

Implications of Thomas Berry's "The Dream Of the Earth": An Argument for Value-Based Education After Multiculturalism Using Bernard Lonergan's Epistemological Methodology

By Christopher Hrynkow

A Thesis

Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies

in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements

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## Abstract

What I propose in this thesis is that there is a discernable teleological path, surrounding an authentic expansion of ethical criteria, that philosophy of education has been following in the West since its inception in 5<sup>th</sup> century BCE Athens. In order to bear witness to this movement, I begin with two “snapshot” moments in the history of thought in the West. The first offers an exploration of Plato’s educational philosophy and the second consists of a description of the development of contemporary multiculturalism policy in Canada. The latter snapshot is presented as the most recent stop along our foundational trajectory, with multiculturalism characterized as the supreme expression of the democratic ideal.

I then move to a discussion of Bernard Lonergan’s epistemological methodology. This methodology will be used to understand how multiculturalism is a necessary, but at the same time transitory, phase in the dynamic and authentically progressive socio-evolutionary expansion of moral categories noted by Aldo Leopold. After unfolding this new imperative necessitated by the ecological crisis, I offer a summary of the thought of “geologian” Thomas Berry as indicative of what this next phase of cultural development, and its corresponding philosophy of education, ought to look like. Further, in order to demonstrate that Berry’s educational philosophy need not remain in abstraction, I make reference to the Owenite tradition of educational praxis and the particular case of Genesis Farm, where Berry’s suggested curriculum is being implemented.

I end with a short conclusion, which challenges educators, as part of their responsibility to a future that is both sustainable and biocratic, not to participate in a “flight from understanding” in relation to the insight presented within this thesis. Throughout, in line with the Department of Social Foundations in Education’s mandate to allow interdisciplinary investigation of problems, this thesis will draw on perspectives from such diverse subject areas as philosophy, history, law, geography, environmental science, theology and the empirical sciences.

## Acknowledgements

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Given the demands placed on them this year, all four of the individuals mentioned above would have been quite justified to decline any request that further taxed their limited free time. That they chose to help me is a reflection of their generous characters. Their shared insights have been cherished gifts.

Additionally, I would like to express my appreciation to Jeremy Dick for taking an interest in the ideas presented in this thesis. He provided a valuable opportunity for me to practice my verbal presentation of both biocratic and Lonergan’s ideas. His interest extended to reviewing a draft of this thesis, which helped to enrich my perspective on the concepts presented below.

Crucially, I would like to thank my parents for their ongoing and generous support. Without their remarkable patience, I have no doubt that my life would be quite different and certainly not as enriching.

In closing, I would like to dedicate this thesis to my godson, Desmond Langan, with the hope that he may grow up in a more biocratic world.

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# Introduction

I think the first question that arises with regard to the topic 'philosophy of education' is, What is the good of it? I will argue that the value is not merely negative, but also that the discovery and articulation of its positive function call for originality and creativity. For traditionalist responses to modern philosophies of education are inadequate, and the formulation of a truly satisfactory alternative will demand that we face complicated technical issues that take seriously the context of contemporary learning. – Bernard Lonergan (1993(b): 3)

Plato wrote that education ought to be sanitized and geared towards a single viewpoint. Currently, we are at point in the Canadian journey where, in sharp contrast we are, at least officially, encouraging a multiplicity of perspectives in both schooling and, via policy initiatives, mass society. After summarising these juxtaposed positions, this thesis will use the thought of the Canadian thinker, Bernard Lonergan, to both frame and offer epistemological support for the transition that allowed for the establishment of culturally multiplicit policies in Canada. Next, it will employ that same epistemological foundation to argue that multiculturalism is a wholly crucial and positive, but at the same time necessarily transitory, stage in an authentically<sup>1</sup> progressive evolution of Western society.

This thesis will then move to a consideration of the thought of “geologist”<sup>2</sup> Thomas Berry in order to suggest what the next phase of Western social development, based on a new universe story, ought to look like. The penultimate chapter of this thesis will assess the implications for value-based education of Berry’s “new story”. Finally, the

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<sup>1</sup> The word authentic is used in a special way in this thesis, to signify a rigorously examined and tested conclusion relating to a human course of action. A full definition of authenticity is offered in the section dealing with Bernard Lonergan’s epistemological methodology.

<sup>2</sup> Berry prefers this label for his profession—he defines himself as an “earth-thinker”.



last chapter suggests a model for practical educational action based on Berry's new framework. As various insight-generating clues are assembled, this latter portion of the thesis will use Lonergan's epistemological methodology to frame Berry's thoughts. In short, the argumentative portion of this thesis will take the form of unfolding an insight and responding to the problem of what an educational philosophy for the new millennium ought to look like given the totality of our current context.

As it unfolds, this argument will make use of specific clue sets. The first two clue sets are the twin "snapshots moments" which form Chapters Two and Three. These two chapters will consist of an analysis of a certain trajectory moving towards an authentically progressive society evident in the transition that has brought us from Plato's way of imaging education to the development of Canada's contemporary multiculturalism policy. Moreover, it will be shown that this movement is tantamount to what Aldo Leopold would consider a sequential enlargement of moral categories. It will then be demonstrated how, in cooperation with this dynamic, Canadians have founded a mass society that officially supports multiplicity of perspective and expression within one cultural mosaic. Finally, in this area, efforts to transfer this respect and support for multicultural principles into the educational sphere will be briefly discussed.

In Chapter Four, this trajectory towards authenticity will be analyzed using Bernard Lonergan's epistemological methodology. Chapter Five will then move towards a more in-depth unfolding of some current reflections on the ecological crisis which are key to the challenge laid out at the end of this paper. Further, in Chapter Six, Lonergan's

methodology will be used to test a speculative suggestion offered by Thomas Berry concerning the future direction educational philosophy ought to take given the new imperatives necessitated by his reading of the ecological crisis.

An additional set of clues, formed by insights gleaned from a number of diverse subject areas, will help to clarify our responsibilities in light of the total impact of humanity on the earth system. To show that transforming actions are possible in relation to these insights, Chapter Seven will set forth the example of Owenite educational praxis in relation to the learning community at Genesis Farm in New Jersey. Finally, the conclusion will set an important challenge for educators relative to their inherent responsibility to the future.

Thus, this thesis becomes a reflection on foundational philosophies of education in the West. Following in Berry's footsteps as a cultural historian, the focus here will be on history; specifically, the historicity of ideas relevant to the educational project in our society. Historicity, in Berry's neo-Aristotelian context, is meant to answer not only the question "where have we come from?" in the foundational sense but also to respond to the questions "where are we going?" and "what course are we to steer?" in the teleological sense. Lonergan's methodology also begs the question "what is going forward?" in any particular time. All of these issues surrounding historicity are crucial in the educational project. Foundationally, education rests on insight. At the same time, from an authentically progressive teleological view, teaching is necessarily future-oriented; a type of great relay race of learning (*i.e.*, a segmental team effort) that seeks to

initiate the young and uninformed into both citizenship and knowledge, striving for, though not always achieving, a correspondingly proper future-oriented direction. Uncovering just what a philosophical foundation, corresponding to a proper contemporary initiation into citizenship and knowledge, ought to look like, is the ultimate purpose of this thesis. In agreement with the framework defined above, the starting point for such an understanding is provided by the person often labelled by historians as the first “great” philosopher: the Greek, Plato. I will begin to explore Plato’s thought, after first presenting a brief literature review which will serve as a foreshadowing of my argument and help the reader situate the major thinkers I will be drawing from in this thesis.

## Chapter One: Foreshadowing Literature Review

According to the fourth edition of James McMillan's *Educational Research*, there are two main ways in which literature reviews are done, corresponding to quantitative and qualitative studies in education. A quantitative review is exhaustive (*i.e.*, covering all available literature on a given topic), very specific and seeks to locate the new work in relationship with other relevant research studies. Further, the quantitative literature review is self-contained, ending prior to the presentation of the author's discussion of her/his research (McMillan: 67). In contrast, the qualitative review will, initially, be relatively brief. This is because the section devoted solely to the literature review plays a foreshadowing (or previewing) role in relation to the undertaken qualitative research. Further, under this second strategy, aspects of the literature review material will emerge at various points in the author's discussion of the themes relevant to her/his study (McMillan: 70).

This thesis is of the philosophical-argumentative type and as such does not fit into an easy classification as either quantitative or qualitative. However, given that arguments often unfold better if supporting information is presented at appropriate points, what follows here is a foreshadowing of important elements surrounding my argument, giving a preview of themes which will ultimately be revealed in their full context and clarity in the subsequent chapters of this thesis.

A brief word about the cognitive genesis of the argument itself is useful here. As will be more fully explained once Bernard Lonergan's methodological reflection on human knowing has been set forth, the insight that led to this thesis represents a special ordering of ideas that only recently became connected in my consciousness. These concrete concepts emanate from both my formal educative and informal existential experiences. When the connections between these concepts initially became apparent to me, in early November 2004, it was a moment of great excitement in my life. My efforts since then have represented an ordering of this insight into an acceptable argumentative thesis, so that I can adequately explain an instance of a concept that has recently emerged and, to borrow Lonergan's phrase, "is going forward".

Before moving into a more nuanced exploration of this argument, a summary review of the principal theorists whose works play important roles in my discussion will be presented. This presentation will be offered along the lines of a "cast in order of appearance" analogy, in order to help prepare the reader to follow the teleological direction of an authentically progressive social thought system as presented in my argument.

***Plato (c.428-c.348 BCE)***

Alfred North Whitehead once wrote, "[t]he safest general characterization of the European philosophical tradition is that it consists of a series of footnotes to Plato" (Whitehead: 29). This statement is habitually extended and misquoted, to say that "All of Western philosophy is but a footnote to Plato...his shadow falls over all of Western

thought" (e.g., Bedford and St. Martins: 1). Additionally, in that he is often represented as the first person to fashion a complex philosophy of education in the West, Plato provides an appropriate starting point for my exploration.

The particular aspect of Plato's thought that has a bearing on my argument is found in Books Two and Three of *The Republic* (written circa 360 BCE). Here, through the voice of Socrates, Plato offers a life-plan for the guardian class, who are to be the rulers and defenders of his ideal polity. Included in this life-plan is an education marked by exposure to a very specific and sanitized curriculum, intended to be "good", "just", and "best" in the sense of engendering virtue. Plato's educational thought is later used, in relation to the story of the development of Canada's official multiculturalism policy, to demonstrate a teleological direction in an authentically progressive social thought system.

### ***The Current Canadian Context***

Although authored as part of a collaborative process the current Canadian context nonetheless plays a crucial part in my argument, as the second reference point in the above-mentioned plotting of an authentically progressive social thought system in the West. Mark Leman's essay, *Canadian Multiculturalism* (1999), plays a director's role, helping to organize the development and expression of official Canadian multicultural policy and practice. Of particular interest, here, are the principles of equality and multiplicity, which are perceived as a crucial part of Canadian identity and protected in the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (1982).

The transference to and expression of multicultural concepts in the educational sector is then briefly discussed with reference to documents produced by the Canadian Department of Heritage as part of their *Lets Stop Racism* (1993) and *Racism – Stop It Now!* (2005) campaigns. To close Chapter Three, a short critique of the values that the Department of Heritage seeks to engender in students through these campaigns is offered by reference to the works of Jack Granatstein, Reginald Bibby and Neil Bissoondath, who deal with the problems of balkanisation and identity that they associate with current Canadian multicultural policy and practice.

### ***Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984)***

Playing a leading role in my argument is Canadian educator, philosopher and theologian Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan's thought in general, and specifically his understanding of "insight", is used for two main purposes in relation to the systems represented by the Platonic ideal of education and the development of Canada's multiculturalism policy. First, Lonergan's methodology is employed to explain how we have authentically progressed, in the West, from the fixed world-view represented in the Platonic utopia to the diversity of cultural expression and practice officially encouraged in today's Canada. Secondly, Lonergan's methodology is used to show that this movement, although remarkable and socially progressive, ought not to be considered a final destination in human development. In simpler terms, Lonergan's epistemological methodology is drawn on here to explain why multiculturalism is an essential, but at the same time transitory, phase in the movement of educational philosophy and practice. The primary source of this methodological support is *Insight: A Study into Human*

*Understanding*, originally published in 1957. However, reference is also made to several of Lonergan's other works, including *Understanding and Being* and *Topics in Education*.

***Thomas Berry (b. 1914)***

In determining where the teleological process, that brought us from Plato's sanitized polity to a point that now allows for the expression of diversity in mass society, might take us next, the writings of my second seminal thinker are employed. Expressed another way, Thomas Berry's cultural theory is offered as an appropriate expression of the "next station stop" in the journey of civilization.

Thomas Berry received his doctorate from the Catholic University of America in 1949. To facilitate his research work for that degree Berry attended language school in the Chinese capital, Peking (now Beijing). This experience was crucial to Berry's emerging academic career. His thought, refined through teaching stints at Setton Hall, St. John's, Fordham, Columbia and the University of San Diego, culminated in the establishment of his own research institute in Riverdale (New York). Specifically, Berry's study of eastern cultural history led him to discern the need of a new cosmology for the West.

Unfolding his call for a reformulated cosmology and its corresponding imperatives, Berry's ideas surrounding the need for a "new story" necessitated by the ecological crisis are explored in this thesis. In particular, an account of Berry's recommendation for a curriculum that is supportive of "biocratic" principles (*i.e.*,



bringing all life forms into the decision making process) is offered. Also brought to the fore by Berry, and explored in this thesis, is the notion that “a child needs a universe”—that the presence of the ecological helps both to educate and to form humans in a special and essential manner. The principal source of Berry’s ideas used in this thesis is *The Dream for the Earth* (1990), which provides, both implicitly and explicitly, a multi-layered vision related to integrated education for the ecological age. These ideas are further supported and clarified with reference to six other sets of Berry’s writings and one interview. Included are selections from Berry’s most recent book, *The Great Work* (2000).

#### ***Aldo Leopold (1887-1948)***

To add support to the notion that our next phase of development ought to be “biocratic” in nature, the thought of Aldo Leopold, as originally presented in *The Sand Country Almanac* (1948), makes an appearance in a supporting role. The most useful observation, harvested from this monograph is Leopold’s discernment of a process through which we have seen the expansion of the ethical sequence of the West. By means of this process, the category “morally worthy”, once deemed fit only for ruling-class males, has been expanded to include all “classes” of humans. Leopold points out that in Odysseus’ time, slaves and women were considered property, yet such a classification becomes highly problematic and rightly illegal today. Leopold also provides us with the image of the potato bug (an insect which, given the necessary condition for success in numbers, will eradicate its food source, thus eradicating itself)—which I consider the key metaphor in this thesis.

***Alasdair MacIntyre (b.1921)***

Another supporting character's concepts, those of University of Notre Dame Senior Research Professor of Philosophy, Alasdair MacIntyre, are used to demonstrate the power of story in relation to culture in the West. Specifically, MacIntyre's thought, as laid out in *After Virtue* (originally published in 1981), surrounding our "un-detachableness" from, and responsibility for, the historical backdrop of our time, is briefly discussed. Berry's "new story" is then explored in light of this insight.

***Robert Owen (1771-1858)***

Robert Owen is the third and last of the starring characters to appear. Descriptions of Owen's reform efforts, centred on model communities, are provided as an example of a way that the cultural story was shifted towards more authentically progressive social principles. Descriptions of these efforts are supported with references to Owen's *Observations on the Effect of the Manufacturing System* (1815) and *To the Population of the World* (1834). Citations from his speeches and testimony before Sir Robert Peel's parliamentary committee are also included. For the purposes of my argument, the centrality of educational praxis to Owen's efforts is highlighted. Then, the educational community located at Genesis Farm near Blairstown, N.Y., which taps into this Owenite tradition of socially transformative education, is put forward as an example of authentically progressive social insight concretized in praxis.

