

## UNITY IN DIVERSITY: ORIENTATIONS AND STRATEGIES FOR BUILDING A HARMONIOUS, MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY

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**Abstract.** This essay addresses the question of how knowledge from social science can be used to guide the design of a harmonious, multicultural society. First, the broad characteristics of a viable multicultural society are presented. Such a society depends in part upon the orientations, both positive and negative, of its constituent members towards members of different cultural groups within that society. Discriminatory behavior at both the interpersonal and inter-group level is, however, potentiated or inhibited by group, organizational and societal norms, policies and laws concerning inter-group relations. Integrative individual and social factors thus combine to create inter-group social capital that promotes unity within diversity. Such a unity may be nurtured through careful attention to structuring inter-group contact, language policies, resource allocation, procedural justice, educational curriculum and methodologies. It is argued that these policies at the national level are applicable at the inter-national level and promote a global harmony that will reinforce harmonious multiculturalism within nations.

*My objective is none other than the betterment of the world and the tranquility of its peoples. The well-being of mankind, its peace and security are unattainable unless and until its unity is firmly established.*  
(Baha'u'llah)

In discussing the important emergence of global social change organizations, Cooperrider and Pasmore (1991) observed that, “So much of what is being said and done in our journals is beside the point, unrelated to the crucial questions of human relationships in a global era of unprecedented change.” (p. 771)<sup>1</sup>. The emergence of new political states and their assertions of a distinctive identity is

<sup>1</sup> I wish to express my appreciation to the following colleagues who provided thoughtful feedback on an earlier version of this paper: Steven Burgess, Seena Fazel, James Liu, Walter Stephan, and Harry Triandis.

one manifestation of this epochal ferment (Naisbitt and Aburdene 1990, ch. 4). Many such states are young and enterprising enough to consider carefully the vision that will guide their nation-building and channel their selection of institutions, laws, and norms accordingly.

This paper is offered in light of Cooperrider and Pasmore's (1991) challenge to be relevant, in line with recent world developments, and the conviction that planned change is possible. I am a social psychologist. I have read widely in culture and cross-cultural interaction to help produce a recent text (Smith and Bond 1998), and have long held a keen interest in humane forms of association. These two parts of my personal history have led me to ask how the yield from our discipline's labors can be used to design societies that are compatible with the presses and opportunities provided by the 21st century.

In assuming this novel task, I will step outside my typical stance of purported objectivity and value-free analysis. I share what Cooperrider and Pasmore (1991) identified as, "something of a 'hidden hunger' among social theorists from throughout the world to make their lives and their work count, and count affirmatively, as it relates to the questions of survival and human dignity in our time." (p. 779). Of course, many people share this hope for their labors in this life. Perhaps as social scientists, however, we are uniquely trained "to put idealism on empirical footing and to construct a science whose constructive mandate is to become a generative-theoretical partner with evolution itself, in the service of promoting the widest good and, ultimately, in the service of life." (Cooperrider and Pasmore 1991:780) Certainly we can address questions about the probable consequences of the value stances and procedures, or what I have called "orientations and strategies", adopted by people, groups, organizations and nations.

Awareness of these consequences can then be used to inform the consultation about what kind of social forms we wish to govern ourselves by as we structure our future. Our social scientific knowledge of persuasion techniques may even be used to ensure that awareness of these consequences figures in the consultation! Many other parties will be involved in this on-going dialogue, and it would be naïve and presumptuous to expect that the inputs of our professional community will be specially privileged. Nonetheless, these consultations, in whatever forms they occur, must take the psychological, social, institutional, and national consequences of changes into account. And in these areas of intellectual discourse, we are plying our trade.

In the following essay, I will try to articulate the considerations that I judge important to make in designing a harmonious, multicultural society. I will "render unto Caesar what is Caesar's" by specifying and defending the end-state towards which I am hoping nations move and the procedures for attaining that end-state, but "render unto God what is God's" by daring to specify and defend that end-state in the first place.

### A humane harmony

*So powerful is the light of unity that it can illuminate the whole world.*  
(Baha'u'llah)

What is my vision of an ideal state, particularly now, as our planet approaches the millennium? Other social scientists have undertaken the daunting task of answering this question (e.g., Naroll 1983), and I claim no authority in the validity of my assertions beyond the fact that I have reached these conclusions in good faith and offer them up for consultation.

I would begin with the medical dictum, "Primum, non nocere". For present purposes, that injunction implies that an ideal state is one where any activity destructive to human life is minimized. At the individual level, injurious behaviors, ranging from taking hard drugs to committing suicide are minimized; life expectancy is at a maximum. At the group level, norms are shared ensuring that individual inputs to group life will be encouraged and attended to, even if not adopted; that process of adoption will not entail the exclusion of deviates. At the inter-group level, identifiable groups with different ideologies and agendas will be accommodated within the limits set by the laws necessary to preserve the fabric of society; systematic denial of access to resources will not be mandated or tolerated, nor will any form of genocide be practiced or racism be institutionalized. At the societal level, institutions such as the military and mechanisms such as international treaties and economic controls are in place and maintained, so as to prevent the annexing of one nation by others.

My basic concern is that society not embed the individual within a dangerous social niche where individual energies are fully deployed in preventing one's destruction and in merely surviving. One can readily think of contemporary societies where a citizen's patrimony entails precisely such a consuming preoccupation. It is in this spirit that I would subscribe to the Russian adage that, "A bad peace is better than a good war."

But my vision for the ideal state has an obverse, i.e., a society which fosters and promotes distinctive, individual development while maintaining its own integrity and nurturing the conditions for social synergy. This broad mandate is best encapsulated in the concept of harmony. An essential component of any viable harmony is the integrity and distinctiveness of the constituent elements that compose the complex unit of which they are a part. Unification does not require homogenization or uniformity. Just as effective cooking preserves the distinctive flavors, textures, colors, and aromas of the ingredients used, so, too, the society I envision must remain responsive to the concerns, the needs, and the aspirations of its individual members, families, groups, and institutions.

I do not believe that such harmony presupposes or requires sameness in the citizens of a society:

*Where harmony is fecund, sameness is barren. Things accommodating each other on equal terms is called blending in harmony, and in so doing they are*

*able to flourish and grow, and other things are drawn to them. But when same is added to same, once it is used up, there is no more ... There is no music in a single note, no decoration in a single item, no relish in a single taste. (Discourses of the States, China, 4th century B.C.)*

We are each uniquely endowed, genetically and by socialization. We later distinguish ourselves further from one another by the acquisition of character and skills and knowledge. Society must then be ordered in such a way as to protect and utilize those differences to benefit both its members and itself. In order to attain such a harmony-engendering state of affairs, the resulting differences among citizens must be believed to arise from this fundamental logic surrounding individual abilities and opportunities:

*An ideal unity in a state is all about equal life chances, about standardizing the life course to the point where people, despite their inescapable genetic and historical differences, perceive themselves as mastering the social order to the extent that resulting differences can be explained by individual choices or chance rather than attributed to external, social-structural causes. (Borneman 1993:315)*

Each person will then be released to find her or his place within the ambient social order. A natural unity will thereby be fostered. "Indeed, it is precisely an inhering diversity that distinguishes unity from homogeneity or uniformity." (Baha'i International Community, 1995:4) If this ordering is successfully achieved, I believe that unimagined human and social benefits will follow. For me, this vision of natural harmony and its shimmering promise is graphically illustrated in Escher's inspiring print, *Verbum*.

