rarely, if at all, mentioned as a criterion in definitions of ethnicity. The following remarks

by Schemerhorn (1970:13) offer a possible explanation for the common tendency of linking ethnicity with a minority status:

> Ethnic group may be either dominant or subordinate .... But each society can have only one dominant group; it follows that most of the ethnic groups are in subordinate rather than dominant positions.[1]

However, one obvious qualification, that is justifiable on both logical and practical grounds, would be that the term "ethnic" may be used with reference to only subsocietal groups or categories; and not to the larger society itself (e.g., "Canadians" in Canada).

ETHNIC IDENTITY

As we noted earlier the subjective definitions of ethnicity lay a particular stress on the psychological identification of an individual, or some collectivity, as being different from others i.e., the "we feeling" or "consciousness of kind". However, one finds that there is a common tendency in the literature to confuse the concept of ethnic identity with that of ethnic group. It is true, that subjective identification by a number of individuals is an important condition for formation and existence of an ethnic group (based on that identification). But this does not imply that the two are necessarily connected: ethnic identity is a psychological attribute; ethnic group is a socio-structural phenomenon. As Manyoni (1978:35) points out:

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1 It must be noted that for Schemerhorn the term "dominant" refers to a majority status, and the term "subordinate" refers to minority status; although technically, as he acknowlwdges, "a minority may be either in a dominant group status, in which case it may be called an elite or in a subordinate group status, in which case it may be called a subordinate minority." (Schermerhorn, 1970:13)

ethnic group is a resultant transformation of ethnic identity through consciously organized action of the participants, and is a function of their structural relations.

Here, a caution is in order. One should avoid committing the common logical mistake of first, disproving existence of a necessary link between two objects or phenomena, and from this, to slide into a position, which implicitly denies any connection whatsoever between the two. Thus, to say that there is no necessary connection between ethnic identity and ethnic group (see Manyoni 1978:35), is not the same as saying that there is no link at all between the two phenomena. For example, in asserting that X (e.g., effort) does not necessarily or always lead to Y (e.g., reward), one does logically, allow for the possibility that X may mostly, or most frequently contribute to an attainment of Y. The point may also be illustrated by referring to an elementary distinction in logic between conditions that are necessary and those that are sufficient. Thus, with reference to the issue under discussion, it seems reasonable to propose that although ethnic identity may not be a sufficient condition in itself for formation of an ethnic group, it is a necessary condition.

The above proposition would be consistent with the subjective definitions of ethnicity, which are founded on the assumption that a subjective ethnic identification is a necessary basis for formation of an ethnic group (see pp. 73-75). Indeed, it is this psychological property of "consciousness of kind" that is considered to be the distinguishing feature of a social group, in contrast to a social category. As Vallee (1975:167) points out

> In order for a social category to become a social group the people in it must develop a sense of we-feeling or common identity, which should be a necessary basis for some meaningful interaction and solidarity.

One major source of confusion in discussion on ethnic identity, or identity in general, is the tendency to treat "identity" as a one-dimensional, and an absolute phenomenon, with no distinctions of degree or kind : one either has an ethnic

Identity, or one does not. But this seems to be an invalid assumption, supported neither by the psychological theory nor by common observation. Indeed, one's identification with a group, a category, or any relevant object, may be present at varying levels of strength: it may be a vague, diffused identity at a low level of consciousness, or a relatively strong identity at a highly conscious level. Ethnic identity may be a significant influence on the affairs and activities of an individual or a collectivity, or it may be a minor, negligible factor. Furthermore, differences in degrees of identification would be reflected in terms of different levels of participation and involvement in activities of the group. Thus, Stymeist's classification (1980:39) "core ethnics," "peripheral ethnics," and "name ethnics" derives from a recognition that different individuals are attached —both in terms of identification and participation--in varying degrees to their particular ethnic group.

With respect to the notion of ethnic identity a couple of pertinent observations may be noted, at this point. First, together with the point that there are different levels of identification, it must be pointed out that the level is not static, but may vary with time in either direction--i.e., it may increase or decrease. Second, it must be appreciated that the concept of identity, in relation to a social group, carries at least three distinct, but interrelated, elements: the cognitive, the affective, and the behavioural. Ethnic identity at the cognitive level refers to a knowledge, or awareness, of one's ethnic origin. The affective component of identity points to the quality of one's emotional relationship to his ethnic ties. It may be positive or negative; one may be proud of one's ethnic root; one may wish to forget it, or hide it; or, one may be rather indifferent. The degree and quality of the cognitive and affective identification with one's ethnic background would most likely be reflected in one's involvement in the respective ethnic group's institutions and activities.