### *After the Stars Have Played Their Roles...*

After the “stars” and supporting actors have put in their appearances, the scaffolding for my argument is fully in place. Backed by Lonergan’s methodology, I am then able to argue that the reality of the ecological crisis necessitates a new way of being in the world and, hence, a new way of educating for and about that way of being. For, it is my contention that, if we do not collectively start finding ways to include the other life systems more fully in our decision making, we—like the potato bug—now run the risk of destroying the very process (evolution) that brought us these abilities.

Because of their inherent responsibility to the future, educators have a special role to play in helping to establish a future that is both biocratic and sustainable. Berry’s thought allows me to assert that our tools in this effort are our human abilities to reason, dream and image: aptitudes which are representative of the very “stuff” of teaching. Therefore, I propose that it is time for educators to start to integrate not only multicultural but also biocultural principles into their programming.<sup>3</sup>

### *A Note on the Uniqueness of this Thesis*

An extensive literature search led me to conclude that the way I am using these thinkers to construct an educational argument for this thesis is unique. There have been only two other monographs, which are principally focussed on an interaction between the thought of Berry and Lonergan. Canadians wrote these both. The best known is Anne Marie Dalton’s book, *A Theology for the Earth: The Contributions of Thomas Berry and*

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<sup>3</sup> At this point, it may be of interest for the reader to note that my argument is presented in chart and diagram form in appendixes A and B.

*Bernard Lonergan* (1999) which, as the title suggests, is concerned mainly with theological issues and mentions education only occasionally and peripherally. The second work, also a theological piece, is Cristina Vanin's PhD thesis written out of Boston College, *Towards an Ecological Ethics: Key Ideas Regarding the Universe from the Work of Thomas Berry as Clarified and Refined by Some of Bernard Lonergan's Thought*. Again, the primary concern is theological, in this case focussing on the ethical implications of Berry's thought.

In this chapter, I cited the precedence of a qualitative education literature review, in order to help the reader start to gain insight into the nature of the argument presented in this thesis. I now move to unfold the supporting information necessary for a substantiation of my argument. To begin this process we will turn to Athens' Golden Age and a consideration of work that formed part of the curriculum at Plato's Academy, *The Republic*.

## Chapter Two: The Starting Point of Educational Philosophy in The West, Plato's Guardians

Following something of a tradition in educational studies, most Western Philosophy of Education classes begin with a review of Platonic discourses on learning. The most famous of these may be the dialogue in *The Republic*, which brings us the analogy of the cave (Book Seven) and Socrates' conversation with Meno and the slave boy dealing with "learning as remembering" found in *The Meno*. However, the dialogue I wish to focus on for the purpose of a first "snapshot moment" in this thesis is taken from Books Two and Three of *The Republic*. Here, Plato sets out his vision of both the cultural structure and system of education for his ideal polity. Most notably, in relation to the purpose of this thesis, he uses Socratic voice to construct a life-span educational plan for the guardians. This chapter offers a detailed summary of that life-plan in order provide this thesis with the starting point for its plotting of the trajectory of the undercurrents driving the history of authentically progressive social thought in the West.

Plato's endeavour, in this regard, is firmly located within the context of Socrates' search for justice. In the first book of *The Republic*, in conversation with various Athenian citizens, Socrates de-establishes two possible definitions of justice—showing that justice is not equated with either a system resembling a ledger sheet of rendering to each what is his due (Plato: 134) or with the prerogative of the powerful to make self-serving laws (Plato: 146). Yet, by the end of Book One, Socrates has proposed nothing to take the place of these two suggestions. Much to the disappointment of those who feel

that philosophical discourses ought to start with a definition of the terms under consideration, Book One ends only with non-definitions.

The second question engaged in Book One is whether it is of greater advantage to be “just” or “unjust” in life. However, this question, too, is not satisfactorily resolved in the opinion of all the citizens gathered for the dialogue (Plato: 156). In simpler terms, at the end of the first book of *The Republic* we still do not know what justice is or whether, in life, it is better to be just or unjust.

In Book Two, Socrates counters the argument, that it is better to seem to be just than to actually be, just with an interesting logical move. Via analogy and his famous questioning, Socrates gains this concession from the assembled citizens: if he is able to show what justice is in its mass expression, the just city, then it would be possible to compare and see what justice is at the most basic individual level, that of the human soul. Given the stated purpose of this thesis, the details of Plato’s argument are worth exploring.

Socrates begins with an analogy of two tablets: the first, a smaller one, inscribed with miniscule letters, far off and shaded in poor light; the second, both bigger and closer, inscribed with larger letters. If someone noticed, by chance, that they bore the same inscription, one could use the second tablet and quite easily compare to make sure that its inscription did, in fact, match the first (Plato: 165). This analogy is subsequently extended so that the smaller tablet is made to represent the justice of one person (*i.e.*, the sought after knowledge about the justice located in the soul), and the larger to represent a

window onto the just city—justice being easier to discern in its mass expression (Plato: 165). With this framework accepted by Glaucon and Adeimantos, two of the assembled citizens, Plato goes on to construct his ideal city. He forms this polity in line with his project to establish a location for justice, in order to be able to see the “big” so as to better discern the “small”. In this manner, Plato proposes to first bear witness to the just city and then to the just soul.

In this portion of the dialogue, Plato begins to construct his city around the idea of a “logical” division of labour, which is necessarily exclusivist. It follows that the smallest possible ideal city would consist of four to five men (Plato does not provide for the possibility of women holding jobs at this stage in the dialogue) engaged in suitable, fixed, occupations: shoemaker, builder, weaver and farmer, according to their natural abilities (Plato: 166). However, for the needs of any city to be supplied most efficiently, the principle of specialization would have to be expanded. For instance, a farmer should not have to take valuable time away from what he is best at (*i.e.*, farming) in order to make his own plough (Plato: 167). Upon this premise, the city would grow exponentially to include craftsmen, traders and experts in overseas markets. Such growth, by extension, would also necessitate coinage to facilitate exchange (Plato: 168). This situation would then generate the need for shopkeepers and merchants. The expansion of the city would also bring about the necessity for wage earners—those “who have strength enough for bodily work but nothing in particular in their minds which makes them worthy to be partners” (Plato: 169). This division of labour would have the effect of creating a situation of plenty, so that the inhabitants of the city would “spend their days in health

and peace, living to old age as you might expect and leaving such life to their children” (Plato: 169).

Yet, because this seemingly ideal life would not be enough for everyone, it follows for Socrates that “decadence” and “culture” would inevitably ensue, necessitating a larger imperialistic city that would take land from its neighbours (Plato: 170). This larger city, in line with its territorial gains, would next need people to defend its emerging “great way of life” against all attackers. Such an army could not come from the people, however, since it was agreed as a founding principle of the place that “one man cannot exercise many arts well” (Plato: 170). Based on this precept of specialization, which earlier banned the shoemaker from dabbling in farming, it follows that a professional military class—Plato’s famous class above and apart, the guardians—would need to be formed. As war is deemed an “art” in the assembled citizens’ view, it follows that a need for masters of the “art of guarding” will emerge.

To address this need, Socrates offers the analogy that just as a good dog is bred to guard a home, so too a well-bred lad exists for guarding the city (Plato: 171). The well-bred guardian would have a strong body, and be quick and appropriately spirited in temper—so as to make him fearless in relation to his enemies and gentle towards his own people (Plato: 172). In order to engender these paradoxical qualities of temper, the guardians would be nurtured with the goal of creating men who, according to Socrates’ analogy, are like good guard dogs: lovers of wisdom and quick to take appropriate action (Plato: 173).



In fostering such a class, education would be paramount. The education of the guardians would consist of gymnastics for the body, along with poetry, letters and things intellectual for the soul (Plato: 173). This formation would begin with the latter categories, based exclusively on state approved and sanitized fables, and geared towards building the moral character of the guardians. Moreover, this particular portion of the guardians' education would be provided by mothers and nurses (Plato: 175). The fables used by these educators would be constructed in such a way as to support the notion of good actions by the gods in all things. Numerous tales from ancient Greek mythology that depict vice; thereby running counter to what, today, might be labelled "family values" would be erased. Philosophical justification for this use of censorship is given by Socrates' reasoning that nothing that is good can be harmful.

Further, to help stabilize the government, there would be a law dictating maintenance of the dualist mantra that "God is cause of good things, not all things" (Plato: 175-178). Another law would dictate that the gods must not be depicted as engaging in deceit, trickery or shape-changing, because this clearly would be against the concept of the divine nature as perfect—beneficial in shaping both ideal guardians and, by extension, ideal citizens of the utopia (Plato: 178-182).

In the next book, Plato continues to build his utopian theodicy. Book Three begins with Socrates' censoring stories about Hades' fearful nature, so as to lessen the chances that a guardian would develop a fear of death and, therefore, be cowardly in battle (Plato:

182-183). For similar reasons, the heroes, such as Achilles, would never be depicted as lamenting or dealing with misfortune in any way other than with the calmness that should characterize a guardian (Plato: 184-185). Also, violent laughter would never be allowed to overcome a guardian, lest the guardians experience "a violent upset of feeling". Therefore, the stories of gods and heroes would need to be altered so as to expunge all depictions that might help establish a negative character trait in any citizen (Plato: 185-186).

In short, for the sake of social stability, what Socrates has identified as "truth" would characterize all lower class associations of the city. Only the ruler-guardians of the city would be allowed to engage in falsehood, and these untruths would only be permitted when they benefit the city (Plato: 186). Moreover, in the upper classes, there would be a further division marked by the stipulation that the pleasures of drink, food and women would be reserved for the ruler-guardians exclusively, while the young would practice temperance (Plato: 185). Furthermore, bribes, and any myths supporting a culture of corruption, would be barred from the city (Plato: 188-189). That the gods and heroes may have committed crimes of lust would never be discussed or put into writing. Further, even poetry, because of the way it encourages a type of falseness in its mode of imitation, would also be banned (Plato: 189-192).

In terms of associations with other people, the guardians would not be allowed to emulate models such as women, slaves, wicked men, cowards, madmen or a person outside of their own station in life (Plato: 193). In summary, all art and educative

associations were to be “pure”. That purity would be measured most significantly in terms of its ability to engender good guardians. Characteristics to be purged from a guardian’s essence would include drunkenness, idleness and softness. Even any musical scales, which roughly approximate such things, would be banned (Plato: 197). Speech, rhythm, art and architecture would always demonstrate concord, less the guardian be drawn astray (Plato: 200). Because excessive pleasures can generate license for anger and vice, Socrates would also ban passionate contact between lovers (Plato: 202).

With that thought, Socrates moves into the principles that would govern the physical education of the guardians. In contrast to athletes, who are overly prone to excessive sleeping and suffer from health problems when their regimen is changed in the slightest, the guardians would need a lighter type of soul-building gymnastics. Such a regime would engender physical adaptability to varying conditions of bodily comfort encountered in the act of campaigning (Plato: 203). Adding that the market in “imaginary” foods promotes a liberal and overly litigious culture—and despite his earlier attacks on their lifestyle— Socrates cites athletes as authorities for stating that “simple foods”, free of sweets, pastries and sauces, ought to be consumed for their beneficial effects on the body (Plato: 204-205).

Further, in Plato’s ideal city, the doctors would start their training early so as to gain knowledge of diseases and death, while judges would receive their education later, having been exposed only to pure “goods” in the first stage of their lives. The purpose of these stipulations is a dark one by modern standards of justice: it amounts to nothing less

than eugenics; providing doctors with the ability to discern those who are not “naturally good” in body (in order to leave these individuals to die) and giving judges the knowledge base necessary to execute those unreformable persons who were naturally bad in soul (Plato: 209). Plato ends this section by asserting that there would also need to be balance in the education of the guardians. For, if too much exercise is taken, “savagery and hardness” would result. On the other hand, if the letters are studied in isolation, an unsuitable “softness and gentleness” would be evident in the student (Plato: 210).

Attention now turns to the division of power. Plato asserts, as a principle, that the older should rule over the younger and the best in each class should rule over the others (*e.g.*, the best farmers should rule over the other farmers). The overall rulers would be drawn from the guardian class; specifically, those “men such as whom we observe to be most careful for us all their lives long; who do with all their hearts whatever they think would be for the advantage of the city, and would in no way ever wish to do what is not” (Plato: 212). To evaluate a guardian’s rigour, he would be observed in all facets of his life, from his way of proceeding with hard labour to his reactions when faced with temptations that would cause most other men’s character to fall into disrepute. Only those who emerged immaculate from this process would be allowed to rule (Plato: 213-214).

In order to support these principles, Plato goes on to create a founding myth based around the imagery of the forge. This constructed myth states that some people are golden (the ruler-guardians), others silver (the warrior-guardians), and still others iron and bronze (the farmers and other craftsmen). Each man is predestined to his station. It

may happen that a bronze child may be born to gold parents. If so, that child is to be cast out, while a gold child born to lesser parents is to be identified and elevated. This myth is to be taught to the children of the second generation of the city as fact. In this way, the children of the *polis* would come to fully accept the nature of their social organization as beneficial (Plato: 215-216).

Book Three ends with Socrates' assertion that all of the guardians' temperate rations, lodging and property should both be provided and owned by the state. Additionally, he states that since, as a gift from the gods, they have gold and silver in their souls, the guardians would have no need for human gold and silver either as currency, vessels or jewellery. Such a provision is meant to save both the state and the guardians themselves from corruption. The Book closes when Glaucon agrees that all of this should form the basis of the educational policies and laws of the ideal state (Plato: 217).

Before moving on to a description of the current Canadian context, I think a brief shading of the information that I have presented will be useful here. As will become more apparent in the latter portions of this thesis, Plato's recommendations for educational practice are certainly complete, in the sense that they deal with every conceivable aspect of a guardian's life. However, Plato's plan is also representative of what a view inspired by Lonergan's thought would term a simple system. Further, as a utopia it is paternalistic and authoritarian; opposed the values of inclusively that have come to be held dear by many Canadians. In contrast, the vision that Berry represents is not only holistic and

inclusive but also integrated. These are important additional descriptors because such an integrated vision offers, as will be demonstrated in the context of this thesis, a more organic and authentic way of imaging a foundational educational philosophy.

## Chapter Three: Multiculturalism in Its Official Canadian Incarnation

From Plato's ancient-Greek utopian dream, we now shift to a consideration of the contemporary worldview that allowed for the development of current multicultural policy and official practice in Canada. This consideration will offer a second "snapshot moment" in the history of the West, which will later be used to plot the teleological direction of the undercurrents driving our social philosophies. This plotting will suggest what a course of action for the future ought to look like, given the totality of the current situation and the yet to be unfolded phenomena of the "sequential enlargement of ethical criteria" (Leopold: 634).

The course of the development of current Canadian policy and official practice is interesting in this regard. For, despite an early history that was explicitly colonial, since its foundation as a Dominion, Canada has transitioned from a sanctioned bi-cultural entity to an emerging multicultural state. Governmental policy and official practice are fostering this transition in many sectors of Canadian society, including the educational sphere. An exploration of government policy and official practice provides a sense of the philosophical/ideological foundations of multiculturalism in Canada, which will be referenced in subsequent parts of this thesis. The goal of the exploration presented in this chapter is to provide a "snapshot" picture of today so that I can move on to demonstrate how the current reality is transitional and not an endpoint in the intellectual journey of the West. As such, many of the nuances and debates surrounding Canadian multiculturalism will

necessarily, due to considerations of focus and space, be brushed over or left aside<sup>4</sup>. With this qualifier in place, a focussing lens for my exploration will be Leman's essay, *Canadian Multiculturalism*, which for the purposes of this thesis will be considered as representative of the official discourse surrounding multiculturalism.