### *Multiculturalism*

*Be anxiously concerned with the needs of the age ye live in, and center your deliberations on its exigencies and requirements. (Baha'u'llah)*

Almost all contemporary nations are *de facto* multicultural. Indeed, this was probably the state of affairs historically for many countries, as well. Economic, political, educational and cultural migration, both in the past and in the present, combined with arbitrary, geographical border-drawing have made them so. However, the size, frequency, and visibility of contemporary migrant movements make the problems multiculturalism poses for host countries especially acute now (Weiner 1995).

A concomitant development is the widespread interest in, and commitment to, multiculturalism. As defined by Fowers and Richardson (1996), "Multiculturalism is a social-intellectual movement that promotes the value of diversity as a core principle and insists that all cultural groups be treated with respect and as equals." (p. 609). These authors maintain that multiculturalism is, "... at its core, a moral movement that is intended to enhance the dignity, rights, and recognized worth of marginalized groups." (p. 609) As such, they locate the movement squarely within "the moral and political traditions or Euro-American civilization." (p. 611)

Clearly the proponents of multiculturalism are motivated by a liberal idealism that extends ideas “of individual uniqueness to cultural groups”. (p. 612) This idealism is fueled by an empathetic response to the suffering of certain groups, an empathy that is sustained by a world-view espousing the ideology that, “Within the four seas, all men are brothers.” (Confucius, *The Analects*)

There is no question in my mind that many groups, culturally and otherwise distinct, have been savagely mistreated. The Algerian and Rwandan and Cambodian and Serbian situations come most recently to mind. The heart shivers before such atrocities. As Berger (1969) put it, “There are certain deeds that cry out to heaven. And it is this monstrosity that seems to compel even people normally or professionally given to such perspectives to suspend relativizations.” (p. 85) These acts would be rejected almost universally, and hardly require a Euro-American cultural legacy to do so; I do not believe that one must subscribe to Euro-American values to be a multiculturalist.

The cultural issue for multiculturalism is where a society positions itself on the universal value dimensions of conformity vs. self-direction and hierarchy vs. egalitarianism (Schwartz 1992, 1994). These outcomes are very much culturally shaped. Pressures for complete conformity will homogenize differences or lead to elimination of those who champion those differences; excessive self-direction undercuts the sociality necessary for a society to remain viable. The achievement of complete egalitarianism will eliminate group differences with respect to power, but run counter to equity in resource distribution; rigid hierarchical structuring of society results in manifest injustices and cannot survive in a democratizing world.

Outside of these extremes, it seems to me that a harmonious multicultural society may be developed. But, what kind of harmony? “God”, Mozart is alleged to have asserted, “lives in the details.” So, I next look at the key orientations and strategy issues whose addressing will play a key role in determining the viability of a society’s solution to the multicultural challenge.

### **Orientations and strategies**

*It is incumbent upon every man of insight and understanding to strive to translate that which hath been written into reality and action.*  
(Baha’u’llah)

I will approach this task as a social psychologist. This avenue gives me a narrow focus on the individual but, as we shall soon realize, must by necessity come to include the broad canvas of that individual’s social world. The individual actor is the repository of the orientations I will discuss and the enactor of the strategies I will propose. However, “No man is an island, entire unto itself”, to quote Donne. So, the ambient norms, traditions, and laws of the families, groups, organizations, and nation where that individual functions will potentate, sustain, and channel those orientations.

## Orientations

*Ye are the fruits of one tree and the leaves of one branch.* (Baha'u'llah)

By orientations, I am referring to individual dispositions found in attitudes, stereotypes, emotions, beliefs, values, and features of personality. Certain of these orientations conduce towards the harmonious, multicultural society I described earlier; others counteract such a development.

One concern in making this selection is the problem of a criterion: our goal is to predict those interpersonal behaviors that unite or divide persons and groups. Psychologists have generally been more adept at designing self-report measures of harmonizing or divisive orientations than they have been at validating them against the actual behaviors of interest. I will thus exercise my own judgment in selecting for discussion those few orientations, like Altemeyer's (1981) Right Wing Authoritarianism, that have been validated against such outcomes and those, like Leung and Bond's (1998) belief syndrome of Social Cynicism, that hold such promise.

*Divisive orientations.* Any orientation that supports separation from and avoidance or isolation and suppression of others because of their ethnicity, national origin, language, color, or disability is divisive. So, attitude complexes like ethnocentrism (Brewer and Campbell 1976), most defensibly measured by Altemeyer's (1981) scale of Right Wing Authoritarianism, create such barriers (see e.g., Peterson, Doty and Winter 1993). So, too, does nationalism, as opposed to patriotism (Feshback 1987).

Social Dominance Orientation (SDO; Sidanius 1993) is an attitude syndrome that legitimizes the ranking of groups within a society and predicts higher degrees of ethnic prejudice in the national ethnic hierarchy in the United States (Pratto, Sidanius, Stallworth and Malle 1994) and in a number of cultures (Pratto, Liu, Levin, Sidanius, Shih and Bachrach 1996). SDO is also strongly correlated with nationalism across a number of American samples (Pratto et al. 1994).

Also divisive are stereotypes, packages of beliefs about out-groups and their members which characterize their personality as malevolent, especially where such negative evaluations are not counter-balanced by positive assessments on other dimensions, such as competence (see Gudykunst and Bond 1997:129–131 for elaboration). Beliefs about the values held by members of other groups are also predictive of negative out-group sentiment (Schwartz, Struch and Bilsky 1990). Low presumed endorsement of Schwartz's (1992) value domains of universalism and benevolence seem especially important in this respect (Bond and Mak 1996). In fact, stereotypes about out-group member values seem relatively more powerful than stereotypes about character in predicting negative prejudice (Esses, Haddock and Zanna 1993). This prejudice, though, is more likely to be translated into discriminatory actions by those high in Right Wing Authoritarianism (Haddock, Zanna and Esses 1993).

Specific stereotypic beliefs about particular out-groups may be decisive in generating prejudice towards them and their members. Beliefs that certain other groups are antagonistic to our group's way of life (the "symbolic beliefs" of Esses et al. 1993) are strong predictors of prejudice. So, too, are beliefs about historical episodes of unjust behavior by certain groups towards one's own group. These beliefs form important components of what Staub (1988) has identified as "ideologies of antagonism". These beliefs color attributions about current behavior which then justify counterattack at the group level, just as they do at the interpersonal level (Felson 1978). Such beliefs are unlikely to arise out of personal experience, but instead be transmitted through group lore, media portrayals, educational curriculum, and other indirect means.