It may be useful here to relate Gordon's distinction (1964:53) between historical identification and participational identification: Historical identification refers to the feeling of "interdependence of fate," or the sense of peoplehood,

that one may share with a particular social segment; participational identification involves participation at the primary group level and sharing of behavioural similarities with members of a particular social category. With reference to the observations made above, it may be noted that Gordon's notion of historical identification involves the cognitive and affective levels of identity, whereas the notion of participational identification corresponds to identity at the behavioural level.

ETHNIC IDENTITY VS NATIONAL IDENTITY:

At this point it seems appropriate to briefly touch upon an issue that that is often brought up in discussions on the merits, or otherwise, of ethnic and/or cultural pluralism in relation to the notion of national identity. Looking from the perspective of those who are critical of the ideologies of pluralism--ethnic and cultural--there are mainly two grounds for objection. One, encouraging and strengthening ethnic or subcultural identities would be detrimental to the cause of developing a national identity.This point of view is well illustrated by the following statement: "Multiculturalism encourages double loyalties and is destructive of the fledgling Canadian identity" (Zolf, quoted by Edwards, 1975:191). Two, putting an individual in a situation of adopting multiple identities would be detrimental to his psychic health: self-alienation, marginality, identity ,conflict, etc., are some of the possible consequences of fostering plural identities (see for example, Mazurek, 1979:29).

Obviously the issue of conflicting identities, or divided loyalties, is a complex one, and has been a subject of considerable debate in the literature on multiculturalism. However, for one who finds the subjective definitions of ethnicity acceptable, taking a position on the issue should be somewhat less complicated. As discussed earlier, the underlying assumption of the subjective approach is that a person's identity is not an absolute attribute, but one that varies according to the situation; the individual, in any organized society, belongs to many different social categories and groups, and consequently develops different levels and forms

of identification--based on, for example, age, sex, social class, and area of residence--as part of his personal sense of identity. On this point, the following comments by Wood (1978:8) seem instructive:

> It must be remembered that an individual's ethnic identity is fluid, rather than being static over time and unrelated to the person's life situation. In a particular context, one might define oneself as a French Canadian in relation to English Canadians; or as a Franco-Ontarian in relation to Quebecois or WASP Ontarians; or as a Canadian in relation to the Americans. The specificity of an individual's self-definition can vary in relation to the commitments operating in a situation.

In light of the above, the concern of those who see a conflict between ethnic identity and national identity, as well as those who see such a conflict as being detrimental to the psychological health of the indiduals involved, seems to be unwarranted. A more reasonable position would be that   ethnic identity may very well be accomodated with national identity, just as one accomodates various identities--regional, religious, occupational, etc.,--within the fold of his self- identity. (See fig. 3 on page 82)

Thus, it seems that the real issue--whether from the socio-political and psychological perspective, or the educational one--is not whether developing or carrying multiple identities is possible but, rather, how the various identities can be joined together in a network of complementary relationships, and thus be integrated harmoniously into an individual's personal identity. What one must be concerned about is to avoid fostering of unexamined and unreflective identities and loyalities to any social entity, whatever its form or its structural level. One may agree that "ethnocentrism" is undesirable because it puts too much emphasis on one particular ethnic group--identification with its culture, institutions, and interests--to the neglect of other society-wide foci of identifications; but, from the educational and moral point of view, it would be equally undesirable to foster extreme forms of nationalism that are founded on an attitude of contempt or

hatred towards other nations. This point is cogently stated in the following comments by Beck (1975:12):

> ... whether the concern is national security or general support for the nation in times of crisis, it is questionable whether an educator is justified in attempting to induce a strong nationalism in order to meet the concern .... Our major concern, as educators, should be the general development toward greater maturity of all those students with whom we are engaged in the interactive relationship of education. If strongly nationalistic indoctrination is incompatible with the achievement of that goal, we must not have any part in it.