In 1999, as part of his work for the Political and Social Affairs Division of the Parliamentary Research Branch of the Library of Parliament, Marc Leman produced an essay, *Canadian Multiculturalism*, that is given to new parliamentarians as a way of helping them grasp the concept of multiculturalism in its Canadian application. A link to *Canadian Multiculturalism* can be found on the Government of Canada's Department of Heritage's web site,<sup>5</sup> further supporting the notion that Leman's thought is generally representative of the official discourse on multiculturalism. Leman's essay was subsequently put on the internet as a public document.

I follow the essay's framework, though not all of its content, in the exploration that follows. Leman offers the following definition of his main term:

Multiculturalism in Canada refers to the presence and persistence of diverse racial and ethnic minorities who define themselves as different and who wish to remain so. Ideologically, multiculturalism consists of a relatively coherent set of ideas and ideals pertaining to the celebration of Canada's cultural mosaic. Multiculturalism at the policy level is structured around the management of diversity through formal initiatives in the federal, provincial and municipal domains. Finally, multiculturalism is the process by which racial and ethnic minorities compete with central authorities for achievement of certain goals and aspirations (1).

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<sup>4</sup> Many educational philosophers and theorists have engaged in a debate concerning the value and expression of Canadian multiculturalism and practice. Readers more specifically concerned with this debate may wish to look at the work of one of my committee members, Dr. Romulo Magsino (a selection of his work is listed in my bibliography).

<sup>5</sup> The Department of Canadian Heritage's website can be found at [www.canadianheritage.gc.ca](http://www.canadianheritage.gc.ca).



Leman moves on to cite a consensus among involved scholars as supportive of his decision to divide Canada's multicultural development into three phases; the incipient period [pre-1971], the formative period [1971-1981], and the institutionalization period [1982 to the present] (3). I will follow this division to provide a foundational background for the current Canadian context.

Confederation can be read as a process beginning in 1867 and ending in 1949, when Newfoundland joined Canada. This process is often represented as creating a situation where the "two solitudes" of Francophone and Anglophone British North America came together to form a single nation. Until 1948, all Canadians were considered British subjects. The passage of the *Canadian Citizenship Act* that same year, however, allowed for a Canadian-based definition of citizenship. Further, by 1948, the face of Canada had already changed dramatically since becoming a "dominion" in 1867. These changes were compounded and laid bare for the Canadian populace by post-war immigration and shifting Western consciousness in the aftermath of the Holocaust and other inhumane aspects of the Second World War. 1948 also marked the year that Canada acceded to the United Nations' *Universal Declaration of Humans Rights*. This accession translated into recognition by the Canadian government, that certain inalienable rights are held by people regardless of sex, race, culture, religion or ideology. It further represented a deep commitment on the part of the government "to the end that every individual and every organ of society... shall strive by teaching and education to promote respect for these [human] rights and freedoms and by progressive measures, national and international, to secure their universal and effective recognition and observance" (United Nations Department of Public Information: Preamble).

Domestically, the recognition of this UN declaration was extended to the level of legislation in 1960 with the passage of *The Canadian Bill of Rights* (1960, c.44), which prohibits discrimination based on sex, religion, national origin and colour. Articles 1 and 2 of the *Bill* stipulate both that certain freedoms have continuously existed for all persons in the Canadian context, and that no law could diminish these freedoms, “unless it [the law] is expressly declared by an Act of the Parliament of Canada that it shall operate notwithstanding the *Canadian Bill of Rights*, be so construed and applied [so] as... to abrogate, abridge or infringe or to authorize the abrogation, abridgment or infringement of any of the[se] rights or freedoms” (*The Canadian Bill of Rights*: Article 2). The freedoms that continue to be protected by law for all Canadians are:

(a) the right of the individual to life, liberty, security of the person and enjoyment of property, and the right not to be deprived thereof except by due process of law; (b) the right of the individual to equality before the law and the protection of the law; (c) freedom of religion; (d) freedom of speech; (e) freedom of assembly and association; and (f) freedom of the press (*The Canadian Bill of Rights*: Article 1).

In the aftermath of this 1960 legislation, the majority Progressive Conservative government of John Diefenbaker passed a bill removing the last of the racial criteria in the *Canada Elections Act*. Thus, 1962 marked the initial year that status First Nation peoples were allowed to vote in federal elections. Further, during the centenary year of confederation (1967), Canadian immigration laws were purged of their remaining racially discriminatory criteria. The 1960s were also a period of continental social change in Canada, as ethnic minorities and women fought for and realized real gains towards achieving equality within mass society. In the Canadian context, this decade also saw the emergence of the Québécois identity and the associated sovereignty movement.

Efforts to establish the principles of human equality in Canada continued into the next decade. In 1970, near the end of Leman's first period, Canada ratified the *International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination*, which asserts that "all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights and that everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set out herein, without distinction of any kind, in particular as to race, colour or national origin" (United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights: Preamble). Also near the end of this period, the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism released *Book Four* (1969), which dealt with issues surrounding the contributions of diverse cultures to the enrichment of Canadian society. In his reading, Leman interprets the pre-1971 period as representative of a "gradual movement towards the acceptance of ethnic diversity as legitimate and integral to Canadian society" (3).

Leman views the time between 1971 and 1981 as the formative period of multiculturalism in Canada. 1971 is a significant year for the development under consideration in this chapter as, in the aftermath of the release of *Book Four*, the federal government announced the foundational principals for a multicultural policy. On October 8<sup>th</sup>, 1971 then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau proclaimed the Canadian government's acceptance of all the recommendations contained within *Book Four*. The following is an excerpt from his speech in Parliament that day:

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

It was the view of the royal commission, shared by the government and, I am sure, by all Canadians, that there cannot be one cultural policy for Canadians of British and French origin, another for the original peoples and yet a third for all others. For although there are two official languages, there is no official culture, nor does

any ethnic group take precedence over any other. No citizen or group of citizens is other than Canadian, and all should be treated fairly.

The royal commission was guided by the belief that adherence to one's ethnic group is influenced not so much by one's origin or mother tongue as by one's sense of belonging to the group, and by what the commission calls the group's "collective will to exist." The government shares this belief (Trudeau: 1).

Leman cites the "key objectives....elaborated upon over the years" of the multiculturalism policy that Trudeau began defining that day as follows:

- To assist cultural groups to retain and foster their identity;
- to assist cultural groups to overcome barriers to their full participation in Canadian society; (Thus, the multiculturalism policy advocated the full involvement and equal participation of ethnic minorities in mainstream institutions, without denying them the right to identify with select elements of their cultural past if they so chose.)
- to promote creative exchanges among all Canadian cultural groups; [and]
- to assist immigrants in acquiring at least one of the official languages (4).

Initially, a directorate within the Department of the Secretary of State administered Canada's multicultural policy. Then, in 1973, the Ministry of Multiculturalism was created. Leman notes that, at the beginning of this second period, barriers to a multicultural society were conceived of in terms of culture and language (5). However, the policy's removal of racial barriers to immigration meant that visible minorities were seeking Canadian citizenship in growing numbers. This translated into a situation where the goals of the multiculturalism policy shifted to focus on the elimination of racially discriminatory barriers in Canadian society at both the personal and institutional levels.

This period also marked the passage of several provincial bills, which reflected the reality of a new culturally diverse Canada. The leading province in this regard, as in the

1950s and 1960s with the Medicare movement, was Saskatchewan. In 1974, the provincial legislature in Regina passed the *Saskatchewan Multicultural Act*. Notably, this Act provided for the establishment of a multicultural council and offered a definition of multiculturalism that included not only the right of groups to retain their identities but also the right to share those identities with others. The goal of the act was:

to encourage multiculturalism in the province and to provide assistance to individuals and groups to increase the opportunities available to them to learn about the nature of their cultural heritage and to learn about the contributions of the cultural heritages of other multicultural groups in the province (*Saskatchewan Multicultural Act*, 1974, s.31: Article 3).

Three years after Saskatchewan's legislation was enacted, the federal Parliament adopted the *Canadian Human Rights Act* of 1977. This Act established the Canadian Human Rights Commission, which currently administers "both the *Canadian Human Rights Act* and the *Employment Equity Act* [1995] and ensures that the principles of equal opportunity and non-discrimination are followed in all areas of federal jurisdiction" (Canadian Human Rights Commission: 1).

In 1982, after the creation of the Human Rights Commission, what Leman labels as the "institutionalization phase" began. By this time Canada's cities, in particular, had noticeably developed into more multi-racial landscapes. With this shift came new challenges and pressures on the mass cultural fabric. Leman characterizes the government's policies in this contemporary period as focussing "on promoting institutional change in order to help Canadian institutions adapt to the presence of the new immigrant groups...[and]... the introduction of anti-discrimination programs designed to help remove social and cultural barriers separating minority and majority groups in Canada" (Leman: 6).

In addition to marking the beginning of Leman's current phase, 1982 also denotes a significant year for multicultural policy and practice in Canada. For, 1982 was the year that the Constitution was patriated and *The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* received royal assent. The *Charter* can be read as a means of enshrining the diversity of the nation within the constitutional framework, as evidenced by section 27, which states, "[t]his Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians" (*Canada Act 1982* (U.K.) 1982, c. 11.). This proviso, for instance, limits the right to free speech (also accorded in the *Charter*), when that right diminishes "the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians" (*Canada Act 1982* (U.K.) 1982, c. 11: Section 27). Thus, the focus of the *Charter* is on maintaining a balance between individual rights and (2) the rights of all to both equality and fairness under the law, regardless of race or ethnicity (Leman: 6).

With this new foundation, it is not surprising that amended legislation would also surface. These changes in policy came, first, with the passage of the *Employment Equity Act* in 1986 and, secondly, in July 1988 when the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act* was approved by Parliament, making Canada the first country to enact a national law of this type. The latter Act sets out a multi-pronged policy that both "fosters" and "promotes" a multicultural environment for all Canadians based on "the understanding that multiculturalism reflects the cultural and racial diversity of Canadian society and acknowledges the freedom of all members of Canadian society to preserve, enhance and share their cultural heritage" (*Canadian Multiculturalism Act*, 1988, c.28: Section 3).

At present, the Department of Canadian Heritage administers Canada's national multicultural policy. Contemporary activities are designed by the Department to encourage the practical application of multicultural theories. A recent minister, Jean Augustine, has reaffirmed the Canadian government's commitment to an "approach toward multiculturalism [that] is based upon the cooperation of governments, communities and groups, to build a society in which all Canadians can realize their full potential" (2004: 2). She and her successor, Liz Frulla, are supported in this effort by several provincial multicultural policies. Manitoba, for instance, passed its own multiculturalism act in 1992. Notably, this act emerged from a new reading of the province's history<sup>6</sup> as represented in the statement that "Manitoba has been a multicultural society from the time of its original population, the Aboriginal peoples" (*The Manitoba Multiculturalism Act*, C.C.S.M., c. M223: Preamble).

It should be noted, however, that some resistance is present in the province of Québec with regards to the way in which multiplicity of cultural expression is being encouraged in the rest of Canada. To quell these concerns, Québec has opted for a policy of "interculturalism", whereby diversity is tolerated and even encouraged, but only from within a framework "where the French language is the medium of 'cultural convergence' between

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<sup>6</sup> Certainly, a new vision of history must also accompany an authentically progressive social change movement. In his work *Bernard Lonergan and the Community of Canadians: An Essay in Aid of Canadian Identity*, Frederick Crowe betrays his conversion to an emerging vision of the history of Canada in the following passage, "[w]hen did our Canadian time begin? Certainly long before the coming of the 'white man' to these shores" (1992: 30). Indeed, Crowe asserts that our first responsibility as Canadians lies in the "appropriation of ... [this]... starting point... We have to take up what philosophers call the hermeneutic of suspicion, what Lonergan calls the purification of the tradition. And this has to start, not with disputed questions of rights, but from the indisputable question of our responsibility" (1992: 32). This thesis will return to the theme of responsibility in subsequent chapters.

mainstream Francophone society and divers[e] cultural communities” (Smith, Foster & Donahue: 347).

The fact that Québec is able to pursue its own approach to diversity, despite federal policy and official practice, is representative of the devolved nature of Canadian confederation. Within this framework, education is clearly defined in the constitution as a provincial responsibility. This situation is not normative. Most industrialised countries have a national curriculum, thus making the transfer of federal policy and practice into classrooms across their nation-states relatively simple.

In the Canadian context, the federal government must rely on provincial governments and educational ministries to administer any educational reforms or changes to curriculum. As such, there is no federal curriculum that can be referenced in this thesis. That is not to say that federal legislation and the Department of Canadian Heritage do not actively seek to influence the writers of provincial curriculum. For instance, unless the constitution’s “notwithstanding clause” is applied, provincial laws and policy cannot contravene the *Charter*.

Another interesting strategy employed by the Department of Canadian Heritage, in this area, is to appeal directly to classroom teachers in order to promote the principles of multiculturalism. As part of this second strategy, in 1989 and 1993 this department of the federal government produced elementary and secondary school teachers’ guides for their *Let’s Stop Racism* program. The guides consisted of a collection of practical suggestions for



creating lesson plans, activities and school environments that were supportive of Canada's official multicultural policy and practice. For example, the secondary school teachers' guide included the following: a definition of the problem of racism, "tips for teachers", suggestions for creating a diverse physical atmosphere in the school, six model units for junior high, seven units for high school students and a full list of references for further reading and research. *Let's Stop Racism* is a document that is part of a campaign with a clear set of normative goals: "(1) to inform Canadians about the nature of racism and its ugly presence in our society; and (2) to encourage everyone to do something, however small, to eradicate racism whenever it is recognized, at home, at school, at work, or at play" (Canadian Heritage, 1993: 1). Amongst the practical suggestions offered to Canadian teachers towards achieving the goals in the booklet are: (1) to display a copy of the *Charter* in their classroom; (2) to encourage the sharing of diverse perspectives within the classroom and among students; (3) to arrange a monthly speaking series featuring individuals from diverse cultural communities; and (4) to look at the photographs of elected representatives as a tool for exploring the racial dynamics of power in Canada.

Recently, this program has been continued, with the same general goals, under a new, more assertive, title: *Racism – Stop It!* In 2005, for school-aged students the most prominent feature of this campaign—again marketed through teachers—was a pan-Canadian contest to produce a 60 to 90 second anti-racism commercial. The *Racism – Stop It!: National Video Competition* closed on March 21, Canada's national day for the elimination of racism. The contest was open to all Canadian citizens and permanent residents between the ages of 12 and 18. In this contest, young people were challenged to produce a commercial. The winning

entries are, at the time of this writing, being broadcast on national television. The goals of this competition were also extremely normative, revolving around the statement, “we must ensure that people are aware that racism exists in our country. Each of us must be inspired to take action against racial discrimination every day. *Racism effects [sic.] everyone. Be open to new ideas and raise your hand against it. Racism. Stop It!*” (Canadian Heritage: 2). Just prior to this statement, the promotional brochure identifies “*Respect. Equality. Diversity.*” as three Canadian values “fundamental to the *Racism. Stop It!* campaign” (Canadian Heritage: 2).

In addition to the resistance against the means through which such values are encouraged by the federal government, as experienced as a consequence of the legislative imperative of the province of Québec, there are also critiques of Canada’s official multicultural policy and practice emanating from individuals. Perhaps the three most well know of these critiques come from the seminal works of Jack Granatstein, Neil Bissoondath and Reginald Bibby. If one were asked to paint their works with one broad brush-stroke, it could be said that their principal concerns are centred on different aspects of the balkanization tendencies of the federal government’s approach to multiculturalism.

