

A Real Culture

Real cultures are not necessarily compatible. They are more often than not competitive. Neither is real culture like a sweat-shirt, to be changed at will. It is part of each of us, profoundly rooted in the concrete experiences of everyday life; in the smell-to-make-you-swoon of the madeleine cake, of which Marcel Proust wrote so movingly for the French; in the haunting call of the loon, for me.

And real cultures are also, as one critic put it, either "raising" or "lowering" themselves. If you want to know whether your culture is headed up or down, just look to the leaders - the thinkers, teachers, writers, and political visionaries - who will always be on the ramparts first. If they are defending, promoting, deepening, the core beliefs, you're looking at a raising culture. But if your own leaders are the first and most powerful critics of the culture, or simply fail to defend it, or seek to replace it with a patsy "policy," then it's headed straight to the bottom.

Lowering cultures are ripe for invasion, and if they are of the mealy-mouthed, everything-goes, modern liberal type, then not much has to be done by the invader. In the way that Marx said capitalists would be found selling the rope used to hang them, most modern democracies, so devoted to diversity and pluralism, have failed to defend themselves.

Their weakness is most easily seen in "multicultural" policy, an abstract idea of culture imposed from the top by modern democratic governments as a desperate ploy to raise up what they have themselves lowered. Such eviscerating policy abstractions erode the real culture and create a vacuum into which some competitive real culture will surely move.

What has been the real culture of a country such as Canada? Well if, by culture - as I contend - we must ask what specific kind of people, what religion, what political institutions, what philosophy, what economic system, what literature and art a people live by - then the answer for Canada is easy. And liberals faint when I say this, so I will have to shout.

According to Statistics Canada, our Census takers, and any number of decent polls, we can justly use the word OVERWHELMING in its proper sense, to say: Canada, including all aboriginal and native people, has only 10 or so per cent "visible minorities." That is a coward's way of saying that Canada is an OVERWHELMINGLY white country in the same way (let's spell it out) that Jamaica, say, is overwhelmingly black, or Japan is overwhelmingly Asian. An OVERWHELMING 80 per cent of Canadians say they are Christian, empty pews and all. Our practical language of commerce, our "public" language, is about 80 to 90 per cent English. Canada is OVERWHELMINGLY an English-speaking-using nation.

Canada's political institutions - a Senate, a Parliament, a court, democratic elections, personal

freedom under a rule of law - remain OVERWHELMINGLY British in their history, tradition and design (even in Quebec).

Now I submit that these things, especially the love of these things, constitute a deeply satisfying and proud "culture," and that our official failure to teach, promote, and fondly protect them will be our undoing, because multiculturalism, which is a policy and not a culture, cannot take their place. So something else will. Eventually, it will be some other culture. Consider the 1994 court bid by the Islamic Schools Federation of Ontario to allow official Islamic school holidays.

Islam is specifically, even programmatically, anti-Christian. We Christians are unbelievers. Infidels. In Islamic law, conversion out of Islam is a capital offence. No pluralism here. These folks are not fooling around. In an *American Spectator* interview in 1993 Hassan Hathout, Ph.D., leader of New Horizons Islamic school in Los Angeles, said "It is our duty to educate mankind" (the infidels). He shudders "at the [Christian] idea that God took on a human form," and adds that for Muslims, Christianity "is an illness planning to attack us."

Islam also despises democracy as an inferior form of governance that seeks to substitute the shifting will of a majority for the truth as ordained by God and the Shari'a, the perfect law of Islam. Accordingly, as one scholar put it, "every major fundamentalist thinker has repudiated popular sovereignty as a rebellion against God, the sole legislator." They are keen "to demonstrate democracy's inferiority to Islamic government." That's why the Islamic faithful say they only need "one man, one vote...once" - in order then to govern by Islamic rules. Diversity? Only for multicultural suckers.

Those of the Islamic faith, according to distinguished historian Bernard Lewis, have a "profound contempt" for the unbeliever and all his ways. (That's you and me.) For them, "democracy is obviously an irrelevance. They are, however, willing to demand and exploit the opportunities that a self-proclaimed democratic system by its own logic is bound to offer them." Fundamentalist Muslims especially despise the democratic world's egalitarian notion of individual "rights," engraved in egalitarian charters. For them, only God has rights. Humans have duties.

So as a Canadian people with a definable culture, we must decide either to recognize and start raising that culture, or resign ourselves handing out more of the multicultural rope with which we will surely be hanged.

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