Emotions become associated with various out-groups as a result of historical alliances and hostilities, portrayals in educational curriculum and the media, relative economic status, and personal experiences interacting with their members. When these emotions are negative, e.g., envy, fear, anger, they predict negative prejudice (Dijker 1987) over and above that predicted by stereotypic cognitions about the group (Stephan, Ageyev, Coates-Shrider, Stephan and Abalakina 1994). Fear, in particular, may drive the belief that out-groups are hostile towards one's own group, thereby promoting anticipatory aggression (Stephan and Stephan 1985).

Beliefs are personal understandings about how the social, material, and spiritual worlds operate. For example, those who subscribe to a just world belief maintain that rewards are fairly distributed in this world. One consequence of such a general belief is that one assumes that those with unfortunate outcomes deserve what they receive (Lerner 1980). Such a belief structure can readily function to support the status quo of a society's economic and political hierarchy or caste system (Staub 1989). Similarly, Altemeyer (1988) asserts that a belief in humankind's genetic pre-disposition to violence promotes out-group hostility, since people so predisposed will be inclined to construe the intentions and actions of out-groups and their members as hostile (see also Seville Statement on Violence, 1994).

Leung and Bond (1998) have collected a wealth of such beliefs operative in Chinese culture through interviews and surveys of literature, proverbs, and media reports. They combined these with those found in the psychological literature (e.g., Lerner's just world belief scale) and administered them to a representative sample of Hong Kong persons. They grouped these beliefs into five dimensions through factor analysis. One of these groupings, Reward for Application, bears a striking resemblance to the just world ideology mentioned above. Another, Social Cynicism, refers to beliefs that the powerful exploit the weak and that kindheartedness is socially ineffective. Both of these belief complexes appear to support social hierarchy and the status quo. So, it is probable that these belief syndromes will be shown to legitimize group-based differences in access to material and social resources.

A person's values are yet another type of personal orientation that has been linked to prejudicial reactions towards members of other groups. Feather (1980) found that presumed overall value similarity between one's own group and another was associated with greater willingness to associate with out-group members. Bond (1988) identified a pan-cultural value factor from the Chinese Value Survey that contrasted the values of tolerance, harmony, and non-competitiveness against respect for tradition and a sense of cultural superiority. Average individual scores on this dimension of Social Integration versus Cultural Inwardness varied across cultural groups and probably relate to stronger endorsements of prejudice and in-group favoritism. Stronger identifications with one's collective are linked to nationalism and in-group defensive reactions to criticism (Kowalski and Wolfe 1994). This result seems consistent with findings that people who are strongly identified with their social group respond to threats to their group identity by derogating the out-group (e.g., Branscombe and Wann 1994).

Finally, basic personality appears to be related to prejudice. If one accepts the Big Five as the fundamental dimensions of personality variation (Digman 1990), then evidence shows that a person's endorsement of Openness to Experience is negatively and strongly linked to measures of prejudice in particular, and political conservatism in general (Trapnell 1994). Interestingly, the facet of Openness most strongly linked to the measure of prejudice used, Right Wing Authoritarianism, was Openness to Values.

Personality considered at such a broad level as that of the Big Five may subsume some of the orientations mentioned above. So, the Big Five are related to the endorsement of certain value domains (e.g., Luk and Bond 1993), although not apparently to the general belief complexes tapped by Leung and Bond (1998) in Hong Kong. As of yet, little work has been done by social psychologists to relate stereotyping of out-groups to personality dispositions. Integrative work of this sort would be most welcome, as prejudicial reactions may derive from common sources, variously labeled as attitudes, values, or beliefs.

One encouraging attempt at integration comes from Hagan, Ripple, Boehnke, and Merkens (1998). They argue that right-wing extremism arises from "near-term, group-linked interests of individuals in their own well-being, ascendancy or domination." (abstract). Focusing on the competitive logic of market-driven forces, they identify a constellation of four, social-psychological factors – social comparison, individualism, preoccupation with material success, and the acceptance of social inequality. "These dimensions coalesce into a higher order, latent subterranean construct we call hierarchic self-interest." (abstract). These various personal orientations fuse in predisposed individuals to "accentuate, exaggerate, and dangerously distort the fundamental tenet of stratified market societies." (p. 3).

Hagan et al. (1998) show that hierarchic self-interest predicts the endorsement of extremist attitudes towards outsiders in both the former East and West



Germanies, accounting for higher extremism in both males compared to females and in the former East Germany compared to the former West Germany. The value of this exemplary study lies in its integration of themes relating broadly to personality and driving the resurgence of political extremism.

Another integration uses the concept of threat, arguing that prejudice against other groups develops out of perceptions that these groups and their members pose a danger to oneself and one's group. "Integrated threat theory" (Stephan, Ybarra, and Bachman 1998; Stephan, Ybarra, Martinez, Schwartzwald, and Turkaspa, in press) identifies threat as arising from "symbolic threats based on value differences between groups, realistic threats to the power, resources and well-being of the in-group, anxiety concerning social interaction with out-group members, and feelings of threat arising from negative stereotypes of the out-group." (Stephan et al., in press, p. 2) These four types of threat are conceptually distinct and empirically separate predictors of prejudice (Stephan et al. 1998). These authors believe that, "The degree to which different threats are salient and therefore likely to be related to prejudice depends on such variables as the prior history of the relations between the groups, the relative status of the groups, the strength of identification with the in-group, and the amount and type of contact between the groups." (p. 15) The process is complex, but its common focus on perceived threat synthesizes a considerable amount of literature and suggests strategies for intervention, to be discussed below.

*Harmonizing orientations.* One could argue that harmonizing orientations are simply the bipolar opposite of divisive orientations. Berry and Kalin (1995) focus on the construct of tolerance which they take to be the opposite of ethnocentrism. Likewise, Staub (1989) argues throughout his book, *The roots of evil*, that altruism counteracts the aggression that can be channeled towards out-groups and their members. An embracing universalism towards all others may well do so. However, social group boundaries are important qualifiers for many social behaviors, especially in more collective cultures (Triandis 1995), so a person's high level of in-group altruism may not extend to outsiders. Unfortunately, no measure of altruism specifically assesses one's humanity towards *all* varieties of different others, so that we cannot yet test the relationship between altruism and prejudice. Similarly, the behaviors or strategies required to bring about harmony among groups may not simply be the opposite of those that foment disunity. At this stage, then, it makes sense to separate these two orientations. Hopefully, researchers will examine the empirical linkages among this congeries of divisive and harmonious orientations in order to clarify their relationships.

Much less work has been invested in exploring this positive side of the inter-group coin. The best known is that of Berry and his various colleagues in Canada on attitudes related to multiculturalism. One set of studies examined the attitude of ethnic tolerance, defined as, "one's willingness to accept individuals or groups that are culturally or racially different from oneself." (Berry and Kalin 1995:306) Following a comprehensive survey of the various ethnic groups in the

Canadian mosaic, Berry and Kalin (1995) concluded that, "Tolerant individuals show little differential preference for various groups. Intolerant individuals on the other hand show relatively great positive preference for those groups that are generally preferred by the population, and great negative preference for groups least preferred." (p. 315) Individual tolerance flattens out the ethnic hierarchy; lack of tolerance sharpens it.