For instance, examining the current state of Canadian history in his 1990 book, *Who Killed Canadian History?*, Distinguished Professor Emeritus at York University, Jack Granatstein, explains that the main issues plaguing his specialization are problems emerging out of the multiculturalism-inspired question, “Whose history would we teach?” (xi). In Granatstein’s opinion, too often the answers to that question result in decisions by provincial education ministries to claw back the teaching of history in schools. Further, when history is

taught, there is a tendency to form curriculum centred on a misdirected political correctness that results in the Canadian past being devalued. In such a context, Granatstein sees Canadian history as entering into a trivial and fictional mode as part of the “multicultural mania” sweeping the country (105). His opinion of this trend, in provincially mandated student-learning opportunities, is clear and captured in his reaction to a high school teacher who expressed the opinion that the current view of Canadian history does not acknowledge a darker side to Canada’s past. As Granatstein writes, “It is difficult to image how any more ‘black marks’ could be squeezed into the curriculum. And why should any nation’s texts stress the ‘black marks’?” (94).

In his 1990 book, *Mosaic Madness: the Poverty and Potential of Life in Canada*, University of Lethbridge sociology professor Reginald Bibby also set out what he considered to be major flaws and trends that are emerging as a result of Canada official multiculturalism policy. In a chapter entitled, “The Institutional Casualty List”, Bibby identified what he shades as Canadian teachers’ complicity in this matter. He wrote:

Educators are clearly in a position to have a profoundly positive influence on Canadian Life. However, their cultivation of an appreciation for the individual and choice has been excessive to the point of counterproductively. A number of areas can readily be cited[:]...individualism without individuality...relativism without reflection...employment skills without life skills...[and] maturation without morality (1990: 130-134).<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> It is interesting to note that in his 2002 book, *Restless Gods: The Renaissance of Religion in Canada*, Bibby has charted the revival of religion and the spiritual in Canada. Bibby holds up this renaissance as having (1) been made possible because of the country’s multicultural policy and (2) having the potential to overcome the negative effects of individuality in Canadian society. In the wake of these new conclusions, based on sociological survey data, Bibby recants on some of the conclusions he made in *Mosaic Madness* and offers his apologies to colleagues with whom he had previously taken issue for asserting the possibility of such a renaissance (Bibby, 2002: 2).

At that time, Bibby's proposed solution to this malaise was the return to 'a dream of a better place'. He cites this dream as the primordial motivational factor for all immigrants choosing to journey to Canada. In his words, it was this dream "that created a multinational Canada", resting on the fact that the "vast majority of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents came to Canada not to live out the old life here, but to find a new life, one much better than they had known in their countries of birth" (Bibby, 1990: 204).

The last of the critics of Canada's official multicultural policy whose thoughts I will mention here agrees with Bibby that coming to Canada should represent leaving the old behind and embracing the new. Further, professional author Neil Bissoondath, himself an immigrant from Trinidad,<sup>8</sup> asserts that official multiculturalism is a divisive force, eroding national unity and solidarity. He sees no role for the Canadian government in promoting cultures of origin, stating in an interview with the *Sunday Guardian*:

I believe that knowledge of one's past is vital to help the individual understand his or her place in the world, but that [it] is the responsibility solely of family to transmit that familial, social mythology....The moment government gets involved, the deeply personal gets simplified and transformed into a kind of propaganda (Sankar: 7).

Bissoondath is particularly well known for his characterization of Canada's official multicultural policy and practice—made in *Selling Illusions: the Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*—as nothing more than a trivial survey of cuisine and festivals, which engenders "an excess of sensitivity" to the detriment of educational and social standards (70-96).

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<sup>8</sup> As one might expect, given his strongly-held views on the need for Canadians to be more uniform in their cultural expressions, Bissoondath purports to hold no special connections with his land of origin:

[f]or a long time now I have thought of Trinidad as simply the place where I was born; the place where I got my early education; the place where my parents died. After half a lifetime away from the island, I have no emotional attachment, and my interest in its events is no different than my interest in events in China or Russia or Botswana: analytical, intellectual. I miss nothing, am prey to no nostalgia (25).

Bissoondath's, Bibby's and Granatstein's critiques may resonate with some Canadians but, when surveyed in 2003, "80% of Canadians agree[d] that multiculturalism enhances the value of Canadian citizenship" (Canadian Heritage: 9). From this survey fact, it can be concluded that Canadians are generally supportive of the officially sanctioned idea of multiculturalism in their country. I will return to this point in the next chapter as part of an explanation of Bernard Lonergan's life and methodology. With the second of the two "snapshot moments" concerned with the history of thought in the West now in place, the next chapter will represent an unfolding of significant methodological elements, to be utilized in subsequent chapters of this thesis.

## Chapter Four: Bernard Lonergan, His Methodology and an Important Implication of His Thought

In 1904, long before the development of Canada's multicultural policy, Bernard Joseph Francis Lonergan was born into an English speaking family in the province of Québec. Bernard Lonergan's first home was in Buckingham; a small, mainly Catholic, francophone village on the north shore of the Ottawa River. Lonergan was educated at the local Catholic school where he won a scholarship to Loyola College, a Jesuit boarding and day school in Montréal. In 1922, after receiving a strong foundation in classical learning, he graduated at the top of his high school class and entered a Roman Catholic religious order, the Society of Jesus (the Jesuits). Recognising academic promise in their new recruit, four years later the Society sent him to Heythrop College in England to study Philosophy. By 1938, Lonergan had been ordained a priest and was starting work on his Doctorate in Sacred Theology at the Gregorian University in Rome.

From 1940 until 1975, Lonergan was a Professor of Theology, teaching in Montréal, Toronto and Rome.<sup>9</sup> During that time, and until his death in 1984, Lonergan engaged in a project seeking to uncover a methodology for inquiry that would be universal in the sense of allowing for a common definition of knowledge<sup>10</sup> and knowing.

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<sup>9</sup> A good account of the biographical aspects of Lonergan's life can be found in Richard Liddy's book *Transforming Light*. Particularly informative are Liddy's descriptions of Lonergan's family, his early life in Canada and his experiences in England (3-15).

<sup>10</sup> Lonergan identifies the problem of isolated subject areas as one of the main challenges facing those seeking to build an authentic philosophy of education, stating that a "contemporary problem is specialization. The new learning is mountainous and unassimilated" (1993(b): 17).

In simpler terms, Lonergan's investigations resulted in the discovery of a single method or process by which humans come to achieve insight. Of interest here is Lonergan's reflection on that method (his methodology) which creates a space for insight into human insights, while also allowing for a common definition of knowledge. Lonergan hoped that such a common definition would break down the compartmentalisation of knowledge and allow representatives of any two subject areas to enter into significant dialogue with each other.

Lonergan's work deals with a varied and complex subject matter<sup>11</sup>. Indeed, his intellectual net was cast so wide that he needed to fashion a new methodology from the resources available to him. The resultant methodology provides such a solid philosophical foundation for a cross-curricular approach to university learning that an interdisciplinary institute at Loyola Marymount University (Los Angeles) is named after Lonergan. Additionally Lonergan Centres, focusing on the study and distribution of his work, are found at Sydney and Melbourne (Australia), Dublin (Ireland), the University of Toronto, Naples (Italy), Manila (Philippines), Boston College and St. Anslem's Abbey (Washington, D.C.).

The intention in this thesis is not to explore all of Lonergan's varied thought. Rather, I employ his ideas as a revealing lens. Thus, it is in an enlightening role that

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<sup>11</sup> Given the sheer volume of Lonergan's output, it is often difficult for someone interested in his thought to know where to begin. Suggested Lonergan 'starters' are "Self-transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious" (Lonergan, 2004: 313-33) and "Cognitive Structure" (Lonergan, 1993(a), 205-221). Also helpful might be the inaugural address to an international congress on the thought of Bernard Lonergan held in Rome by Cardinal Carlo Maria Martini, S.J., "Bernard Lonergan at the Service of the Church", which has been recently published.

Lonergan's methodology is used in the context of this paper. To appreciate how I will be using Lonergan's reflections in the latter portions of this paper, his work needs to be situated within our larger historical context.

At certain times during the history of the West, the need for the updating of concepts and their corresponding methodological reflections became abundantly clear. Often coinciding with periods of substantive cultural change, these times can be identified as turning points in intellectual history. Lonergan's methodology, in its flexibility and adaptability, allows various academic disciplines to deal with such transitional moments. It can also be used to explain the high degree of divergence between the closed system represented by the Platonic vision of education for the guardians and the more open multicultural model in official ascendancy in most of Canada. This chapter will demonstrate the flexibility of Lonergan's methodology as an instrument to explain that transition.

Philosophically, our current phase of human development is often termed "post-modern". This label means quite different things for various writers and theorists. In this thesis, I will make use of a particular interpretation of post-modernism in order to contrast Lonergan's methodology with other current theories of knowledge.

Post-modernists, subscribing to this specific interpretation would look at the Platonic story from *The Republic* and, understandably, feel a sense of unease. In deconstructing this story such a thinker would classify Plato's system as necessarily flawed



because it was based on both absolute “sureness” and “truth”. Along the lines that I am suggesting, these post-modernists would label Plato’s system as typically “classical” or even as “fundamentalist” for resting on such an assumption. They might continue their critique by arguing that this is exactly the type of reliance on truth and certainty that gave rise to phenomena that were ultimately proven to be destructive to the human spirit (*e.g.*, colonialism and fascism). In this line of argument, it follows, that holding any system to be absolutely true or correct is dangerous in and of itself. For those accepting this train of thought the basis for human action and agency is severely muted.<sup>12</sup>

According to this view, the modernist period that preceded our current phase was marked by the sureness and faith in absolute truth that supported the “great” wars and dictatorial regimes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Such a faith in “the truth” and defined systems can also be said to characterize current waves of fundamentalism evident the Christian and Islamic faith worlds. As was the case in the Platonic vision of education, these systems and their emerging educational philosophies are opposed to divergent points of view in much the same manner, though for different reasons. Such systems, nonetheless, hold a certain attraction for the human psyche because they provide security and firm answers in a complex and turbulent world.

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<sup>12</sup> At this point, I wish to explain why I have chosen this specific shading of post-modernism. This choice did not come, as some might expect, to build up a “straw man” argument only to knock it down later. Rather, this choice is concurrent with the particular presentation of post-modernism that I was exposed to during an intensive summer course held in the summer of 2000. In the wake of this course I almost abandoned all university study because, emotionally, I found the ideas presented to be so draining. My subsequent study of Lonergan restored my faith in philosophical reflection as a positive life-generating force because of the way his methodology leaves a place for human agency and by extension allows for the authentically progressive social change.

Loneragan's reading of history falls in an interesting place within this fundamentalist to post-modernist continuum. His methodology allows for truth within a framework of divergent ways of being, while at the same time encouraging a high level of critical thinking. In the words of David Tracy:

Loneragan's enterprise does not impose a new classical system, however rigorous and attractive, but promises rather a new possibility of open scientific inquiry based upon certain invariant dynamic and structural elements in human consciousness....It demands rather an audience willing to live up to the transcendental exigencies: Be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, develop, and, if necessary, change (268-269).

The remaining part of this chapter will unfold Tracy's statement.

I start by asserting that Lonergan's system represents an essential updating in epistemology—it is a project that brings the notion of a truth discourse as a basis for action into our current philosophical way of being. Lonergan accomplishes this feat not by retreating from the current situation, but rather by engaging with dominant ways of knowing. Like the software that allows a computer from the Apple Corporation to dialogue with its IBM cousins, Lonergan has a special language that permits this type of engagement. This language of engagement is found in the ideas that circulate around his reflections on “insight”.

*Insight* is the title of Lonergan's philosophical *magnum opus*, which was first published in 1957.<sup>13</sup> In *Insight*, Lonergan lays out his “understanding of understanding” or more precisely, his “insight into insight” (Lonergan, 1992: 21). Lonergan defines

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<sup>13</sup> In November, 2005, *The Canadian Literary Review* listed *Insight* as one the “100 most important Canadian books ever written”. In describing their selection criteria editor Bronwyn Drainie explained, “We were not looking for ‘favourite’ books or ‘books that influenced me most in my growing years’ .....We wanted books that have changed our country's psychic landscape” (The Literary Review of Canada: 1).

insight as “not any act of attention or advertence or memory but the supervening act of understanding” (1992: 3). Understanding, in this light, crosses academic disciplines and does not rest on things such as common sense or traditional scientific analysis. Rather, Lonergan’s emphasis is on exploring the *act* and not the *content* of understanding (Lonergan, 1992: 3). It follows that because of this reduced weighting of content criteria his methodology can (because it represents, in Lonergan’s view, a discovery of the universal method of knowing), in principle, be applied to any subject matter.

In order to bear witness to the mass applicability of Lonergan’s methodology, one has only to consider the multiple layers of meaning that surround Lonergan’s definition of “insight”. In the preface to *Insight*, Lonergan somewhat hesitantly offers, it not being in his nature to leave terms undefined, a summary of his thoughts concerning his principal term in ten brief paragraphs. I will use these paragraphs as an introductory framework towards the goal of exploring some deeper implications of the totality of his ideas, reproducing each paragraph as an introduction to a subsection on the given topic. In so doing, I will demonstrate something of the interconnected nature of Lonergan’s epistemology—an epistemology that is complex and varied in its connections, appealing to both sense-based scientific and intuitive expressions.

Lonergan’s system draws on theoretical foundations based in works as diverse as those of Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Aquinas, Hobbes, Hume, Ockham, Spinoza, Hegel, Kant, Husserl, Marleau de Ponty, Kierkegaard, Jung and Einstein (to name but a few of the represented thinkers) in forming his explanation of knowing. Lonergan himself

comments the enormity of his task in the preface to *Insight*, after which he goes on to offer no apologies for the scale of his project (over 800 pages produced in a time before word processors), stating that “[i]n constructing a ship or a philosophy one has to go the whole way; an effort that is in principle incomplete is equivalent to a failure” (1992: 7).

Lonergan saw insight as working on three mutually supporting levels intertwined with the human capacity to choose (*i.e.*, as humans, we can chose not to engage with the existential imperatives emerging at one or all of the levels). First his work offers “a study of human understanding”. This first level is the tool with which the methodology reveals the second level—“the philosophical implications of understanding”. The first level of study combined with the second level of unfolding, allow us to grasp a third crucial level, a human existential imperative to participate in a “campaign against the flight from understanding” (Lonergan, 1992: 6-7). These three levels offer the overriding context for exploring of the ten areas, which Lonergan views as essential to understanding insight. These ten areas are explored below because what Lonergan is attempting to explain in his project is at the heart of the human responsibilities emerging from the information presented in the later portion of this thesis.

### *Area I*

First, then, it is insight that makes the difference between the tantalizing problem and the evident solution. Accordingly, insights seem to be the source of what Descartes named clear and distinct ideas, and on that showing insight into insight would be the source of the clear and distinct idea of clear and distinct ideas (Lonergan, 1992: 4).

It follows from this quotation that the difference between a tantalizing problem and its evident solution is a “clear and distinct idea”. Lonergan begins his work with an example of just such a “clear and distinct idea”, the insight that produces the Archimedean theory of hydrostatics. Relaxing in the baths of Syracuse, mulling over the problem of how to determine whether the king’s crown was gold or not, without destroying it, Archimedes noticed that the water level was raised by his entry into the pool. From this fact emerged the insight leading to his solution of the conundrum; the “eureka” moment that told him to “[w]eigh the crown in water!” (Lonergan, 1992: 27).<sup>14</sup> This fact was only able to surface as relevant to the problem because Archimedes knew that gold has a different weight than any other metal. As per this example, insight can be viewed as a gradual accumulation of facts that combine in a special way to produce a clear and distinct idea, in the moment when the connection between those constituent facts becomes apparent. It follows that intellectual mastery of a subject area or a way of life is the result of the slow accumulation of “little insights” (Lonergan: 1992: 27). Both Plato’s system of education and the Canadian policy on multiculturalism are easily deconstructed to demonstrate how they too, as systems, are representative of insights which grew out of various social and political realities. For instance, in our current egalitarian context, the uniform and sanitized nature of *The Republic* is seen to be harsh on those who were not of the golden class. In moulding his ideal city-state, Plato was making an effort to establish a just society. The definition of justice associated with

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<sup>14</sup> An exploration of Archimedes pioneering work in the area of hydrostatics can be found in Gerald Tommer’s article *Archimedes*, which includes the following assessment of the account that Lonergan refers to in *Insight*: “[t]he story that he [Archimedes] determined the proportion of gold and silver in a wreath made for Hieron by weighing it in water is probably true, but the version that has him leaping from the bath in which he supposedly got the idea and running naked through the streets shouting “Heureka!” (“I have found it!”) is popular embellishment” (1).