DIAGRAM 3

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PERSONAL IDENTITY, AND

ETHNIC, NATIONAL, AND GLOBAL IDENTIFICATIONS

→ Personal Identity

→ Global Identification

→ National Identification

→ Ethnic identification
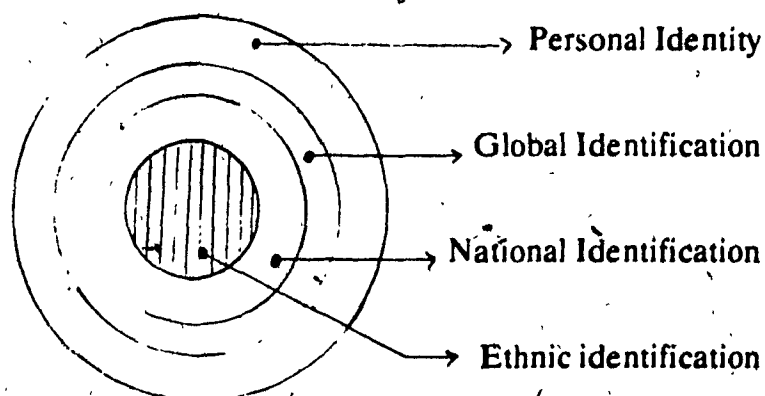
(Source: Banks, 1981:219)

ETHNIC GROUP VS ETHNIC CATEGORY:

Another area of conceptual problems in the literature on ethnicity is the confusion between social categories and social groups: often, the term "ethnic group" is applied in reference to what in the proper social science terminology would

are not organized into a system of social interaction. As Vallee (1975:167) points
out

> In order for a social category to become a social group, the people·
> in it must develop a sense of we-feeling, or common identity, which
> should be the basis for more meaningful interaction and solidarity.

Therefore, the two main distinguishing characteristics of a social group, in
relation to a social category are: (a) a sense of common identity, and (b) existence
of institutions that serve as effective vehicles for interaction between the mem-
bers. The distinction between the two terms may have some important implica-
tions, both for social policy and research. Thus, for sociological research the dis-
tinction may be useful in allowing one to work with the conceptual tool that is ap-
propriate for the level of precision one wishes to achieve. For example, in con-
ducting an enquiry that focuses on a certain large number of individuals who
share some common ethnic traits, one would want to know whether these in-
dividuals constituted a social category or a real group, in order to offer explana-
tions or make predictions that are competent (cf. Anderson & Frideres, 1981:47).
Likewise, in much of the policies and programs concerning multiculturalism and
multicultural education, there has been a tendency to use "ethnic group" as a
blanket term to cover a variety of social categories deemed to be based on some
shared ethnic attributes; the "ethnics" are, thus, all treated as cast, in a monolithic
mould, with little distinction as to differences in their size, residential concentra-
tion, historical circumstances of arrival and settlement, rates of endogamy and ex-
ogamy, cultural and physical similarity to the dominant subsociety, and so on. As
noted above, one of the important indices for distinguishing between an ethnic
group and ethnic category is the level of organizational development. Here it may
be useful to refer to Breton's notion of "institutional development"[2]:

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2. One may also refer to Neumeth's notion of the "degree of closure" (see Val-
   lee, 1975:174) which is quite similar to the concept of institutional com-
   pleteness.

> The primary relationship of individuals are influenced by the institu-
> tional completeness of their group. An institutionally complete eth-
> nic group can provide all the services its members need: education-
> al facilities; churches and religious organizations; stores and res-
> taurants; professional services by doctors and lawyers; and voluntary
> associations. This concept is best understoood in terms of a con-
> tinuum, ranging from groups which provide few services to themsel-
> ves to groups which are almost completely self-sufficient. (Quoted
> by Wood, 1978:11)

It, thus, seems more profitable to conceive of ethnic category and ethnic group as positions on a continuum--i.e., of institutional completeness--rather than in terms of an either-or distinction. In the Candian context, the Jews, Ukranians, Italians, and Hutterites may be cited as examples of groups with a relatively high level of institutional completeness, whereas the Scandinavians, and the Dutch are examples of the other extreme.

ETHNICITY AND CULTURE

As noted at the beginning of the chapter, the terms "ethnic" and "cultural" are often used interchangeably both in popular usage and in social science. Part of the explanation may be traced to the social science theory which defines ethnicity in primarily cultural terms, and part may lie in the empirical observation that emergence of the "ethnic phenomenon" in the post-world-war II era has been lar-gely associated with a concern for "cultural rights" of minority and ethnic groups. Not only have most of the ethnic groups, by themselves, chosen to put a par-ticular stress on preservation of their culture in voicing their demands for freedom and equality, but "culture" has also been generally the main focus of offi-cial responses to to ethnic demands. For example, in Canada as well as in Australia, the state policies towards minority groups have been expressed in terms of a "multicultural" model. Furthermore, although some social scientists have, in recent years, stressed the conceptual distinction between ethnicity and culture, the strong association of the two concepts is evident in continued

reference to ethnic ethnic groups in cultural terms, not only in popular usage but also in much of the works in social science.