Another set of attitudes targets multiculturalism itself and is involved in Berry's (1990) two-dimensional typology of orientations towards ethnic acculturation. He distinguished attitudes towards the maintenance of own ethnic traditions from attitudes towards inter-ethnic contact. The former sustain the sense of ethnic security required to maintain the ethnic mosaic; the latter support movement across group lines, creating the potential for positive inter-group relations. These attitude complexes have been instrumented and measured in immigrants, confirming hypothesized relations to their adaptation outcomes (Berry, Kim, Power, Young, and Bujaki 1989).

What is needed is to extend these measurements to the host groups in a given society (Bourhis, Moise, Perreault and Senecal 1997). This needed extension will enable researchers to explore the attitudes and behaviors of the key groups toward members of other ethnic groups as well as towards the local norms and national policies surrounding their integration into the wider social fabric. These state integration policies will interact with group ideologies surrounding acculturation orientations to yield harmonious, problematic or divisive outcomes (Bourhis et al. 1997).

Berry and Kalin (1995) explored the reactions of Canadians to their country's policy of multiculturalism by measuring three aspects of its implementation: attitudes towards the program, perceived consequences of multiculturalism, and multicultural ideology. They found that these three components cohere and together correlate with their measure of cultural/racial tolerance. So, a disposition towards tolerance probably supports organizational and governmental policy initiatives aimed at promoting harmony in diversity.

Another constellation of attitudes that appears important for within-nation multiculturalism is internationalism or world-mindedness. Sampson and Smith (1957) were the first to explore this concept, defining it as, "a frame of reference, or a value orientation favoring a world-view of the problem of humanity, with mankind, rather than the nationals of a particular country, as the primary reference group." (p. 105). This orientation showed a coherent clustering of attitudes on political, economic, social, and religious questions in their American sample. Similar consistency has recently been confirmed with the Hong Kong Chinese, using a similarly multi-faceted scale of global culture developed by Walter Stephan (Fong 1996, see also Der-Karabetian 1992; Kosterman and Feshback 1989).

Logically, a person espousing internationalism would be less likely to endorse prejudicial attitudes towards people of any different ethnicity or race, be they

within the country or outside. Sampson and Smith (1957) confirmed this deduction using an early measure of ethnocentrism. Internationalism may increase tolerance for other ethnic, racial, and national groups by weakening the strength of one's in-group identification or by embedding that in-group identification within a latticework of broader identifications.

Little work has been done on emotions and inter-group harmony, though a suggestive finding from Berry and Kalin (1995) was that higher levels of tolerance predicted feeling comfortable around members of various other groups.

It is difficult to link beliefs to tolerance empirically, because most contemporary "belief" scales, such as Rotter's (1966) Locus of Control Scale, are a pastiche of values and intentions along with assertions about what is true, i.e., beliefs. Leung and Bond's (1998) study of "pure" beliefs identified Fatedness as one of five such dimensions. Those high in Fatedness beliefs assert that outcomes are determined; one may predict but not otherwise control these outcomes. We expect that people low on Fatedness beliefs would struggle against the apparent givenness of inter-group divisions and hierarchy, a givenness that is sometimes justified by genetic or hereditary factors.

Personal values are related to integrative behavioral orientations. Sagiv and Schwartz (1995) found that readiness for out-group social contact was connected positively to his value domains of universalism and self-direction, but negatively to tradition, security, and conformity for the dominant Jewish group, but to the value domain of achievement for the subordinate Arab group in Israel. This finding suggests that the motives regulating out-group contact differ depending on the group's position in the social hierarchy.

Few studies have been done relating personality to integrative orientations across group lines. One suggestive finding comes from the work on attitudes towards global culture done by Fong (1996). He found that self-ratings on adjectival personality measures of openness and assertiveness positively predicted endorsements of this general constellation of attitudes, including the integrative facets of humanism, global welfare, and gender equality. Again, the important role of openness to experience found in the section on divisive orientations is underscored by its reappearance in this section.

People high on concern for others in particular and empathy in general show lower social dominance orientations, as do those high on Katz and Hass' (1988) Humanitarian-Egalitarian scale (Pratto et al. 1994). Lower SDO scores may be taken as a preference for lesser inequality among social groups, a probable unifying social feature in social groups (Wilkinson 1996).

There is an absence of integrative approaches to studying harmonizing orientations. In this regard it would be fascinating to examine the Baha'i commitment to the oneness of humankind, a cornerstone of that community's approach towards social relations (Baha'i International Community, 1995). Research has already shown that people espousing this commitment have a distinctive value profile (Feather, Volkmer and McKee 1992). It is likely that they

would also present a consistent set of beliefs about people and group life, of emotional responses to persons of difference, of personality dispositions like altruism (Heller and Mahmoudi 1992), of group identifications, and of inter-group attitudes. All these characteristics may prove to be distinctive but interrelated manifestations of a commitment to the oneness of humankind.

*From personal orientations to social action.* All the above orientations are personality variables; in most research they have been related to other personality variables, not to observed interpersonal behavior. Many psychologists are skeptical about our capacity to predict either divisive or harmonizing behaviors by reference to personality variations. Brown (1996) points out that personality variation fails to explain "the widespread *uniformity* of prejudice in certain societies or subgroups within societies." (p. 533) He also notes the historical specificity of prejudice: its intense targeting of particular groups at particular time periods is not amenable to explanations requiring long-term socialization of members to become prejudiced. Instead, it appears that other social factors involving group identities and normative behaviors are more central in explaining prejudice and subsequent discrimination. The same could be said of harmonizing behavior.

Social psychologists have pointed out that interpersonal behavior which occurs across cultural lines may be construed by the actors along a continuum varying from interpersonal to inter-group (Brown and Turner 1981; Tajfel 1978). They argue that under a variety of social conditions behavior will shift from its more variable, personally shaped forms of the interpersonal mode to more uniform, normatively driven forms of the group mode. In this group mode, discriminatory behavior, be it divisive or harmonizing, is probably influenced much more by situational considerations than by personality orientations (Deutsch 1994; Snyder and Ickes 1985). A group's norms surrounding behavior between individuals of different groups should be especially decisive in such encounters.

These norms will shift depending on the construction of the relationship between the groups and the cultural ideology about group relations surrounding the interacting groups. Where members of these groups perceive themselves as legitimately competing for the same, fixed resource, e.g., land, jobs, food, etc., interpersonal conflict across group lines is more likely and less tractable (see Deutsch 1994; Tedeschi and Felson 1994 on realistic group conflict). This conflict could be exacerbated by feelings of relative deprivation (see Walker and Pettigrew 1984), feelings which would probably be greater in cultures characterized by an egalitarian ideology (Schwartz 1994).