Canada's multicultural movement, however, when applied to Plato's utopia, shows his construction to be limited and fair for only a minority its residents.

Why and how we know the last statement to be true is very much the subject of *Insight*. A clue in this regard is the ability humans have to understand their own act of understanding. This ability emerges from another talent, the capacity we have to reflect on our own intellectual lives. This latter capability emerges from the fact, captured in the Aristotelian sentiment expressed by Lonergan, that "[w]hen an animal has nothing to do it goes to sleep. When a man has nothing to do he may ask questions" (1992: 34). This act of questioning is representative of a moment of transcendence. Plato engaged in it when questioning the construction of Ancient Greek society, as did the social activists of the 1960s who helped inspire the policy change towards multiculturalism in Canada. The first moment in the act of questioning is the awaking to one's own intelligence. It can only occur when one's intelligence is released from biological drives and the routines of daily living. This moment is an arousing of the desire to understand (Lonergan, 1994: 34). When this moment is applied to social problems, a desire to understand these collective issues emerges, which, in turn allows for the formation of concepts. When that same desire is applied to knowing itself, understanding of our own human act of understanding can result.

## ***Area II***

Secondly, inasmuch as it is the act of organizing intelligence, insight is an apprehension of relations. But among relations are meanings, for meaning seems to be a relation between sign and signified. Insight, then, includes the apprehension of meaning, and insight into insight includes the apprehension of the meaning of meaning (Lonergan, 1992: 5).

In that insight is gradual and arising out of a collection of facts ordered in a certain manner in our minds, this quotation reminds us of a truth surrounding our overriding context: it is not possible to know everything instantly. Rather, there is a “strategy” for the accumulation of insights that centres on the fact that the answer to some questions rests on the answers to previous questions and that the adequate resolution of those previous questions may rest on the answers to even earlier questions (Lonergan, 1992: 196). A young child does not yet understand the manner in which these relationships surround meaning. Therefore, he or she tries to understand everything immediately. The transition to becoming an effective learner requires that the child develop a methodology of learning; a small insight into the way meaning comes into being for him or her. It follows that while it is true that “our intellectual careers begin to bud in the incessant what and why of childhood...[t]hey flower only if we are [able], or constrained, to learn how to learn. They bring forth fruit only after the discovery that, if we really would master the answer, we somehow have to find them out ourselves” (Lonergan, 1992: 197).

In the case of Canada’s multiculturalism program, such insights into the relational nature of knowing may have led to the generation of an emancipating force, which allowed for the survey fact, “80% of Canadians believe multiculturalism enhances the value of Canadian citizenship” (Canadian Heritage: 9). Individuals answering the related survey question in an affirmative manner may be making a connection between the label

“value” and the type of fairness and justice advocated in Canadian multiculturalism policies.

### *Area III*

Thirdly, in a sense somewhat different from Kant's, every insight is both a priori and synthetic. It is a priori, for it goes beyond what is merely given an explanatory unification or organization. It seems to follow that insight into insight will yield a synthetic and a priori account of the full range of synthetic a priori components in our cognitional activity (Lonergan, 1992: 5).

What Lonergan is asserting in this statement is that insight is something different from an impression, which results solely from the gathering of empirical data. In short, insight might be said to be not the analytical accumulation of data generating a positive result but another thing entirely. The factor that stops a computer, in its current form, from achieving insight is the intervention of the human intellect. Thus, insight can be viewed as reflective of human cognitional activity rather than energy from a pure empirical formula. In this light, if we were to ask, “what brought Rosa Parks<sup>15</sup> to sit down near the front of that bus in Alabama?”; we would be correct, in more ways than one, in

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<sup>15</sup> Rosa Parks is famous for not surrendering her seat to a white man who sought to exercise his legal rights over her on a Montgomery, Alabama bus on December 1<sup>st</sup>, 1955. Her simple action set in motion a chain of events that led to her arrest and the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Prior to the incident, Parks had been trained for civil disobedience during a two-week interracial course at Highlander Folk School, with her tuition paid for by white friends. Both on the day of her arrest and in her 1994 book, *Quiet Strength*, Parks explains her motivation in terms of what a view inspired by Lonergan's methodology would consider an action-inspiring human insight; “[o]ur mistreatment was just not right, and I was tired of it, I kept thinking about my mother and my grandparents, and how strong they were. I knew there was a possibility of being mistreated, but an opportunity was being given to me to do what I had asked of others” (Westmoreland-White: 1). Interestingly, in a testimony to the relationship between authentically progressive social change and the educational project after her initial foray into the spotlight, Rosa Parks chose to use her notoriety to found learning programs for youth, parents and the community based out of the Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development in Detroit, Michigan with seminars given around the world. Parks had a public 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday part on February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005, which included activities for Detroit school children (Rosa and Raymond Parks Institute for Self-Development: 1). In the wake of her death on October 25<sup>th</sup>, 2005, American civil rights leader Jesse Jackson paid tribute to Parks with a pointed reference to that famous moment on the Montgomery bus, saying “She sat down in order that we all might stand up—and the walls of segregation came down” (BBC: 1).



asserting that her humanness did. Further, with the benefits of historical hindsight, we can see how that human moment spurred on the North American civil rights movement, which can be sourced as providing foundational support for the Canadian multiculturalism movement.

#### *Area IV*

Fourthly, a unification and organization of other departments of knowledge is a philosophy. But every insight unifies and organizes. Insight into insight, then, will unify and organize insights of mathematicians, scientist, and men of common sense. It seems to follow that insight into insight will yield a philosophy (Lonergan, 1992: 5).

In the exploration of the selection corresponding with Area II, we have seen the genesis of this idea in the discussion of the way a child achieves the understanding of ways to order understanding. To make this discussion more explicit, it can be asserted that once a child knows how to know, a methodology for achieving insight will emerge. What Lonergan asserts is that this methodology, just like the reflections of mathematicians, scientists and persons of common sense, has the potential to yield a refined and coherent philosophy. Through these means, insight into insight (*i.e.*, a coherent understanding of understanding) will result in a situation where the reflective investigator is able to bear witness to a philosophical body of knowledge. In the case of Lonergan's own investigation into knowing, it was his own accumulated insights which provided for the genesis and foundation of his methodology.

#### *Area V*

Fifthly, one cannot unify and organize knowing without concluding to a unification and organization of the known. But a unification and organization

of what is known in mathematics, in the sciences, and by common sense is a metaphysics. Hence, in the measure that insight into insight unifies and organizes all our knowing, it will imply a metaphysics (Lonergan, 1992: 5).

Continuing on the theme raised under Area IV, Lonergan now takes his argument one step further towards its completion by asserting that the philosophy that emerges from insight into insight will be a metaphysics. As a consequence of its metaphysical nature, this emergent body of knowledge will include areas that transcend scientific realism and probe the assumptions made by that and all other bodies of knowledge.

#### *Area VI*

Sixthly, the philosophy and metaphysics that result from insight into insight will be verifiable. For just as scientific insights both emerge and are verified in the colours and sounds, tastes and odours, of ordinary experience, so insight into insight both emerges and is verified in the insights of mathematicians, scientists, and men of common sense. But if insight into insight is verifiable, then the consequent philosophy and metaphysics will be verifiable. In other words, just as every statement in theoretical science can be shown to imply statements regarding sensible fact, so every statement in philosophy and metaphysics can be shown to imply statements regarding cognitional fact (Lonergan, 1992: 5).

As part of the unification and organization mentioned in Area V, Lonergan now moves on to show how his methodology will produce verifiable results. Verifiability being an important characteristic of knowledge in our current context (where the scientific reflection on reality is seen as producing truth), this characteristic of Lonergan's methodology greatly strengthens its validity claims. It also allows one to test the accuracy of speculative concepts. People who test speculative concepts in this way, and achieve positive results, can then rest assured of the philosophical resilience of their concepts.

Further, these dynamics can be used to explain the emergence of dissenting “creative minorities”, such as the group of individuals who were involved in the American civil rights movement. As Lonergan notes in *De Scientia atque voluntate Dei. Supplementum schematicum*, “every...historical movement, however great, profound and lasting it may be, begins with a ‘creative minority’: it is the minority that questions, thinks, understands, decides and takes the lead; the majority are taught, persuaded and led” (Lonergan, 1950: no. 24).<sup>16</sup>

### *Area VII*

Seventhly, besides insights there are oversights. Besides the dynamic context of detached and disinterested inquiry in which insights emerge with a notable frequency, there are the contrary dynamic contexts of the flight from understanding in which oversights occur regularly and one might say almost systematically. Hence, if insight into insight is not to be an oversight of oversights, it must include an insight into the principal devices of the flight from understanding (Lonergan, 1992: 5).

For those people who seek authentically progressive social change, presumably like the 1960s civil rights activists, pertinent questions surround not only the philosophical strength of their viewpoints but also the moral correctness of those viewpoints. Recognizing the importance of creating a place for such moral considerations in epistemology, the framework represented by Lonergan’s reflection on learning thus exposes knowing as a self-authenticating process centred on human judgment. The corresponding test for authenticity rests on the very human structure of experience, leading to understanding and accumulated understanding leading to judgment. When used

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<sup>16</sup> Anthropologist Margaret Mead (1901-1978) expressed a similar sentiment. She counselled us to “[n]ever doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world. Indeed it was the only thing that ever has” (The Institute for Intercultural Studies: 1).

in a reflective manner this structure produces a firm “yes” or “no” about any matter, when the question “is it so?” is applied to that issue (Lonergan, 1992: 360). Thus, turning away from the results of this process represents not only a flight from understanding but also a denial of the human ability to enter into a process of inquiry which produces results that are binding on an individual’s conscience.

If Lonergan is correct in this formulation, it must also be noted that such a flight from insight would be met with resistance and transference in its cognitive manifestation as the self becomes entangled in a battle within itself. In Lonergan’s reading of the work of the psychiatrist, Dr. Wilhelm Stekel, such a situation would additionally have the potential to manifest itself as disease, requiring treatment by what Stekel would label “retrospective education” to source the cause of the conflict (Lonergan, 1992: 224).

### *Area VIII*

Eighthly, the flight from understanding will be seen to be anything but a peculiar aberration that afflicts only the unfortunate or the perverse. In its philosophic form, which is not to be confused with its psychiatric, moral, social, and cultural manifestations, it appears to result simply from an incomplete development in the intelligent and reasonableness. But though its origin is a mere absence of full development, its consequences are positive enough. For the flight from understanding blocks the occurrence of the insights that upset its comfortable equilibrium. Nor is it content with a merely passive resistance. Though covert and devious, it is resourceful and inventive, effective and extraordinarily plausible. It admits a vast variety of forms, and when it finds some untenable, it can resort to others. If it never refuses to supply superficial minds with superficial positions, it is quite competent to work out a philosophy so acute and profound that the elect strive in vain for centuries to lay bare its real inadequacies (Lonergan, 1992: 5-6).

In light of the preceding discussion, this selection becomes quite self-explanatory. Here, I would like only to extend Lonergan’s reasoning to state that established

unauthentic systems, be they philosophical or political, tend to be well-supported and equipped to deal with challenges raised by dissenters. Those struggling for authentically progressive social change, such as the activists who sought universal suffrage for all Canadians beginning from the very moment the country was born in 1867, (and not succeeding until 1963) would have been only too aware of this fact.

As something of a preview at this point, it may be useful to mention that of extreme importance to the argument presented in the subsequent sections of this paper is the notion that the biocratic way of being represents a coherent and morally binding philosophical system that educators ought to be helping to establish as dominant in our society. If teachers take up the challenge, presented at the end of this thesis, to support such a system, they will be forming themselves into a group of “the elect”, in Lonergan’s sense of the term. They will then have to face all the tenacious resistance that more established and entrenched anthropocentric systems can muster. In face of such resistance, it may be all too easy to fall into a flight from understanding in relation to the precepts of the ecological inclusive way of being advocated by Thomas Berry. However, if teachers choose to recognise Berry’s precepts as authentic insights, they can move to support biocratic principles and therefore strive for personal and systematic integrity. This effort would shake the foundations of unauthentic ways of being in relation to new moral imperatives necessitated by the ecological crisis. Upon analysis, such an effort would reveal a pattern very similar to the one engaged in by the social activists who helped establish Canada’s current multicultural policy and official practice.

This last selection brings us to the mass applicability of Lonergan's methodology. As mentioned near the beginning of this chapter, this methodology's lack of content criteria means that the knowledge gained through Lonergan's inquiry into the nature of knowing can, in principle, be applied to any subject area. What this questioning produces is a useful philosophy. A philosophy not confined to the halls of universities like so many others that deal with metaphysical issues, but rather a methodology that allows for the verification of speculative concepts. Therefore, the practical application of Lonergan's reflection comes from its ability to engender a sphere for reflective-based action in the world. In the words of Lonergan:

insight into insight brings to light the cumulative process of progress. For concrete situations give rise to insights which issue into policies and courses of action. Action transforms the existing situation to give rise to further insights, better policies, more effective courses of action. It follows that if insight occurs it keeps recurring; and at each recurrence knowledge develops, action increases its scope and situations improve (1992: 8).

After reviewing the nature of the logical support for the above excerpt, we can bear witness to the fashion in which Lonergan's methodology both allows for and provides an explanation as to how it was possible, in the West, to move from the sanitized and uniform polity envisioned by Plato in *The Republic* to a society, which both encourages and fosters diversity of expression, as evidenced in current official multicultural policy and practice in Canada. It was action that transformed Plato's insights (and those of similar closed systems), giving rise to new insights in an authentically progressive way, moving through individuals to the cultures, until we arrived at the point in the West at which multiculturalism could be supported by a mass society.

## *Area IX*

Ninthly, just as insight into insight yields a clear and distinct idea of clear and distinct ideas, just as it exhibits the range of the a priori synthetic components in our knowledge, just as it involves a philosophic unification of mathematics, the sciences, and common sense, just as it implies a metaphysical account of what is to be known through the various departments of human inquiry, so also insight into the various modes of the flight from understanding will explain (1) the range of really confused yet apparently clear and distinct ideas, (2) aberrant views on the meaning of meaning, (3) distortions in the a priori synthetic components in our knowledge, (4) the existence of a multiplicity of philosophies, and (5) the series of mistaken metaphysical and antimetaphysical positions (Lonergan, 1992: 6).

I once had the contemporary success of the scientific method explained to me by a first year lecturer, with the statement, "it works". Lonergan would refer to such a functioning system as a coherent body of knowledge. He is asserting here that inquiry into the nature of understanding, when combined with human curiosity, allows us to discern a pattern in knowledge sets concerned with what forms clear and distinct ideas. As such, authentic insight into insight, precipitated by concrete personal connections, has the potential to form a coherent body of knowledge—a system that can only emerge because of, and after, insight.