Let us consider, first, some examples from the Canadian context. It is interesting to note that in in its report that led to the formulation of the multiculturalism policy, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (1970) titled one of its chapters "The Cultural Contribution of Other Ethnic Groups"--an indication of the strong link of ethnicity to culture in view of the Commission. What's perhaps more revealing, is that within the the text of the chapter, the report frequently uses the terms "ethnic" and "cultural" as if these were interchangeable concepts: it sometimes refers to "non-British, non-French cultural groups," and at other times to "Canadians of ethnic origin other than British or French"; likewise, occasionally, one also finds expressions such as "ethnic origin or cultural background." Similar examples are to be found in the statement by the then Prime Minister, Trudeau, in the House of Commons, 1971, when he announced Multiculturalism as the official Canadin policy (Reprod. in Mallea & Young, 1984:518-520). There he alternately refers to the various "cultures," "cultural groups," "cultural communities," "ethnic groups," and "immigrants"; a typical example of the conceptual vacillation is provided by the following phrase: " ... matters affecting the social integration of immigrants and the cultural activities of all ethnic groups." But, the conceptual incertitude is not restricted only to the politicians and bureaucrats: many writers and researchers in the general area of multiculturalism appear to be just as confused. For example, Porter (1980) refers to "immigrant cultures," "ethnic cultures," "ethnic groups," and ethnic communities" almost as if these were substitute terms. Painchaud (1984) seems to waver between the terms "ethnic communities," "cultural communities," "ethnocultural communities," and "minorities." Berry's following statement (1977:27) is a typical example of the general confusion between ethnicity and culture: "If an individual is to be open in his ethnic attitude and have respect for other groups, he must have confidence in his own cultural foundation."

All these examples illustrate how the two concepts "culture" and "ethnicity" are entwined in the minds of the various contributors to the debate on multiculturalism. Now, it is true that there may be contexts where an interchangeable use of the terms "cultural" and "ethnic" in a particular discourse would have little bearing on understanding the essential arguments of the discourser. If both these terms were being used merely as descriptive labels for the same type of sociological phenomena, and no further inferences were drawn from the terms, then using them interchangeably should not be too problematic, except as a minor irritant perhaps. However, knowing that the terms "culture" and "ethnicity," despite their considerable overlap, belong to distinct conceptual fields in social science, and are central to the debate on multiculturalism, one should exercise particular care in their application and interpretation.

It may be useful to examine also the different views in social science theory regarding the relationship between ethnicity and culture. Predictably, the views of social scientists vary according to their particular theoretical perspectives. Two are relevant here.

One holds that ethnic groups are primarily culture-bearing units: it's the sharing of a distinct culture that brings and keeps the members together as a social group. Let us consider some examples of this position. According to Chinoy "Ethnic groups are made up of persons who share a common cultural tradition which unites them in a single social entity" (quoted in Manyoni, 1978:35). Martin & Franklin (1978:58) propose that "ethnic groups are identified by their cultural distinctiveness." Fenton (1982:58) states that "If a recognisable segment of a population shares a language, tradition, folk memory or shared sense of origin, it is an ethnic group." And, according to Rose "groups whose members share a unique social and cultural heritage passed on from one generation to the next are known as ethnic groups" (quoted in Manyoni, 1978:37).

In contrast to the above views the other theoretical position, with reference to ethnic groups, denies culture as a necessary component of ethnicity. For example, according to White "a sense of ethnicity can exist without shared culture or a

geographically located community" (cited in Bullivant, 1981: 211). Isajiw (1980:23) maintains that "persistence of ethnic identity is not necessarily related to the perpetuation of traditional ethnic culture." Whereas these two writers have approached the issue with respect to the notion of ethnic identity, Barth (1969) focuses his analysis on the maintenance of ethnic group boundary. In his view, culture is not a primary and definitional characteristic of ethnic group organization, but is rather an implication or result (p.11); thus, the critical focus of investigation should be the ethnic boundary that defines the group, not the cultural stuff that it encloses:

> The cultural features that signal the boundary may change, and the cultural characteristics of the members may likewise be transformed, indeed even the organizational form of the group may change—yet the fact of continuing dichotomization between members and outsiders allow us to specify the nature of continuity, and investigate the changing cultural form and content. (p.14)

The two contending viewpoints reflect, essentially, the dichotomy between the objective and subjective definitions of ethnicity (discussed earlier in the chapter). It should be obvious that those who link ethnicity with culture are using the objective approach; whereas those stressing the fluidity of ethnic boundaries and ethnic identities, represent the subjectivist tradition. Rather than engaging in a lengthy theoretical analysis to determine which version is the "correct" one, it would perhaps be more profitable to view both as complementary interpretations of ethnicity.

It seems that those who link ethnicity tightly with culture are impressed by the way in which the concern for preservation and perpetuation of culture often appears to be the prime formative factor in emergence of an ethnic group. Empirical observation does indicate that, at least for the earlier generation of immigrants whose culture is different from that of the host society, it is usually the cultural factor that becomes the mainspring for creation of various ethnic institutions. To this extent, the linkage of ethnicity to culture seems justified.

The main drawback of this view, however, lies in maintaining a fixed and monolithic association of culture with ethnicity. For, empirical evidence indicates also that with passage of time, and the forces of assimilation at work, "preservation of culture" becomes less and less of a concern for the later generations of an ethnic community; "culture" may be replaced to a large degree with other collective interests --interests in the socio-political and economic spheres, for example. The ethnic group, thus, may be better described, as the subjectivists contend, as a form of social organization that could be given varying amounts and forms of content depending upon the circumstances prevailing at a given time (cf. Barth, 1969:13). The individuals who are attached to their ethnic community, according to this view, may no longer be preoccupied with preservation of their ethnic culture, but with securing of their political rights and economic interests in the larger society. This view is well illustrated by Bank's classification of ethnic groups into four types--cultural, political, economic, and holistic--depending on a group's main focus of interests and activities. Thus, the subjective approach has an advantage over the objective approach in allowing for the possibility of different types of ethnic groups: Not only may different ethnic groups vary from each other at any given point in time in terms of their functional objectives, but a particular ethnic group, too, may change over a period of time from one type to another.

It may be useful, at this point, to examine a couple of highly pertinent conceptual problems involving the notion of culture as it is used in relation to ethnicity. First, in discussions of ethnicity, whether from a subjective viewpoint or the objective one, it is rarely made clear which conception of culture is being implied: that is, culture in its historical sense, or the psychological and/or the normative interpretations? (See the discussion in chapter 1.) To recapitulate our earlier discussion, in its historical conception culture is seen as being the social heritage of a group: "the ways of acting and doing things which are passed down from one generation to the next ... by formal and informal methods of teaching and demonstration" (Gordon, 1964:32). The psychological conceptions present culture

as a problem-solving, adaptive mechanism through which a society survives: "the sum total of learned techniques, ideas, and activities which a group uses in the business of living" (Opler, in Kroeber & Kluckhohn, 1964:112). And, from the normative perspective, culture is viewed as representing the "prescribed ways of behaving or norms of conduct, beliefs, values and skills, along with the behavioral patterns based on these categories" (Gordon, 1964:32). Given these different possible interpretations of culture, the need for clearly indicating one's conceptual perspective, in discussing the relationship of ethnicity to culture, could be well appreciated.

The other part of the conceptual problem lies in the expression, "a distinct culture," as it is used in discussions of ethnicity: what is often left unclear is the meaning and implications of the term "distinct." For when one is advocating or challenging the proposition that "ethnic groups are identified by their cultural distinctiveness," one ought to make clear the degree and the form of distinctiveness that is being implied. A culture may be distinctive in the sense that every human being is a unique individual. In this sense, every social organization develops its own set of rules for conduct, norms of behaviour, symbols, traditions, and its peculiar atmosphere or "chemistry"; indeed, it is in this sense that one may speak of the "Oxford culture," in contrast to the "Cambridge culture," or the culture of an accounting department versus that of the marketing department. Thus, to the extent that ethnic group is a form of social organization (Barth, 1969:13), then differences in even the demographic and other incidental characteristics--e.g., the relative size, residential concentration, history of arrival and settlement, etc.,-- would make one group's culture different from that of others'. Another important point with respect to the notion of "a distinct culture" is the degree of dissimilarity that is being implied. An ethnic group's culture may be different from that of the mainstream society in some fundamental and important aspects of culture--e.g., beliefs, values, and ideals that have implications for behaviour in the political, economic, and social spheres; another group may have a culture that is distinctive in only some relatively minor and inconsequential aspects--e.g., mat-

ters of tastes and styles in food, dress, recreational activities, or rituals associated with ceremonial occasions.