Of course, in some cultural settings it may be normative for members of one group to believe they are not entitled to compete against other groups either individually or corporately, as doing so may challenge accepted social hierarchies (see Hofstede 1980, ch. 3 on power distance or Sidanius 1993, on social dominance orientations). In other cultural settings, a history of violent inter-group hostilities may lead to widespread beliefs that *any* conflict will redound to the

detriment of all parties. Such a “minus – sum”, as opposed to a “zero-sum”, expectation about the consequences of conflict (Bond 1987) would stimulate the search for non-divisive modes of interaction.

Not all struggles are about material resources; respect and appreciation communicated across group lines are powerful bonding forces whose withholding or denial can generate intense conflict. Perceived denigration of a group's language, dialect, customs, religion, art, music, dress and traditions can fuel intense defensive reactions and counterattack. Again, these feelings of unjust treatment are likely to be stronger in cultures with an egalitarian, or individualistic cultural tradition (Hofstede 1980, ch. 5) where human rights legislation (Humana, 1986) empowers groups as well as individuals. In this light social norms promoting diversity and encouraging contact across group lines become countervailing forces against the drift towards group ethnocentrism. We need to begin the tasks of understanding the structure of these social norms (Moghaddam and Studer 1997) and of using information about these norms to predict inter-group behaviors in diverse societies!

*Social capital as ballast and momentum.* What I am suggesting above is that divisive or harmonizing behaviors across group lines are socially controlled or potentiated. Even though these behaviors may involve only two persons, they are inter-group whenever the other may be categorized as an out-group member through cues of physiognomy, dialect, language, dress, or whatever. Even if the groups in question are not in conflict, inter-personal encounters across group lines will become increasingly construed in group terms as ethnic, religious, linguistic, and social class membership becomes politicized through democratization.

Inter-group encounters are channeled by each group's norms informing inter-personal encounters across group lines. These norms thus become a form of positive or negative social capital. “‘Social capital’ refers to features of social organization, such as networks, norms of reciprocity, and social trust, that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit.” (Putnam 1995:67) “Coleman (1990) defines social capital as involving the creation of capabilities for action to achieve shared goals through socially structured relations between individuals in groups.” (Hagan, Merkens, and Boehnke 1995:1018). Social capital may be nurtured in the family, schools, work organizations, and voluntary associations by building and sustaining strong social bonds of interdependence (Portes 1998; Sampson and Laub 1993). As Bourdieu (1986) asserts,

*It is in fact impossible to account for the structure and functioning of the social world unless one re-introduces capital in all its forms and not solely in the one form recognized by economic theory. (p. 241)*

Social capital has been measured in various ways and at different levels of analysis (individual, province, nation); it is related to such important societal outcomes as rates of mortality, homicide, burglary, and assault (Wilkinson et al. in press), school delinquency and right wing extremism among German youth (Hagan et al. 1995).

By extension, socially structured relations “that facilitate coordination and cooperation” may involve individuals interacting across group boundaries, not simply within group boundaries. Social capital in the inter-group sense would then be constituted by the harmonizing components of inter-group attitudes, stereotypes, emotions, and beliefs held by the participants from each of the groups; social liability, by the divisive components of the same types of orientation. And more. Inter-group social capital across individuals would be protected or augmented by the social norms (e.g., of political correctness), the laws (e.g., against racial discrimination), and the enforcement practices which structure relations across group lines in the wider society. Or restrained and undercut.

Such an amalgam of inter-group dispositions at the individual level of the different group members, combined with larger state policy form the building blocks of a recent theoretical model developed to explain consensual, problematic, or conflictual outcomes between immigrants and members of a host community (Bourhis et al. 1997). The logic of such approaches to understanding interpersonal outcomes is that a host of factors must be considered. A number of analytic levels are involved – the individual (orientations); the group, including the family (norms and attitudes towards inter-group contact); the organization (goals, inter-group policies and practices); and the nation-state (laws; multiculturalism policies; group-targeted resource allocations; international memberships, relations and treaties).

One could visualize a set of concentric circles surrounding the individual from the most proximal to the most distant influences, combining to shape the individual orientations which then direct interpersonal behavior across group lines. In this vein, Pratto et al. (1994) comment on the development of empathy with others, an individual orientation, by stating that, “... concern for others (particularly out-group members), is not just a fixed individual propensity, but instead seems likely to be influenced by social structures and policies.” (p. 757). In trying to explicate the socialization of a social dominance orientation in particular, they assert that,

*Social structures and policies that prevent the formation of close personal relationships and empathy between high and low status persons (e.g., economically or legally enforced segregation, language barriers, publishing biases), would seem to discourage empathy between groups and the formation of a common identity. (p. 757)*

Our task as social scientists is to identify, measure and understand the orchestration of these forces. The model will be complex. Its development may be rendered more manageable, however, by conceptualizing its inputs in terms of inter-group social capital. “For, the structure of the distribution of the different types of social capital at a given moment in time represents the immanent structure of the social world, i.e., the set of constraints, inscribed in the very reality of that world, which govern its functioning in a durable way, determining the chances of success for practices.” (Bourdieu 1986:46)

We will use the concept of inter-group social capital to inform our discussion of strategies.

### *Strategies*

*Let not the means of order be made the cause of confusion and the instrument for union an occasion of discord. (Baha' u'llah)*

There has been considerable recent work examining the impact of group diversity on group functioning (e.g., Earley 1997; Jackson 1991; Watson, Kumar and Michaelson 1993). Contemporary researchers typically begin with a review of earlier studies and conclude with Maznevski and DiStefano (1996) that, "Diverse teams have the potential to create unique and innovative solutions to problems, but have great difficulty interacting to integrate their differences ..." (p. 5). These investigators note that the traditional paradigm for group process research assumed a narrow range of participant backgrounds and experiences. New organizational (and indeed national) contexts necessitate greater attention being deployed towards the integration of perspectives, so that diverse teams (and nations) can avoid becoming mired in conflict, and can harmonize their inputs in order to achieve success. Effective integration of differences will build social capital by the training of unit members to accommodate difference and by the bonding of members that arises out of success.

Maznevski and DiStefano (1996) have argued that successful integration requires three conditions: effective communication, collaborative conflict resolution, and constructive interaction. Developing measures for these inter-related constructs, they find that team success may be predicted by higher levels of these components, and that it is the mastery of these issues which makes any team effective, be that team diverse or homogeneous. This outcome may help explain why Watson et al. (1993) found that their diverse groups eventually outperformed their homogeneous groups – part of their experimental procedure involved the experimenters meeting on a number of occasions with each group to consult about its performance problems. By forcing the diverse groups to confront their difficulties, it is probable that Watson et al. helped these groups to enhance the three components of successful integration identified by Maznevski and DiStefano (1996).

This work trumpets a warning for any social unit striving to make its diversity a resource rather than a liability: success will be the margin of good planning. A multi-cultural society is a fragile plant of potential beauty if astutely nurtured. I will propose some of the key issues that I believe need to be addressed in this planning.