## *Area X*

Tenthly, there seems to follow the possibility of a philosophy that is at once methodical, critical, and comprehensive. It will be comprehensive because it embraces in a single view every statement in every philosophy. It will be critical because it discriminates between the products of the detached and disinterested desire to understand and, on the other hand, the products of the flight from understanding. It will be methodical because it transposes the statements of philosophers and metaphysicians to their origins in cognitional activity, and it settles whether that activity is or is not aberrant by appealing, not to philosophers, not to metaphysicians, but to the insights, methods, and procedures of mathematicians, scientists, and men of common sense (Lonergan, 1992: 6).

This discussion of insight brings us to a key point in this thesis. The implication of the process described in the first part of this chapter is that multiculturalism is not the terminal point in the evolution of educational philosophy. This is because, quite simply, new information will likely enter the individual consciousness and by extension, the social equation, which will require an updating of the conclusions that lend validity to multicultural systems. From a perspective inspired by Lonergan's thought, responding to such information is a human prerogative. Lonergan conceives of the objectivity of human knowing as resting on virtually unconditioned (*i.e.* rigorously and authentically examined) results. Building upon these foundational premises, Lonergan is able to speak of human knowing as a triple cord made up of experience, intelligence and judging (1993(a): 213). This characterization allows for the existence of truths on many different levels, while also providing a clue for us to discern objective truth within our lived experiences. Lonergan tells us that in order to make knowledge categorically human, judgment must be present (1993(a): 206), but to pass judgment without understanding is "human arrogance" (Lonergan, 1993(a): 207). It follows that a careful balance between informing oneself and drawing specific foundational conclusions must be achieved.

Through his triple cord analogy, Lonergan establishes human learning as a "dynamic structure" (Lonergan, 1993(a): 205) that is characterized by three activities: rationality, intelligence and sensitivity. In this conception, rationality involves reflecting, weighing evidence and judging. Intelligence incorporates inquiring, understanding, conceiving and thinking. Sensitivity includes seeing, hearing, touching and tasting



(Lonergan, 1993(a): 210). Lonergan observes that, as humans, we have an innate desire to inquire into things and, from this observation, concludes that the ultimate purpose of questioning must be to know “the universe in its full concreteness” (Lonergan, 1993(a): 211). For him, it follows that if in our questioning we are objective in relation to the information gathered and open when engaging in this human activity of questioning, then we will be able to produce a knowledge set approaching and even reaching authenticity. For questioning is, herein, seen as a locale that allows for a movement from “data”, to “truth”, then to “being and truth”, and finally to the recognition of another realm: “being and truth still to be known” (Lonergan, 1993(a): 211). Whether or not the results of this process are objective “rests upon unrestricted intention or an unconditioned result” (Lonergan, 1993(a): 213).

It is here that Lonergan establishes the means through which his notion of “authentic subjectivity” comes into play. These means rest on the realization that “[g]enuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity” (Lonergan, 2003: 292). From this, and the premises presented earlier in this chapter, it follows that to remain both authentic and objective, the results of any inquiry must forever be mediated by a recognition that emergent information may require the updating of any or all previously drawn conclusions. It is important to further note that it is within the dynamic of openness to new information that Lonergan located both objective and authentic human knowledge: “[b]ut before we have [such authentic] judgements there is an accumulation of insights, acts of understanding; and the insights arise upon experiences.” (Lonergan, 1993(b): 235). Thus, the act of updating the conclusions that generate systematic

foundations grows out of experience-inspired insight. Further, this updating becomes essential to personal and, by extension, systematic authenticity. It follows that any knowledge set emerging out of insight, to remain objective and authentic, must always be held tentatively, in that the results of the curiosity-inspired concrete connections that give rise to concepts must remain open to revision when necessitated by those same dynamics.

Such an updating of conclusions, on the personal level, occurred for Lonergan when he reviewed the then normative interpretations of Thomas Aquinas that were being provided to him by his professors. At that time, in a letter to his superior, the young Lonergan wrote that “I can prove out of St. Thomas himself that the current interpretation is absolutely wrong” (1935: 4). In applying his own methodology to this moment, we can see that his insight gave him the courage to suggest that the Thomists were in error. Further, we can assert that Lonergan’s intellectual conversion provided the foundation for the reformulation that was to form the basis of his doctoral work, which consisted of an analysis of Aquinas that represented a departure from the interpretation prevailing in his academic milieu.

I suggest that the ecological crisis may provide similar impetus for an even more necessary reformulation of human outlooks onto the world. This suggestion is explored in the subsequent chapters of this thesis, which represent a certain piecing together of clues to generate the insight which, in turn, forms the conclusion for this thesis. As Lonergan writes in the preface to *Insight*:

[i]n the ideal detective story the reader is given all the clues yet fails to spot the criminal. He may advert to each clue as it arises. He needs no further clues to solve the mystery. Yet he can remain in the dark for the simple reason

that reaching the solution is not the mere apprehension of any clue, not the mere memory of all, but a quite distinct activity of organizing intelligence that places the full set of clues in a unique explanatory perspective (3).

In applying his statement to this thesis, it follows that the next chapters will represent a re-tracing of knowledge to which I have been exposed over my academic career. Given the implications of the “clues” which I have uncovered, I am able to assert that the subsequent chapters of this thesis move on towards presenting an authentic explanatory perspective concerning the direction that foundational educational philosophy ought to take given the current ecological crisis. Although I remain open to new information that may cause me to adjust or even change this conclusion, I believe that the fact of the ecological crisis, as reflected on by Thomas Berry and other theorists presented in Chapter Five, mandates a new course of action, representative of “what is going forward” (Lonergan, 2003 :189), which I will chart. As per Lonergan’s good detective story analogy, I believe we now have enough clues before us to lend validity to my conclusion. Now, I move to present you, the reader, with the assembled evidence; a body of evidence, which I hope we, as humans, do not choose to collectively ignore.

## Chapter Five: Thomas Berry and the Ecological Crisis

Lonergan tells us that “history is the desire to get at what really happened” (1993(b): 235). Further, he asserts that when linked to the human search for authentic knowledge, this desire translates into a form of “[q]uestioning [which] probes every aspect of everything” (Lonergan, 1993(a): 211). Thomas Berry can be read as grounding his thought in such a thorough query-based approach to the study of historical events. Like Lonergan, Berry identified several key shifts in the intellectual history of the West. What Berry contributes to our understanding of these shifts is a new awareness of how, during each of these crucial phases, something was gained and something was lost. To this I would add what is perhaps an obvious implication for educators and the writers of curricula and laws: at each of these points, there may have been something “lost” during any given set of social and political reforms that was worth keeping even if, on the whole, the sum total of the changes was moving towards authentic social progress. Moreover, there may have been something “lost” that is needed now to effect the next authentically progressive and necessary set of changes. Berry picks up on this idea of what I would call “essential recovery” in his work.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup> Frederick Crowe in the following passage from his book *Old Things and New: A Strategy for Education* proposes that this idea of essential recovery is crucial to the educational project:

[i]t is the students, of course, who are the focus of our interest. And, our question is, what relevance has the way of heritage for them now in the new and complex situation where they are freed from the domination of elders in their choice of values, their judgments on the universe, the meaning they find in life, and their selection of resources from the immense hopper of material before them? (1985: 120).

The purpose of this chapter will be to show, given the totality of the current context, just what we ought to be recovering from past phases of cultural development in order that humans might continue to have the opportunities necessary to live fulfilling lives. In setting out Berry's proposal for the future, supporting evidence will come not only from his own work but also from reflections on the ecological crisis generated by diverse disciplines.

Thomas Berry was ordained a Catholic priest of the Passionist Order in 1942. He went on to earn a PhD in cultural history with a specialization in Indian and Chinese thought.<sup>18</sup> Both his faith and his particular academic training mark his approach to the problem of essential recovery in relation to the mitigating circumstance of the ecological crisis. Berry's work is based in visions of history. He writes about times in the intellectual history of the West when new visions were produced due to stresses. For example, Berry cites the now common notion in political philosophy that the fall of the Roman Empire both called for and allowed for the appearance of Augustine of Hippo's *City of God*. Berry also discerned a then new historical vision as emerging out of the work of Francis Bacon and Bernard Fontenelle in the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, that of "progress"—a notion which both brought about and supported the industrial age (1990: xii).

Currently, we find ourselves at another junction, one that is perhaps the most significant crossroads in our cultural history. This is because:

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<sup>18</sup> A succinct summary of the biographical details of Berry's life (b. 1914) can be found in the introduction of Anne Marie Dalton's *A Theology for the Earth* (1-2).

the issue now is of a much greater order of magnitude, for we have changed in a deleterious manner not simply the structure and functioning of human society: we have changed the very chemistry of the planet...structures and functions that have taken hundreds of millions and even billions of years to bring into existence. Such an order of change in its nature and in its order of magnitude has never before entered either into earth history or into human consciousness (Berry, 1990: xiii).

Berry is, of course, not alone in identifying the precariousness of the natural reality inherent in this state of affairs, a situation that has come to be known as the ecological crisis. Many others assert that what are commonly labelled "environment issues" mark the world today. In the opinion of these concerned thinkers, when the effect of human ways of being on the planet is considered, the whole of the ecological situation deserves the label "crisis". Ecological issues, ranging from the disposal of toxic waste to the depletion of the stratospheric ozone layer and the disappearance of countless plant and animal species, threaten the life systems of the planet on which we live. For the first time, the whole earth faces the prospect of ecological collapse. This outcome has been brought into the realm of the possible by human over-consumption and exploitation of the planet. In the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary edition of his best selling book, *Earth in Mind*, David Orr, a passionate advocate of ecological renewal, wrote:

If today is a typical day on planet earth, we will lose 166 square miles of rain forest, or about an acre a second. We will lose another 72 square miles to encroaching deserts, the results of human mismanagement and overpopulation. We will lose 40 to 250 species, and no one knows whether the number is 40 or 250. Today the human population will increase by 250,000. And today we will add 2,700 tons of Chlorofluorocarbons and 15 million tons of carbon dioxide to the atmosphere. Tonight the earth will be a little hotter, its waters more acidic and the fabric of life more threadbare. By year's end the numbers are staggering: The total loss of rain forest will equal an area the size of the state of Washington; expanding dessert will equal an area the size of the state of West Virginia; and the global population [of humans] will have risen by more than 90,000,000...[In] the year 2000 perhaps as much as 20% of the life forms extant on the planet in the year 1900 will be extinct (Orr, 2004: 7).<sup>19</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> On March 30<sup>th</sup>, 2005, during the editing phase of this thesis, the urgency of the current situation was once again laid bare for the world's media with the release of the United Nation's *Millennium Ecosystem Assessment*. The statement from the board for this project identifies ten key messages and conclusions that can be drawn from the assessment:

Reacting to the ecological crisis represents both a challenge to and a departure from “most Western ethics, religious and otherwise, [which] have had a decidedly anthropocentric but also humanist flavour, even if the conceptions of the human and of the human good differed in substance” (Schweiker: 539). Like Berry, only earlier, Aldo Leopold (1887-1948) dealt with the philosophical complexities of the current situation.

Leopold is unquestionably a pioneer in the area of ecological ethics.<sup>20</sup> Of particular note are his ideas concerning the relationships between humans and what he terms “the enlarged community” of the land (Leopold: 635). Leopold’s most celebrated effort in this regard dates back to his 1948 book, *The Sand County Almanac*, which introduces his concept

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- Everyone in the world depends on nature and ecosystem services to provide the conditions for a decent, healthy, and secure life.
  - Humans have made unprecedented changes to ecosystems in recent decades to meet growing demands for food, fresh water, fibre, and energy.
  - These changes have helped to improve the lives of billions, but at the same time they weakened nature’s ability to deliver other key services such as purification of air and water, protection from disasters, and the provision of medicines.
  - Among the outstanding problems identified by this assessment are the dire state of many of the world’s fish stocks; the intense vulnerability of the 2 billion people living in dry regions to the loss of ecosystem services, including water supply; and the growing threat to ecosystems from climate change and nutrient pollution.
  - Human activities have taken the planet to the edge of a massive wave of species extinctions, further threatening our own well-being.
  - The loss of services derived from ecosystems is a significant barrier to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals to reduce poverty, hunger, and disease.
  - The pressures on ecosystems will increase globally in coming decades unless human attitudes and actions change.
  - Measures to conserve natural resources are more likely to succeed if local communities are given ownership of them, share the benefits, and are involved in decisions.
  - Even today’s technology and knowledge can reduce considerably the human impact on ecosystems. They are unlikely to be deployed fully, however, until ecosystem services cease to be perceived as free and limitless, and their full value is taken into account.
  - Better protection of natural assets will require coordinated efforts across all sections of governments, businesses, and international institutions. The productivity of ecosystems depends on policy choices on investment, trade, subsidy, taxation, and regulation, among others (Zakri *et.al*: 1).

<sup>20</sup> A comprehensive summary of some key events in Leopold’s life (1887-1948) can be found at [www.aldoleopold.org/Biography/Biography.htm](http://www.aldoleopold.org/Biography/Biography.htm).

of the “land ethic” to mass Western thought. His basic premise is that the history of ethics can be viewed as “an ecological evolution” by which, ever since Odysseus’ travels, in the earliest days of ancient Greece, a sequential enlargement of ethical criteria can be witnessed (Leopold: 634).

In the current context, the ethical sequence has not yet extended to the land. Today, as a result, “land, like Odysseus’ slave-girls, is still property. The land relation is still strictly economic, entailing privileges but no obligations” (Leopold: 635). Accordingly, Leopold goes on to assert that the extension of ethics to the land is the next logical step in the human ethical sequence. Such an extension of the ethical sequence would shift our concept of the land away from being viewed as something to be owned. Replacing that outdated conception would be a vision of solidarity that situates the land within a larger-life community. He calls this expansion of moral categories both “an evolutionary possibility and an ecological necessity” (635). Such an extension of ethical criteria would mean that the land would come to be treated with respect and care, so that wanton destruction of members of the ecological community would carry with it not only economic consequences but also moral sanctions.<sup>21</sup>

This is a more universal approach to the problem of the ecological crisis. As such, this ethic is engaged in a task of enlargement of the moral community “to include soils, waters, plants, and animals, or collectively: the land” (Leopold: 635). This task involves changing social roles so that humankind’s part in the ecological world shifts from being

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<sup>21</sup> Mindful of the previous chapters’ shading of “authenticity”, I would add here that a reflection on this expansion in light of Lonergan’s own methodology can allow a human thinker to bear witness to the connection between the organic extension of ethical criteria over the course of Western history and a movement, in this same area, towards increasing authenticity of moral associations (See Appendices A and B for a visual representation of this connection).



“conqueror of the land-community to a plain member and citizen of it... [This shift] implies respect for... fellow-members, and also respect for the community as such” (Leopold: 635).

Such a zone of respect is not located within any uniformity of action or behaviour. Rather, it is based upon a high value given to multiplicity in social associations, a new sense of moral worth generated from the certain scientific fact that “the trend of evolution is to elaborate and diversify the biota” (Leopold: 636). Human animals are seen as having a special responsibility in relation to this fact, for humanity’s “invention of tools has enabled... [us]... to make changes of unprecedented violence, rapidity and scope” (Leopold: 636).<sup>22</sup> These changes, most notably innovations surrounding transportation, have had the further effect of removing many of us from both the land and our relationship with the food we eat (637).<sup>23</sup> Further, it seems that such a situation of discontinuity all too frequently supports an unhealthy anthropocentric orientation.

This ecologically unfriendly orientation is often based both on and around a certain interpretation of the Judaeo-Christian tradition which has permeated Western thought. David Kinsley has labelled this interpretation “the mastery hypothesis” (116). In short, the mastery hypothesis represents an almost pure anthropocentrism, manifested in the idea that because humans are made in “the image and likeness of God”, they are to be considered above all other creatures. In this view, the earth and all “its bounty” are for humankind to use as it

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<sup>22</sup> Lonergan recognizes these changes inflicted by the very fact of the growing mass of humanity as one of the main problems for philosophy of education (1993(b): 15).