All these conceptual distinctions, as noted above, have important implications for the various participants in the field of multiculturalism, and ethnic group relations. Unfortunately, however, the tendency has been to engage in voluminous academic research and debate on multiculturalism, or policy formulation and program development in multicultural education, while ignoring,-out of convenience perhaps, many of the conceptual problems that such works entail.

IMPLICATIONS FOR EDUCATIONAL AND SOCIAL POLICY

One important issue in research and policy debates in multicultural education has been whether, and to what extent, ethnic identity and ethnic culture of a minority group child influences his academic achievement.

On one side we have those who mantain that ethnic identity and ethnic cultures play an important role in the educational performance of students from minority ethnic groups--in particular those whose home culture is considerably different from the mainstream culture. The argument is based on the assumption that disparity between the home cultures of minority group children and the culture being transmitted at school creates emotional as well as cognitive problems for such children; these problems retard their academic progress. Relating curriculum and teaching methods to the ethnic child's ethnic and cultural background is expected to help improve his educational performance in two ways: Pragmatically, this facilitates the child's learning process in school by making use of the skills and knowledge he has acquired through socialization at home. Emotionally, recognition of his home culture by the school would build the minority child's self-esteem, which in turn would contribute to his academic success. The following comments illustrate this line of argument:

> It is good pedagogy to recognize and use all students' cultural backgrounds. (Quoted in Bullivant, 1981:237)

And,

> The concept of multiculturalism recognizes that each of our young people needs to develop a confidence through a sense of self-identity and a feeling of self-worth. Good pedagogy tells us that as an individual and as a member of a particular ethnic or cultural group the student functions best if full use is made of the traditions and experiences which are integral to home culture and therefore to student well-being. (Wells, 1977:3)

In contrast to the views noted above, we have the arguments of those who dispute the validity of assuming a causal relationship between the improvement of an ethnic child's identity, knowledge of his cultural background, and an increase in his academic achievement. As supporting evidence, some of these writers point to the success of students from certain ethnic backgrounds in educational settings where no provision was made for preservation of their identity or recognition of thier cultures (Glazer, 1977:20-21; Bullivant, 1981:237). Others may draw attention to the failure of many of the multicultural and multiethnic educational programs in improving the educational achievement of minority group students (Musgrove, 1982:130).

Another line of argument, opposing promotion of ethnic identities and cultures through school education, is that such programs may help presereve the "life styles" of ethnic groups but would be of little use in improving the "life chances" of their individual members. A number of reasons are given for this inverse relationship between the goals of preserving ethnic cultures and attaining socioeconomic equality. For example, Porter (1980) argues that qualities and skills valued by some minority cultures may be antithetical to those rewarded in the opportunity systems of the larger society. For instance, success in the larger society is tied to universalistic criteria that recognize individual skills and talents; but many minority cultures "do not emphasize individual achievement, nor do they provide the appropriate skills for it (332-333)." And Birrell contends that while maintenance of ethnic identity and culture may be emotionally satisfying for

minority group members, the time and effort invested towards this end could inhibit the acquisition of skills and knowledge reuired for socio-economic mobility (Cited in Bullivant, 1981:238).

Instead of concerning ourselves with the relative merits of the two contending lines of argument, let us pay attention to problems common to both. First, there is the way in which reference is made to "ethnic groups" as if they all belong to a homogeneous category; there is little intimation of the wide variation between ethnic groups in terms of their socio-economic and cultural characteristics, achievements, interests and orientations. Secondly, there is the tendency to make simplistic assumptions concerning self-identity, ethnic-identity, and their relationship to academic achievement: while one side over-emphasizes the role of ethnic identity in scholastic performance, the other side denies any causal relationship between the two.