*Confronting multi-culturalism openly.* I accept the proposition of Hagan et al. (1995) that hatred towards out-groups is one kind of subterranean tradition, i.e., a deviant attitude complex whose animus is not openly expressed in public discourse. Given the right mix of social and psychological conditions however, virulent disdain of foreigners, immigrants, and other out-groups will be

manifested in right-wing extremism, as Hagan et al. have demonstrated in Germany.

I propose that it is important to address this subterranean tradition explicitly and publicly, as a way of mobilizing controls around the animus. Such open discussion will be stimulated by the institutionalization of multiculturalism policies in nations, organizations and groups. So, for example, in Canada there has been considerable debate about the merits of the country's 1988 "Act for the Preservation and Enhancement of Multiculturalism in Canada". Heated exchange has centered around the economic value of Canada's immigration practices against the backdrop of its high unemployment, for example.

Recently, Berry (nd) has summarized the issues arising from the debate in Canada concerning the social-psychological costs and benefits of having a policy of multiculturalism. He identified some of these benefits as: morale and self-esteem for members of all groups, arising from the knowledge that one's ethno-cultural traditions are being considered; a sense of security arising from the knowledge that a primary prevention program is in place and enforced; a sense of collective esteem derived from being the citizen of a country which vigorously promotes human rights internationally; and the increased biculturalism or multiculturalism of many individuals within Canada.

Berry's (nd) assessment of the benefits is important but less important than the fact that they are being openly considered. The public airing and consideration of benefits in this and other forums is particularly important, because they are rarely included in underground discourse about out-groups. The expression of these countervailing points of view balances the debate, generating greater support for out-groups than would be possible otherwise. This support arises because the issue of race and ethnicity has been openly discussed after being made institutionally explicit through leaders' speaking out or legislation's being enacted. For this reason, I believe it is important for multiculturalism to become part of our public discourse.

*Facilitating contacts across group lines.* Berry and his co-workers have found that tolerance was associated with geographic mobility within Canada (Kalin and Berry 1980) and the degree of ethnic mixing in a given area of Canada (Kalin and Berry 1982). One way to explain these results is to assume that inter-group social capital increases as a result of non-hostile contact and exchanges across group lines. Recent work on this "contact hypothesis", however, makes it clear that only certain types of such contacts promote positive relations (Pettigrew 1998). Hewstone and Brown (1986) concluded that the groups must be positively interdependent and enjoy "equal status" cooperation. Stephan et al., (1998) have summarized the conditions as optimal, "When prior relations between groups have been amicable, the groups are relatively equal in status, the members do not strongly identify with the in-group, and contact has been extensive, voluntary, positive, individualized, and cooperative." (p. 15) These considerations may be used to frame the structuring of super-ordinate goals, considered next.



*Creating super-ordinate goals.* Social polarizations may be transcended through groups' and their members' uniting successfully around a common purpose or goal (Sherif 1966). This might involve local tasks such as constructing community facilities. Community service projects, especially if involving younger students from various ethnic groups serving members of various other ethnic groups, may be especially effective in building trust and good-will across group lines (see James 1910/1970; Holland and Andre 1989; Staub 1989, ch. 18). National tasks, such as protecting the shared environment or indeed, fighting off an invader, will accomplish the same unification. Social capital will then develop out of the experience of working together and subsequently out of shared pride in the ongoing benefit from the actual accomplishments themselves.

Ethnic diversity may be a particular resource here if each group has a distinctive contribution to make (Brown and Wade 1987). This will be the case, for example, if increased tourism is being promoted as a national goal, and ethnic groups can exploit their cultural legacy to develop tourist attractions. Internal tourism increases contacts across group lines; external tourism brings into the country wealth that diffuses across the constituent ethnic groups. Taxation and re-distribution policies must ensure, however, that such diffusion occurs and is perceived by citizens to diffuse to the benefit of all.

*Implementing integrative language policies.* Cooperative activities of any sort are facilitated by having a common script and spoken language available for joint use. Where ethnic communities have different linguistic heritages, government educational policy must promote the acquisition of a common language by all citizens. Given the centrality of one's "mother tongue" to one's self-concept (Fishman 1972), some care must be taken to avoid such policies themselves becoming a source of contention among ethnic communities. Promoting mutual bilingualism in the constituent languages of the country, as in Canada, or mastery of heritage languages plus a common language, as in Singapore, may be workable options to consider.

*Promoting cross-cutting social ties.* The potential divisiveness of group memberships may be moderated in two ways: first, a super-ordinate identity may be made salient, uniting members of oppositional groups under a common identity (Gaertner et al. 1993). This is the re-categorization strategy adopted by political figures who appeal to the common citizenship of the people in a country. Nationalistic or patriotic rallying calls invoke this same dynamic.

Second, non-ethnic associations may be encouraged when these associations have non-ethnic membership criteria and can draw their members from various ethnic communities, e.g., professional societies, local parent-teacher groups, work organizations, labor unions, etc.) Putnam (1995) has discussed the ways in which voluntary group memberships enhance social capital, and many researchers have operationalized their measure of social capital by indexing the extent of membership in such associations (see Putnam for examples). A given person may then have a number of competing loyalties whose balancing demands make any

polarizing claims along ethnic lines harder to sustain (see Brown and Turner 1979, on criss-cross categorization or Dorai 1993, on cross-cutting social ties). Associations which mix ethnic groups thereby increase the social opportunities for building inter-group social capital.

*Avoiding extremes of wealth and poverty.* Wilkinson (1996) has documented the extensive evidence connecting relative economic inequality in nations and states within nations to a host of undesirable outcomes ranging from decreased longevity and poorer health to lower educational performance, higher accident rates, and increased crime. Hofstede (1980, ch. 3) had earlier shown a connection between inequality and the level of domestic political violence. Many of these effects, as in the case of homicide (see e.g., Wilkinson et al., in press), persist even if the effects of average national or state wealth is held constant. Wilkinson et al. explain these socially undesirable outcomes as arising through a deterioration in the quality of social bonds, producing psychosocial stress for all, particularly those of lower status.

We know that norms of distributive justice vary across cultures, especially in the strictness with which equity principles are applied (Morris and Leung 1996). Pratto, Tatar, and Conway-Lanz (1996) have found that those higher in SDO favored equity-based over need-based allocation of resources. This finding suggests that social and personal ideologies surrounding the distribution of resources may have to change in high-SDO cultures if greater egalitarianism across groups in society is to be promoted and greater economic democracy (Korten 1993) achieved. In such societies, a sustained re-orientation of value priorities will be required to support the lowered emphasis on material wealth and power which undergird a strict equity focus (Korten 1993; Schwartz 1994).