<sup>23</sup> It should also be remembered here that, until the development of synthetic technologies in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, food was a wholly natural thing (*i.e.*, of the land, or of the sea).

chooses. In an interesting (though condescending) analogy, Janet Martin Soskice labels such sentiments “divine hamster cage anthropocentrism”, where:

God is the hamster owner and we are the hamsters. God creates the world as a kind of vivarium for human beings. The rest of the created order is our lettuce leaves and clean sawdust, completely at our disposal (64).

Those who support the mastery hypothesis may look on the granting of “dominion” over the natural world that occurs in Genesis 1:28<sup>24</sup> as a divine ordinance providing justification for subduing and exploiting the earth (Carmody: 6). This translated into a situation where, for the most part, Westerners could feel “quite self-righteous in their quest to tame, civilize and otherwise dominate nature even if that meant destroying large parts of it” (Kinsley: 116).

Leopold’s land ethic counters such anthropocentrism by referring to the “indivisibility of the earth” (641). As a result, it is not only creatures and plants of obvious value to humans that are conceived as having “worth”. In Leopold’s system, the category of “worthy” is extended so that all biological beings, even those held in low esteem by the majority of humans, such as rats or cockroaches, are recognized as having a full set of rights in terms of existence (Leopold: 641). For Leopold, it follows that a key part of this new imaging of rights will involve a recognition by humans that the force of love should mediate relations with the land. Indeed, Leopold’s reading and research led him to conclude that extending the moral community to cover the land could mean only one thing: that the force of love has a real presence. In his estimation:

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<sup>24</sup> Genesis 1:28 reads: “God blessed them, saying; “Be fertile and multiply; fill the earth and subdue it. Have dominion over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and all the living things that move on earth” (New American Bible).

[i]t is inconceivable...that an ethical relation to land can...exist without love, respect, and admiration for land and a high regard for its value. By value, I of course mean something far broader than mere economic value; I mean value in the philosophical sense (638).

Such a philosophical value accorded to land will necessarily have its expression in a lived reality. Mindful of this formulation, when considering possible responses to the ecological crisis, it is interesting to note that Leopold suggests that the token by which “a special nobility inherent in the human race—a special cosmic value, distinctive from and superior to all other life” (642)—can be manifested is in a basic rational choice available only to human animals. We can choose to be remembered either as:

a society respectful of its own and all other life, capable of inhabiting the earth without defiling it or [as] a society like that of John Burroughs’ potato bug, which exterminated the potato, and thereby exterminated itself. As one or the other shall we be judged in ‘the derisive silence of history’ (642).

Precisely because these two modes of being are representative of the broad set of choices available to humanity as a whole, Leopold’s statement begs us to consider possible temporal outcomes when formulating our statements, policies and actions around matters that are inherently ecological.

I view Leopold’s image of the potato bug as a key metaphor in this thesis. In plain terms, given the necessary conditions for it to achieve success in numbers, the potato bug will proceed to eradicate its food source in a particular bioregion and thus destroy itself. It is my sincere hope that the human citizens of earth can collectively demonstrate some human “cosmic value” that shows us to be better caretakers of our fate than Burroughs’ potato bug. Quite simply, if too many people regress into the non-option (of continuing to over-

consume), and do nothing to divert humanity's current path towards self-destruction, then even any small minority who realise the implications of the ecological crisis, and seek to modify their behaviour accordingly, will suffer along with everyone else as a result of the doom of the planet. The "spaceship earth" analogy,<sup>25</sup> which shows us to be an interconnected whole subsisting on finite resources, helps to further situate the importance of Leopold's potato bug image in relation to the future prospects of humanity.

In Berry's estimation, the value (in Leopold's philosophical sense) that will allow us to transcend the fate of the potato bug, by using our power of reason to prevent our own self-destruction, is imparted from story. Indeed, Berry asserts that the entire ecological crisis is simply a question of story: "[w]e are in trouble now because we do not have a good story" (1990: 123). Further, he notes a compounding of this problem resulting from the situation that "[w]e are in between stories" (Berry, 1990: 123). In this formulation, Berry is picking up on a point identified by contemporary philosopher, Alasdair MacIntyre, who (like Berry and Lonergan) has had the label neo-Aristotelian applied to his work because of his concern about the trajectory of social development and decline in Western civilization.

MacIntyre proposes that stories provide an account of the social-moral order, which is either now or partly-transcended (121). Thus, stories form a significant aspect of historical background as references that provide a practical guide to morality in a given society. The story becomes the chief means of moral education. This was especially the case in Ancient

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<sup>25</sup> As part of Kenneth Boulding's essay for the University of Washington's Committee on Space Sciences, by 1965, the analogy of "spaceship earth" was already being explored for its ecological implications—"[m]an is finally going to have to face the fact that he is a biological system living in an ecological system, and that his survival power is going to depend on his developing symbiotic relationships of a closed-cycle character with all the other elements and populations of the world of ecological systems" (3).

Greek, Medieval and Renaissance cultures (MacIntyre: 121). For instance, we can bear witness to the importance of the mythical story when reading ancient Greek philosophy. In that context, Homer provided the historical backdrop for the emergence of the Golden Age in 5<sup>th</sup> Century BCE Athens. By this time, the Jews already had their own stories coalescing in the *Torah*—stories which told them to live a good moral life or face the wrath of G-d. Success as a nation rested on faithfully keeping the *Torah*, with its ten core commandments. Turning to Baal and the pagan ways would mean disaster.

The Bible and the Qur'an, based in part on these Jewish ideas, were to become highly successful in the human socio-political context. Indeed these religious texts have been so influential that most Western cultures are permeated with the historical background and moralities of "the peoples of the Book". These examples support the view that the sentiment expressed by Henry James and quoted by MacIntyre—"[w]hat is character but the determination of incident?" (MacIntyre: 125)—is deeply ingrained in the Western consciousness. This embedding can be witnessed both historically (*e.g.*, the question, "what did Odysseus do to anger the gods?") and today (*e.g.*, the question, "why is God punishing me?" from the mother of a child who has just died of cancer).

MacIntyre makes a strong case for the importance of this story-based background in relation to our own times. He asserts that, even if we do not realize it, we are deeply affected by this historical context, which may seem invisible but is ever present in our culture. Indeed, he emphasizes that the self is inseparable from (1) social and (2) historical roles and status (MacIntyre: 221). Given this "un-detachableness" from these social and historical roles, it would have been false, for instance, if a white South African had said that *Apartheid* was not

a problem for himself/herself. Implicit in this formulation is the idea that the moral quest cannot be an activity engaged in by a lone individual seeking the good (MacIntyre: 220). It follows that a target must be provided by the society for the good to be discerned (MacIntyre: 219). In MacIntyre's conception, the society provides a focal point for the seeker of the good. In simpler terms, it is the culture that defines the good. In a political society, which necessarily relies on co-operation, the good can only come through consensus. In the spirit of the current topic, what this means is two important things: first, it is not possible to divide ourselves from our cultural story; and, second, as members of a society, we hold a responsibility for that story.

These are particularly poignant points when applied to the ecological crisis, because the biosphere is necessary to all cultures. From Berry's perspective, the story of progress (as it emerged in the aftermath of Bacon and Fontenelle) sustained us for a long time.<sup>26</sup> Just as Augustine's story provided a source of vitality and hope in the aftermath of the fall of ancient Rome, through similar dynamics, the myth of progress gave humanity both a role in the emerging modern world and a sense of meaning. However, the story of progress has now been found to be faulty in its larger social dimension (Berry, 1990: 123-124). Such a "technocentric" view (O'Sullivan: 42) of the future runs counter to the idea that I have labelled as "essential recovery" in this thesis. Accepting this myth of progress also involves a certain alienation from the natural world.

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<sup>26</sup> Edmund O'Sullivan associates progress in this sense with "a type of manifest destiny" which he sees as representative of a "technozoic vision" (52). When (as per Ronald Reagan's old General Electric commercials) progress becomes a product. As part of this vision, the past is seen not as a source of knowledge but rather as an enemy of the future (O'Sullivan: 52).

To be sure, in the West we are acting out a way of living that, if adopted by the whole world's human population would result in the destruction of the very biosphere, which supports all life. Currently the facts that (1) "80% of humanity's total eco-footprint is taken up by 97.5% of the population"; and (2) the remaining "20% of the global human eco-footprint is taken by only 2.5% of the world population" (Addison:1), is most significant. The stark reality that these numbers represent is that if everyone followed the lead of the West and were brought to their same high levels of consumption, the earth's ecosystem, already near or at capacity (Redefining Progress: 1), would collapse. Any change in this regard will require a painful re-imaging of the very ways Western society has come to express itself:

[t]hat our Western civilization should be the principle cause of such extensive damage to the planet is so difficult a truth for us to absorb that our society in general is presently in a state of shock and denial, of disbelief that such can possibly be the real situation. We are unable to move from a conviction that as humans we are the crown and glory of the Earth community to a realization that we are the most destructive and the most dangerous component of that community. Such denial is the first attitude of persons grasped by any form of addiction. Our Western addiction to commercial-industrial progress as our basic referent for reality and value is becoming an all-pervasive attitude throughout the various peoples and cultures of the Earth (Swimme and Berry: 254).

Berry's response to this malaise of denial is what he terms the "new story".

In Berry's assessment, a "new story" emerges out of the crisis of dysfunction witnessed in the failure of the commercial-industrial worldview. Moreover, this "new story" is already being established. This emerging historical vision involves the realisation of a positive commitment to a forward-moving course for history, whereby, "a period of mutually enhancing human-earth relationships is being established" (1990: xiii). In the West, this takes the form of what Leopold would consider "ever-expanding moral categories". Berry labels this phenomenon as the movement "beyond democracy to biocracy" (1990: xiii). In such a

movement, the larger-life community participates in our human decision making processes. Within this expanded context, human affairs gain their meaning through intercommunion (1990: 136). Value and worth will then mark all professions, occupations and activities, precisely to the degree that they enhance and contribute to the larger life community. For, in Berry's estimation, it is only when we take our cues "from the very structure and functioning of the universe [that] we can have confidence in the future that awaits the human venture" (1990: 137).

In contrast to certain de-constructionist philosophies that avow no truth claims, Berry is here setting a social target for the "new story"—he asserts that the narrative should form the moral order for our times. Thus, this story is meant to permeate human consciousness and character in the same manner that MacIntyre saw Homer's stories as supporting the type of integration, which appeared in 5<sup>th</sup> Century BCE Greece. For, as suggested by an insight associated with the "new story", departing from the holistic integration with the ecological at this point in history has the real potential of causing the entire evolutionary process to collapse.<sup>27</sup>

Such a collapse, even if *homo sapiens* were somehow able to mitigate its human-specific effects with technology, would be a tragedy from Berry's point of view. For, in his conception, it is the biodiversity of this world that both shapes and defines us as humans.

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<sup>27</sup> This new formulation would also help to deal with the deteriorative crisis of meaning too often associated with everyday life in the contemporary western context. As Berry writes in partnership with Brian Swimme: "[w]ithout entrancement within this new context of existence it is unlikely that the human community will have the psychic energy needed for the renewal of the Earth. This entrancement comes from the immediate communion of the human with the natural world, a capacity to appreciate the ultimate subjectivity and spontaneities within every form of natural being" (Swimme & Berry: 268).



Berry cites an example of such shaping as present in the way that interaction with the beauty of the natural world allows humans to experience an essential sense of wonder and awe in relation to our purpose in the complex web of life.<sup>28</sup> Further, awareness of the value of diversity allows for our connection with the natural world in a communion of subjects, rather than a collection of objects.<sup>29</sup> In terms of childhood development, Berry fully expresses these sentiments in his poem *It Takes a Universe*:

The child awakens to a universe.  
The mind of the child to a world of meaning.  
Imagination to a world of beauty.  
Emotions to a world of intimacy.

It takes a universe to make a child  
both in outer form and inner spirit.  
It takes a universe to educate a child.  
A universe to fulfill a child (Spirit in the Smokies: 1).

Additionally, for Berry, any ecological collapse would represent a complete separation of what he terms our “genetic” and “cultural codes”. It is through genetic endowment, he argues, that we maintain “our intimate presence to the functioning of the earth community and to the emergent processes of the universe itself” (1990: 199). Cultural coding, which emerges from and transcends our genetic makeup, allows us to “invent ourselves in the human expression of our being” (1990: 200). Due to our ability to be freely

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<sup>28</sup> In his book, *Moral Outrage in Education*, University of North Carolina education professor David Purpel agrees with Berry’s point on the importance of nourishing a sense of wonder in students. This can be seen in his belief that integrating our social vision “with a sense of awe and mystery of the universe” should be a defining, key goal for any educational project (5).

<sup>29</sup> Berry sees this situation of interconnectedness in the universe as arising from its quality as the “only self-referent mode of being”. It follows that “[s]ince all living beings, including humans, emerge out of this single community there must have been a bio-spiritual component of the universe from the beginning. Indeed we must say that the universe is a communion of subjects rather than a collection of objects” (Berry, 1996(a): 2).

determined, cultural coding results in a diversity of human expressions (1990: 200).<sup>30</sup> In light of the earlier discussion of the current Canadian context, it could be said that the fact of human multiplicity, which allows for the existence of both a multi-cultural story and society, can be seen as emerging from the dynamics of cultural coding. Thus, cultural coding becomes representative of the human capacity for free determination.<sup>31</sup> However, once established, sets of cultural codes also become normative reference points for action within a community (Berry, 1990: 200).

Due to this power of normative reference, such self-invention is seen not only as a privilege but also as a responsibility (Berry, 1990: 200). That Berry locates the nature of this responsibility in accountability is further demonstrated in his shading of the historicity of cultural coding.<sup>32</sup> In the past, one essential feature of our cultural coding was located in the identification of our cultures with the ecological story and, by extension, the universe. For

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<sup>30</sup> By implication, this ability to be self-determined allows human to become moral actors. Lonergan connects our becoming moral with the exercising of our human capacities to experience and judge: "to become moral practically, for our decisions affect things; to become moral interpersonally, for our decisions affect other persons; to become moral existentially, for by our decisions we constitute what we are to be" (1985: 29).

<sup>31</sup> This point about the constructed nature of the cultural coding is key, for it leaves humanity with the power to choose to change those codes in order to respond to the current crisis. Lonergan also recognises this realm of action open to humanity when he notes that "[t]he family, the state, the law, the economy are not fixed and immutable entities. They adapt to changing circumstance; they can be reconceived in the light of new ideas... But all such change involves change of meaning—a change of idea or concept, a change of judgment or evaluation, a change of order or request" (2003: 78).

Here can be seen the fashion in which the new story may come to be accepted by Western society.

<sup>32</sup> Further support for this notion of the historically constructed nature of cultural coding, and the power that the realisation of this fact gives us to control our own destiny, can be found in the Lonergan's notion of "common meanings". An illustration of what Lonergan signifies by this term is found in the following extract from an essay in which he is dealing with the transition from the classical world-view:

Now the common meanings constitutive of community and of the lives of individuals in community are not some stock of ideal forms subsistent in some Platonic heaven. They are the hard-won fruit of man's advancing knowledge of nature, of the gradual evolution of his social forms and of his cultural achievements. There is such a thing as historical process, but it is to be known only by the difficult art of acquiring historical perspective, of coming to understand how the patterns of living, institutions and the common meanings of one place and time differ from those of another (1974: 4).