The various respects in which distinctions can and need to be drawn between ethnic groups have been suggested at several points earlier in the chapter; we shouldn't need to reproduce those here. What may be more pertinent to the current discussion would be to take note of the variation that exists between ethnic groups in terms of their achievement in school. Both as a matter of common observation and through empirical studies it is evident that minority ethnic groups are found at both ends of the achievement scale. In the North American context, among the groups which have traditionally occupied the bottom rung are the Blacks, native Indians, and Mexicans (Banks, 1981:20); more specifically to the Canadian scene, besides native Indians and Inuits, groups such as the Francophones in Ontario, Portuguese and Greeks have been generally associated with low achievement levels and high dropout rates. At the other end we find groups such as the Jewish, Japanese, Chinese, Armenians, and East Indians which in general have performed at levels superior not merely to the national average but to that of the dominant Anglo-Celtic groups (Herberg, 1984;452-476).

But even as we refer to the empirical evidence of variation between the achievement levels of different groups, a couple of reservations are in order. First

it must be pointed out that the empirical studies measuring levels of academic achievement for different groups also reveal that within each group the results vary significantly from one region to another, and from one period of time to another (see for example, the study by Herberg, 1984:452-476). Secondly--and this is essentially an elaboration of the point noted above--the "ethnic groups" that are being referred to are segments of population that are primarily statistical categories. They are not all ethnic groups in the same sense or to the same degree: there are differences in terms of institutional development, degree of enclosure, residential concentration, and so on. For example "the Blacks" is a highly generalized category consisting of a number of sub-categories such as, the American Blacks (descendants of Africans brought as slaves centuries ago), West Indians, Haitians, and other recent immigrants from the black African countries; similarly the label "East Indian" is usually applied to natives of India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, as well as those from Guyana, Trinidad, and some East African countries. Thus within each of these categories one may find a vast array of different nationalities, religions, languages, and physical characteristics. The point here is not to imply that all generalizations and categorizations are useless or misleading, but rather to suggest that one should exercise a degree of care in dealing with categories at such broad levels of generalization.

Following our analysis of ethnicity, some general recommendations may be offered for those involved in the field of multicultural education.

Maintenance of ethnic cultures and enhancement of ethnic identities may be useful for ethnic groups as well as the society at large; social and educational policies aiming toward these goals can be justified on several grounds. However, with reference to the aim of improving educational achievement of students from minority groups, ethnicity in itself is neither a problem nor the solution. Educational attainment is a function of a complex array of sociological and psychological variables: ethnicity is one of the important ones but not the only one. Which factors become more influential, and where, in the learning process of a child is not easy to determine.

In formulating educational policies, or designing curriculum, we can not use fixed generalizations about ethnic groups, their educational problems and needs. Not only have we to be alert to the variations across ethnic groups, but also to the variations within each group. In particular we have to be sensitive to the differences--of needs, interests, and orientations--between individuals who constitute an ethnic group. Now this should hold true for dealing with all individuals, whether they belong to a minority ethnic group or to the dominant group; but obviously a minority group child is more likely to suffer from stereotyping than one from the latter group. The point that individuals categorized as belonging to particular ethnic group are not alike is well stated by Banks (1981: 253):

> Individuals vary greatly in the degree of their ethnic attachments. The beliefs and behavior of some individuals are heavily influenced by their ethnic culture; others maintain only some ethnic beliefs and behavioral characteristics; still others try to reject or lose, or are simply unaware of, their ethnic origins .... For many persons, then, ethnic criteria may be irrelevant for purposes of self-identification. Their identities stem primarily from sources such as family, social class, occupational groups, and/or social associtions.

Many of these observations and recommendations may seem like stating the obvious. But this feeling is often rather quickly dispelled by reading a random selection from the literature in multicultural education.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this thesis has been to analyze some of the concepts, and related issues, that are central to theory and practice in the field of multicultural education. The rationale behind such an excercise was, as stated in the introduction, that some serious conceptual problems have retarded progress in the field: much ambiguity and confusion surrounds the key concepts, which has obsructed the task of both application and interpretation.

SUMMARY AND COMMENTS:

A realization that "culture" is a vast and complex notion with several levels and categories of definitions (Ch.1), should help us in being more careful, selective, and precise in using this word. The issue is not that of deciding which interpretations are right and which wrong, but , rather, which are more useful in relation to the particular inquiry at hand. Some of the suggestions that followed from our analysis are as follows: The Holistic-Enumerative definition of culture may be useful for studying societies and social groups as discrete units or as independent, functioning "wholes"; but it would be of little use in dealing with the type of social and educational issues that arise in multicultural settings. Definitions that emphasize the historical dimension of culture are indeed relevant for educational purposes. As an imperative for survival every society pays special attention to transmission of its cultural heritage to succeeding generations; the school is considered one of the prime social institutions for accomplishing this task. However, this becomes problematic in multicultural societies because the constituent groups also are concerned with preservation of their own cultural heritages. But whether we look from the perspective of the larger society, or that of the subsocietal group, the demands of survival make it necessary that the emphasis on cultural heritage be complemented by an equal emphasis on the "current living" aspect of culture. A comprehension of the Organizational-Patterning concept of culture should help in improving the effectiveness of programs in mul-