Often economic class divisions are confounded with ethnicity or racial differences. These divisions may have arisen historically through specialization by various groups in particular forms of subsistence activity, through immigrant status, or through systematic discrimination and denial of educational resources. Stereotypes will then coalesce around ethnic/racial group membership to legitimize these economic differences (Augoustinos and Walker 1995). Economic cleavages across group lines seem particularly galling and incendiary, since it then becomes easier to attribute one's low status to discrimination. Where these differences become sufficiently wide, ethnic/racial group membership can then be used to fuel and rally political and social agitation against the group status hierarchy. Where a smaller ethnic group becomes notably wealthier, it often becomes the target of hostility from larger ethnic groups, especially when economic downturns occur (Staub 1989, ch. 8; Mackie 1976).

In contrast,

*Societies which are more egalitarian are not only healthier, but ... are also more socially cohesive than others ... With reduced income inequality, people are connected in public life through a variety of social organizations, purposes and activities. Some sense of the moral collectivity and of social purpose remains important. (Wilkinson 1996:213)*

Such societies have earned high levels of social capital. To achieve and expand this social capital, Wilkinson (1996) argues that,

*Policies on education, employment, industrial structure, taxation, the management of the business cycle, must all be assessed in terms of their impact on social justice and social divisions. Economic management must have the explicit aim of increasing social cohesion and the social quality of life. (p. 223)*

Special attention to such policy initiatives should be made in societies where economic inequalities parallel ethnic/racial/caste differences.

*Enhancing perceptions of procedural justice.* Thibaut and Walker (1975) have demonstrated at the individual level that a person's reactions to an allocation decision are determined not only by the outcome received but also by the process which resulted in that outcome. Procedural justice focuses on the processes by which material and other resources are distributed in a social group (Lind and Tyler 1988). A wide number of decision-making strategies, such as negotiation, third-party intervention, arbitration, and withdrawal, have been explored. Their use is determined in large part by the extent to which they are perceived to be fair to the participant.

The degree of fairness associated with a given strategy is jointly determined by properties of the decision-making process (procedural justice) and the quality of treatment received from the persons carrying out the procedures, i.e., interactional justice (Tyler and Bies 1990). Procedural considerations are: the perceived control over the dispute process an approach gives the participant, and the capacity of the approach to reduce animosity between the disputants.

A key feature of process control is the opportunity to express one's point of view (Folger 1977). This granting of voice is often undertaken with some ambivalence, since it opens the Pandora's box of possible disharmony and animosity in exchange for the process control it confers upon the aggrieved party. Recently in America, for example, there has been considerable controversy arising from public debate in the media and in the courts. This debate centers around whether certain ethnic group practices, such as female clitorrectomy, may continue to be performed even though they are at variance with mainstream American customs and even law (Shweder, Markus, Minow and Kessel 1997). Most multicultural societies will face such potential for conflict in accepted practices; the American model of multiculturalism grants voice to the ethnic groups involved. It appears to be a judgment call whether the increase in fairness judgments resulting from such conferment compensates for the struggle and possible social polarization which ensue.

Considerations about interactional justice include participants' assessments of decision-makers as neutral, respectful, and benevolent. These assessments have been shown to exercise a stronger impact on fairness judgments than perceived process control, and indeed were even more important than outcome favorability (Lind 1994). This relative emphasis on interactional fairness relative to outcomes is even more important to those in societies characterized by lower power distance (Tyler, Lind and Huo 1997).

Interactional unfairness seems to be particularly incendiary when it communicates disrespect towards the other. Tedeschi and Felson (1994) have integrated a body of literature to argue that violence follows the perception of unjustified attack, in particular, insults from the other (see also Wilkinson et al., in press). This conclusion underscores the importance of decision-makers' interpersonal behavior when processing disputes between parties, so as to neutralize the potential for anger arising out of applying the procedures for conflict resolution themselves.

Procedural concerns thus seem to be fundamental to judgments of fairness. Lind and Tyler (1988) explain this power conferred by procedures using the group value model. It "is based on the notion that people are concerned about their standing in a group and infer their status from the treatment they receive from the group (or its representatives) in the procedures used to allocate social benefits and burdens." (Leung and Morris 1996:39, brackets added) Unjust procedures belittle participants; it is this social communication and status outcome that seems so basic to the responses made by participants in allocation situations. This conclusion harkens back to Wilkinson et al.'s (in press) explanation of how relative inequality leads to violence through the agency of felt disrespect.

Importantly, procedural considerations show no evidence of cultural variability. In their literature review, Leung and Morris (1996) draw two conclusions: "First, the available evidence suggests that the content of procedural and interactional justice is largely similar across cultures ... Second, the consequences of perceived procedural and interactional justice also seem to be similar across cultures." (pp. 40-41) What appears to vary culturally is the restraint of anger in the face of injustice. Higher power distance at the societal level (Gudykunst and Ting-Toomey 1988) is associated with a muting of anger in response to perceived injustice. This finding is understandable in light of recent work on the appraisal theory of emotions (Ellsworth 1994): anger arises when situations are construed as controllable. In hierarchical societies, many interpersonal exchanges which lead to perceptions of interactional unfairness involve superiors and are hence less controllable by the subordinates (see e.g., Bond, Wan, Leung and Giacalone 1995).

So, the way that decision-making procedures are assessed for their fairness is culturally invariant; the expression of anger in response to that perceived unfairness is not. Again, it may be a social judgment call whether a group places a premium on the social debate that may arise where process control is promoted or on the apparent social order that appears in more hierarchical organizations.

Of course all this research has been focused on the individual within a mono-cultural social encounter. An important question is how the key outcomes of perceived fairness and of expressed anger will vary when the encounter shifts towards the inter-group end of the spectrum. Recently, Huo, Smith, Tyler, and Lind (1996) have examined the processing of interpersonal conflicts between bosses and workers across ethnic lines in American organizations. They found

that weak identification with the organization was associated with a worker emphasis on dispute outcome rather than with procedural concerns. Given that limited resources are available to distribute in any group, inter-group relations will be easier to manage by improving procedural (and interpersonal) considerations. What must be done is to enhance super-ordinate identification, so that disputants' focus of concern shifts away from the less tractable outcome issues. Fortunately, as Huo et al. demonstrated, this super-ordinate identification need not occur at the expense of identification with the participant's own ethnic group (see also Berry's 1990 work discussed above).

Of course, we must appreciate that this research did not involve groups in a state of current or recent hostility. It also occurred in an organizational context where participants have a basic level of commitment to the system. And finally, it was run in a nation that has a backdrop of legal/constitutional protections for minority groups. There is, in short, opportunity for voice throughout the whole social system, releasing minority group members from avoiding conflict by withdrawing. In many societies, the consequences of giving any voice to discontent may be too frightening to contemplate until such procedural mechanisms are instituted. Only after these are in place and are enacted in an interpersonally just way, will a social system be able to reap the benefits that follow from perceptions of minimal fairness in treating group interests.

Without such publicly available mechanisms, the social specter of informal retribution will always be lurking across ethnic lines. Cultures of honor (e.g., Cohen 1996; Peristiany 1965) typically demand retaliation for injustices inflicted on one's group. These "blood feuds" (e.g., Dragoti 1996) pass across generations, fostering an endless cycle of attack and counter-attack. Available legal mechanisms and their enforcement are necessary to break this vicious cycle. A full range of social responses, including restitution, reconciliation (e.g., Moore 1993) and other appeasement forms (Keltner, Young and Buswell 1997), needs to be explored, so that this whole legal process not only satisfies demands for fairness but also restores (Consedine 1995) inter-group social capital. This broadening of social responses should include a close assessment of the destructive costs of current legal processes in many nations characterized by the ruler of law (Frankel 1981).

*Educational provisions.* There are many ways a society may decrease the divisive forces of inter-group disharmony through its educational provisions (Hollins 1996). First, it can invest in open access to education based solely on considerations of pupil competence. Human resources will be enhanced generally, redounding to the benefit of the economy and stimulating associated benefits, like improved health care. Also, the openness of educational training to all citizens will ensure that members of all ethnic groups in a society will gain access to trades and professions. Cross-cutting of social ties will thereby be promoted, embedding ethnic group membership in a wider lattice-work of associations.

Secondly, a part of standard school curriculum should include a re-orientation of spiritual priorities (Korten 1993). He believes that a socialization for

community and harmonious living must replace the contemporary focus on materialism if we are to enjoy a sustainable global future, "... as an act of collective survival, to recreate the political and economic structures of human society in ways that free our world from the grip of greed, waste, and exploitation ... to re-establish the nurturing bonds of sharing on which human community and life itself depend." (p. 59). This re-orientation will help reduce the pressure on limited material resources arising from widespread acquisitive motivation, and move society away from a status hierarchy based primarily on wealth (see also Hatcher 1998; and Schwartz 1992, for the trade-off between power motivations and values of benevolence).

One educational requirement that could be deployed towards "nurturing bonds of sharing" is community service (Holland and Andre 1989; James 1910/1970). Engaging students to assist other citizens outside the school setting would go some way towards achieving greater empathy from these future leaders of the nation, gratitude from the recipients of their contributions, and social capital generally. Additionally, work at school could make greater use of cooperative learning tasks where students interact to achieve a common goal (e.g., Sharan, Hare, Webb, and Hertz-Lazarowitz 1980). Students learn to teach and help one another under these requirements. Both types of project could be designed to span ethnic/racial boundaries. These opportunity structures would then help promote ethnic harmony within societies (Fishbein 1996).

Another relevant educational module is the training of students for non-violent forms of conflict resolution (Stevahn, Johnson, Johnson, and Real 1996; Zhang 1994). These skills would help reduce levels of ethnic disharmony within the school setting itself, but also generalize to social settings outside school and later in life. Well-ingrained strategies for conflict resolution are a protection against escalation (Felson 1978), and a vital form of social capital.

Additionally, school curricula can be broadened, so that a variety of skills, social, aesthetic, musical, athletic, and so forth become nurtured and recognized (Gardner 1993). Such an opening presupposes a wider definition of what it is to be fully human, and provides alternative routes and rewards for self-development. An over-emphasis on the professions ossifies and narrows the status hierarchy in a society, and materially over-compensates the survivors of such a focused, competitive scramble. Also, the content of some of these additions to the curriculum can be used to confront prejudice directly, e.g., the songs from *Time For Healing* by the musical group, Sounds of Blackness.

Third, liberal arts can be encouraged, both as major fields of study and as elective courses in the curriculum. Altemeyer (1988) has found that lower levels of Right Wing Authoritarianism characterize students in the humanities and social sciences, and that this level decreases over their course of study.

The content of history courses may be particularly important in promoting multiculturalism; the inflammatory portrayal of ethnic group interactions in the past can fuel "ideologies of antagonism" (Staub 1988) and divisive perceptions of

history impacting on social identities (Liu, Wilson, McClure and Higgins 1997). Ethnically balanced reporting may be an antidote to possible in-group bias in historical representations in the school curriculum. This balancing of content could also include a greater emphasis on peace building, as a counterweight to the emphasis on war that currently dominates most people's perceptions of history (Liu, in press).

Fourthly, culture as a topic of study should receive much more attention (e.g., Claydon, Knight and Rado 1977; Hoffman 1996), so as to moderate students' attitudes towards race and other forms of difference (Banks 1995). This exposure could include culture as the primary focus (e.g., Ladson-Billings 1995) and with appropriate techniques (Pusch 1979) or as a supplement to other social science or business courses where cultural considerations are central to the validity of material presented (e.g., Smith and Bond's 1998 text on social psychology across cultures). By the identification of culture as a vital and worthy concern, ethnicities are legitimized and validated. Weight is given to cultural claims and a sense of security imparted to ethnic groups in the national mosaic.

### The International Context

*The earth is but one country, and mankind its citizens.* (Baha'u'llah)

This essay has been focused on social psychological recommendations for building harmonious, multicultural societies. The current context for undertaking these initiatives is dramatically different than it was, say, at the end of World War II. As expressed by the Baha'i International Community, "History has thus far recorded principally the experience of tribes, cultures, classes, and nations. With the physical unification of the planet in this century and the acknowledgement of the interdependence of all who live on it, the history of humanity as one people is now beginning." (1995).

The novel, contemporary dynamic driving this change is the "porous border" (Rosenau 1997), viz., the relative ease with which influences pass across national boundaries placing enormous stress on those boundaries (Blake 1998). These influences may be ecological, as with environmental pollution and resource depletion; financial, as with currency devaluations and huge, unregulated flows of capital; human, as with legal and illegal, migrants; informational, as with the uncontrollable input available over the internet; and ideological, as with the growing pressure for human rights and clean government. Added to this ferment is the unrelenting pressure on the eco-sphere by continued population growth (Korten 1993). The upshot of these developments is that all people on this fragile planet have become more interconnected and interdependent; the successful management of this relatedness has become a matter of our corporate survival. As Benjamin Franklin aptly put matters, "We must learn to hang together, or surely we shall all hang separately."

In forging this often-reluctant cooperation, we might pause to consider whether the same considerations will be needed to achieve unity at the international level as are needed at the national level. In thinking through this broader, global issue, the Baha'i International Community has written,

... such rethinking will have to address practical matters of policy, resource utilization, planning procedures, implementation methodologies, and organization. As it proceeds, however, fundamental issues will quickly emerge, related to the long-term goals to be pursued, the social structures required, the implications for development of principles of justice, and the nature and role of knowledge in effecting enduring change. (1995:2)

I submit that this daunting agenda is exactly what we have been exploring in the main body of this essay, and that the possible solutions proposed there will be applicable inter-nationally. As an important example, the emergence of global social change organizations (Cooperrider and Pasmore 1991) is generating a growing body of social capital that transcends national borders and targets planetary concerns. This "international" social capital arises in part out of a belief in the oneness of humankind and adds to the momentum of this awareness and commitment through its investment in various projects. This "international" social capital will be augmented by practicing in relations across nations any of the harmonizing solutions discussed as applicable within nations. In all these ways, we will be better positioned to build a unified community of nations at the same time we are building more unified nations.

*Mankind hath been created to carry forth an ever-advancing civilization.  
(Baha'u'llah)*

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