ticultural education that aim at promoting intercultural understanding: If cultures are to be understood then they should be looked upon as "patterns of, and for, living," and not as mere collections of discrete customs and artifacts. The Psychological and the Moral definitions present, again, two complementary facets of culture. The psychological conception emphasizes the point that individuals acquire culture through learning, rather than as a biological inheritance. This seems like stating the obvious, but it as an important point for educational initiatives in multicultural settings with its implication that it is possible to learn more than one culture. However, it is one thing to acquire a cognitive understanding of a culture, and quite another to "belong" to a culture--that is, to adopt and internalize the system of beliefs and values of a culture. It is this latter aspect of a culture that is emphasized by the "moral" type of definitions: as a member of a social group one does not just learn its culture at the cognitive level, but also accepts the moral force behind cultural prescriptions and proscriptions.

If different cultures possess different sets of beliefs and values then in what sense can we talk of individuals becoming multicultural or bicultural (Ch. 2) ? An understanding of the distinction between the psychological and moral conceptions of cultures can help resolve the conflict between those who believe that it is possible to become multicultural, and those who contend that it is not. Obviously, the former viewpoint is valid if the psychological interpretation of culture is adopted; the latter point of view is justified if culture is conceptualized as a system of beliefs and values.

But we are still left with the problem of conflict between the values and beliefs of different groups, both in relation to each other and in relation to the larger society. Here, a proper understanding of the notion of common culture (Ch. 3) becomes important. "Common culture" implies that some degree of consensus among the constituents of a society--groups as well as individuals--is necessary in order that it continues to function as a society. Thus interpreted, common culture provides a useful instrument for drawing some guidlines for social and educational policies: The right of subsocietal groups to preserve and perpetuate

their respective cultures can be respected, but only insofar as values and practices which are incompatible with the fundamental values and beliefs of the society's common culture are excluded. However, the authority of the common culture as a referee in cases of value-conflict would be valid (from the moral point of view, that is) only to the degree it represents the commonality of all the groups, rather than the power of the dominant group.

This brings us to the last link in the chain of concepts that have been discussed in the paper: ethnicity (Ch. 4). A society consists of different types and levels of social groups and categories: occupation, sex, age, area of residence, are among the many indices for forming social categories. However, the social unit that is the main focus of interest with reference to a multicultural society, is the ethnic group. But to categorize a group merely as "ethnic" would not carry an investigation too far: there are different types of ethnic groups, and different degrees of ethnicity. There are several possible ways in which ethnic groups could be differentiated, for example: their socioeconomic and political statuses; their primary concerns--i.e., preservation of culture, or promotion of economic and political interests; their orientations with respect to the larger society--i.e., assimilationist, pluralist, or segregationist; or their level of institutional development. In formulating policies and programs with reference to ethnicity, one must keep in mind the variations between, as well as within, different ethnic groups. Thus, different educational approaches may be appropriate for different groups, and different individuals within the groups.

CONCLUDING NOTES: The notion of multiculturalism seems well established in the social and political scenery of Canada. For over fifteen years multiculturalism has been a state policy. The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms states explicitly that it "shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians" (Reprod. in Mallea & Young, 1984:539). The present composition of Canada's population is marked by a high level of cultural and ethnic diversity, and new im-

migrants continue to arrive in substantial numbers. What all this·implies for the schools, as it does for other social institutions, is that they must be prepared for facing the issues relating to ethnic and cultural plurality for quite a while.

As this thesis has attempted to demonstrate a necessary part of such a preparation should be for practitioners and theoreticians in education to sharpen their conceptual tools. Concepts are extremely important. They influence the identification of problems, the choice of research methods, the interpretation of findings, and the formulation of policies and strategies. The work of those involved in the field of multicultural education, at all levels, could become much more effective and efficient if they could divert a part of their efforts towards conceptual clarification: precicision and clarity in the use of language, thinking analytically about issues, and treating them with the degree of attention that their complexity demands and deserves..

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