It is through such an understanding of history that Berry is able to discern a basis for biocratic action today.

example, pre-contact Native Americans<sup>33</sup> are seen as fully recognising the creative force of nature in their cultural context. Such a recognition is represented in the special status accorded to the "Earth Mother archetype" in Native American cosmologies (1990: 187). For instance, in the Navajo tradition, an illustration of the special importance given to ecological reality is found in the image of the Corn Mother. This image is brought to life in the traditional practice, when members of the Navajo nation place an ear of corn beside a newborn child to acknowledge "the role of the mothering principle with powers beyond that of the human mother" (1990: 187). However, it should be remembered that Native American cultures are not alone in displaying this connection to the ecological community. All human cultures, including Western European ones, emerged from the genetic coding, which is essentially an ecological feature. The reality of this fact is illustrated in Berry's metaphor of language use: "we are genetically programmed to speak; the manner of our speech, however, is our own invention" (1990: 200).

In our current cultural context, the ecological crisis may be explained by the fact that, in the West, we have lost our connection with our genetic heritage. This has turned into a situation representative of "supreme pathology... [whereby]...[w]e are indeed closing down the major life systems of the planet" (Berry, 1990: 206). An act of recovery for the planet will, therefore, involve an act of recovery for human consciousness.<sup>34</sup> Here, Berry calls attention to the real power of the "new story": the power it has to change the way we dream an image about the future. This is the "dream of the earth". Paradoxically, the realisation of

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<sup>33</sup> "American" is used here in its dual-continental sense, not solely to refer to those peoples who inhabit the United States.

<sup>34</sup> To this point can be added Lonergan's observation that humans are most true to themselves when they are self-transcending (2003: 357). Without a certain release from the self, the broadening of consciousness that would allow for an acceptance of the foundational premises of the "new story" would not be possible.

this dream for the future requires returning to a past state of interconnectedness that existed between humans and their ecological context. Therefore, what is required is an act of re-education.<sup>35</sup> The ability of the old ways of being to adapt to present “progress” oriented discourses is illustrated powerfully in the history of artistic endeavour in the Americas:

[t]he arts of the... [Native Americans]...in these past five centuries indicate their capacity to absorb outside influences and to reshape them in accordance with their own genius. So with the beadwork of the [Native Peoples]. There was beadwork prior to the arrival of the European, but it flourished with a new vigour once modern beads were available. Beads were then able to express visions that they had never expressed previously. They became a resplendent display of the interior grandeur of the human (Berry, 1990: 188).

Here, we can see that the recovery, which Berry advocates, does not signify a fundamentalist appropriation of the past. Rather, Berry’s “new story” becomes oriented toward a better tomorrow—a future set on achieving a lost balance between the genetic and cultural human codes in a fresh and historically appropriate manner.

Lonergan’s viewpoint on “authenticity” can be harmonized with this effort to achieve lost balance and to build an ecological community. Recovering the term “progress” from its scientific-industrial use criticized by Berry, Lonergan is able to assert that:

[t]he fruit of authenticity is progress. For authenticity results from long-sustained exercise of attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility. But long-sustained attentiveness notes just what is going on. Intelligence repeatedly grasps how things can be better. Reasonableness is open to change. Responsibility weighs in the balance short-and long-term advantages and disadvantages, benefits and defects. The longer these four are exercised, the more certain and the greater will be the progress made. The fruit of unauthenticity is decline. Unauthentic subjects get themselves unauthentic authorities. Unauthentic authorities favour some groups over other. Favouritism breeds suspicion, distrust, dissension, opposition, hatred, violence. Community loses its common judgments so that different groups inhabit different worlds. Common understanding is replaced by mutual

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<sup>35</sup> As identified in Lloyd Gerring’s discussion of axial ages, such an act of re-education would be made easier by a realisation that “[t]he advent of Global/Secular culture does not render valueless the trans-ethnic religious traditions any more than they, in turn, rendered valueless the ethnic cultures they subordinated. But it does mean that they have to experience radical change if they are to continue to play a positive role in the Global Era” (2).

incomprehension. The common field of experience is divided into hostile territories (1985: 9).

In this light, Berry's writings can be viewed as an attempt to establish a more authentic "new story" as a challenge to the long held scientific-industrial myth that, as evidenced by its mass application, has been found to be unauthentic in relation to both the human and the larger life communities.

In terms inspired by Lonergan's methodology, the fate of Burroughs' potato bug represents a challenge that can be overcome because humans are self-creating beings. According to this view, we merely need to decide to integrate the truth contained in this metaphor with our being. Doing this will require a certain existential awareness in relation to the reality of the lack of sustainability associated with the current state of the human relationships with the ecological world. Drifting along with the myth of progress (and continuing to over-consume) is tempting for many citizens of the West. However, it should be remembered that:

[d]rifters lack a mind of their own. They do and say and think what everyone else is doing and saying and thinking, and the people, they imitate are drifters too. There are countless sheep and among them there is no shepherd. Still their condition is not hopeless. To each may come the existential moment when they discover in themselves to settle what they are to be (Lonergan, 1985: 230).

Given that our status on this planet as members of a diverse life community is no longer guaranteed, a new existential imperative has been created by the ecological crisis. Too many drifters in regard to this new reality will be like the deluge of lemmings who push their enlightened brethren at the head of the pack from the cliff into the sea. Our situation, however, is not hopeless. What is needed is an integration of the "new story" into our collective being. Authenticity in relation to the future mandates the integration of the "new

story” or something similar; our ability to be self-creating allows for it. It is well within the human potential to foster a future that is respectful and nourishing towards all life forms. We need only to grasp this possibility and act to make it a reality.

## Chapter Six: The Next Step, The Movement from Multiculturalism to Bioculturalism

The concern of this thesis now becomes how to construct an authentically progressive educational philosophy oriented towards a future marked by the “new story”. Hence, the goal of this chapter is to apply Lonergan’s methodology to Berry’s insight in order to explore the implications for philosophy of education. Previously, investigating the philosophical dimensions of what Berry would term the current “story”, I concluded that multicultural education was the supreme expression of the democratic ideal of human solidarity and inclusiveness. However, based on the evidence of methodological and cultural transformation presented by Lonergan and Berry respectively, this ideal can only be viewed as transitional. For, if as Berry suggests, the ecological crisis requires a new cultural story, such a reformulation would also have to permeate both educational philosophy and curricula.

As witnessed by the contrast between Chapter Two and Chapter Three, reformulations have clearly taken place at specific points in the past. The trajectory evident in the transition from Plato’s exclusivist philosophy of education to the Canadian context where human diversity is fully encouraged and nurtured, is itself consistent with what Leopold called “a sequential enlargement of ethical criteria” (634). Currently, there are factors that both push and pull us towards a new conclusion regarding moral categories. The implications of Berry’s “new story” suggest that “biocracy” should now permeate moral associations.

Berry can be read as coming to this conclusion from his examination of the democratic-industrial way of being, which he showed as being sustained by the myth of progress. That this way of being is still in vogue in Western culture (and is, now, coming into fashion in countries like India and China) gives rise to important questions about sustainability and the future; questions that Berry sees as moving through the reflective process towards a support for the principles of biocracy. Quite simply, this argument is based on the premise that just as democracy rests on the principle that every citizen should share in the decision making process, so the biocratic imperative is centred on the idea of "the participation of the larger life community in our human decision making processes" (Berry, 1990: xxiii).

In Lonergan's terms, such an approach grows out of a truth of human intellectual development that insight into simpler systems, such as Plato's philosophy of education, will raise questions that allow for the possibility of updating. For instance, studying Plato's utopian vision of education for the guardians raised questions in my mind surrounding many contentious points which, when applied against my own intellectual understandings and related to my own educational experiences led me to conclude that the Platonic education system was in need of updating. This small insight, in turn, moved me towards the view that multiculturalism offered a better answer to the question of how best to organize societal and educational systems. However, my later study of Thomas Berry forced me by that same logic to conclude, in terms of Leopold's expanding moral categories, that multiculturalism is an essential but only transitional stage in the authentic



development of human consciousness. In my mind, Berry raised what is necessarily a morally binding point: that due to the current state of ecological affairs, a change in the way of being of humanity is required. Through this process, Berry's arguments convinced me that the human ego alone should not mediate all decision-making processes on this planet.

We come here to an important point related to Lonergan's methodology. What I have presented above is often mere information and concepts. At their best, such selections have the potential to mitigate an intellectual conversion<sup>36</sup> in the reader. In simpler terms, from this point of view, the most that this thesis can hope for (if those segments are considered in isolation) is to have presented information in a manner so the reader can understand the nature of the ideas offered. Therefore, in themselves, these sections can only appeal to the reader's intellect and answer the question "is it clear?". However, beyond that query there lies another more pressing question: "is it true?" (see Lonergan, 1992: 360-362). In the difference between these two questions, we can trace the rational movement from "the affirmation of the possible to the affirmation of actual contingent being" (Lonergan, 1997: 99).

Even if the reader concludes, as I have, that Berry's argument is true and sound, there remains another step in the reader's awakening of consciousness. That step involves integrating this truth with the reader's being, a step that requires what Lonergan labels

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<sup>36</sup> A discussion of Lonergan's theory of intellectual conversion, in light of his thesis work on Thomas Aquinas, is offered in Chapter Four of this thesis.

“self-appropriation”. Self-appropriation, like its partner self-knowledge, is generated by a dynamic of self-presence (1995: 34). By way of explanation:

[f]irst of all, self-appropriation is advertence—advertence to oneself as experiencing, understanding, and judging. Secondly, it is understanding oneself as experiencing, understanding, and judging. Thirdly, it is affirming oneself as experiencing, understanding, and judging. The analysis of knowledge, then, yields the three elements: experiencing, understanding, and judging (Lonergan 1995, 34).

It follows that it is an exercise of self-appropriation that Berry is calling for in his dream of the earth. In such a situation, humans would use their abilities to experience, understand and judge in order to appreciate the need for a diverse universe. In Leopold’s terms, this is what would happen if one recognised the land as having moral worth. An integration of this truth into our collective being, or social-ethical truth, would solidify its definition as a “good” in MacIntyre’s sense.

Therefore, if the new story were to become our cultural myth, underlying all our interactions, a state of diversity of expression in being and discourse would also come into existence on the earth. As Lonergan puts it, we would be shifting the received idea of community and thus would be changing reality itself.<sup>37</sup> Under this new biocratic reality, the moral yardstick would shift from holding a “me” or “us humans” as a value to looking at the planet as one inter-layered community.<sup>38</sup> In more transcendental terms, this

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<sup>37</sup> As the prelude to his 1992 essay *Bernard Lonergan and The Community of Canadians*, Frederick Crowe conducts a fictitious interview with the then deceased Lonergan. In this interview Crowe has Lonergan make the link between perception (in terms of the image of community) and reality with the following words, “[t]o change the received idea of the community is to change the reality itself” (1992: 12).

<sup>38</sup> Understood in its (what Leopold would label) philosophical sense, love represents a community building force in any movement towards a new way of imaging social interaction. This is because love for the inter-layered community of the earth can be seen to have the power to solidify the connection between all creation when it is recognized that “[i]n the measure that the community becomes a community of love and so capable of making real and great sacrifices, in that measure it can wipe out grievances and correct the objective absurdities that its unauthenticity has brought about” (Lonergan quoted in Crowe, 1992: 34). In

would be representative of a recognition of humans as a significant development of the evolutionary dynamic, not the whole or the culmination of this life-giving process.

This is not to say that humans do not have a unique role to play amongst the other actors in the process. We, *homo sapiens*, are clearly the animals in the position to do the most harm to the biosphere that supports all life in its diversity. However, if we make our decisions according to biocratic principles, we have the potential to foster diversity instead of destroying it; thus, allowing the evolutionary process to continue. That said, as things stand now, if the paradigm shift to the “new story” does not permeate our existence, we run the risk of the biosphere collapsing to the point where the very evolutionary process, which generated both us and our power of reason, will be severely interrupted or even halted.

Several educators, in line with their inherent concern for the future, have made substantial efforts to instil a respect and value for the ecological (or in Lonergan’s terms, present the information necessary for self-appropriation). Berry’s work leads me to the conclusion that this effort cannot be done apart from a respect and value for human diversity. In terms of expanding moral categories, this endeavour is probably best read as the movement from (a) love, respect and understanding of oneself, to (b) love, respect and understanding for the needs of a diversity of peoples to (c) love, respect and understanding for the ecological world. To stage-manage these terms, this would

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order to be an effective tool of community-building, this love requires looking beyond immediate and selfish concerns and toward the needs of the whole community. It represents a change in the way of proceeding from a focus on the “me” to a growing awareness of a larger ethical consideration. This shift is necessary for any multicultural or biocultural society to come into being.

represent a shift from a multicultural outlook to a biocultural way of being in the world. In line with this teleology, just as democratic curricula in Canada foster reverence for the other in the human sense, a biocratic education would foster reverence for the other in the ecological sense.

A chapter in *The Dream of the Earth* includes a discussion of the role of the American college in the ecological age, which offers a model for biocratic education. Berry's model is based on a tripartite unity of "universe education, earth education and human education" (1990: 89). Educational institutions, like Western colleges, are located within this unity as "a continuation, at the human level, of the self-education process of the earth itself" (Berry, 1990: 89).

Berry then goes to some length to emphasize what he means by this process. When employing the expression "universe education", he is referring to the type of learning "which identifies with the emergent universe in its variety of manifestations from the beginning until now" (Berry, 1990: 89). Additionally, when using the term "earth education", he reminds us that he is signifying "not education about the earth, but the earth as the immediate self-educating community of those living and nonliving beings that constitute the earth" (Berry, 1990: 89). As such, "human education is primarily the activation of the possibilities of the planet in a way that could not be achieved apart from human intelligence and the entire range of human activities" (Berry, 1990: 92).

What Berry advocates as the philosophical basis of such an integrated education is a new cosmology. This cosmological formulation moves beyond the physical sense that cosmology all too often denotes in Western culture (Berry, 1990: 90). Indeed, what Berry is suggesting here is a reformation of the manner in which schools deal with ecological issues. Whereas, today, an empirical-scientific approach is often taken in schools and other social configurations as a way of dealing with environmental problems, Berry and others working in this vein, such as William Cronon, advocate a rethinking of the relationship between the human and the natural. Berry's new cosmology renews the human-earth relationship. As part of this proposed way forward, diversity is enshrined in a foundational manner which at once includes, and also transcends, multiculturalism. Therefore, in this system the total educational process is imaged as a unity. Learning is meant to reflect an "unbreakable bond of relatedness" (Berry, 1990: 91) that rests on the spatial and temporal axiom, "[n]othing is completely itself without everything else" (Berry, 1990: 91).

In a 1996 lecture at Harvard University, Berry asserted that it is in a failure to realize this unity that a major inadequacy "of the four basic establishments that determine human life in its more significant functioning" can be found (1996(b): 1). He went on to define the four basic establishments of society as (1) the government, (2) the church, (3) the university and (4) the commercial-industrial corporation, or in other terms, "the political, religious, intellectual and economic establishments" (Berry, 1996(b): 1). His shading of the problem was particularly noteworthy, because he saw a common thread underpinning the shortcomings of these establishments:

all four are failing in their basic purposes for the same reason. They all presume a radical discontinuity between the non-human and the human with all the rights given to the human to exploit the non-human. The non-human is not recognized as having any rights. All basic realities and values are identified with the human. The non-human attains its reality and value only through its use by the human. This has brought about a devastating assault on the non-human by the human (Berry 1996(b): 1).

It follows that a certain type of reconciliation is required in order to transcend this isolating situation. Indeed, overcoming the alienation between humans and the larger life community is the exact function of the unifying dynamic in Berry's work.<sup>39</sup>

While continuing to explore this unifying dynamic in *The Dream of the Earth*, Berry refers to his concept of genetic and cultural coding. Here, he further qualifies his use of the term, "human education" by defining it "as a process whereby the cultural coding is handed on from one generation to another in a manner somewhat parallel to the manner by which the genetic coding of any living being is communicated to succeeding generations" (Berry, 1990: 93). As he traces the history of the development of this phenomena of cultural coding, Berry also discerns a unity between genetic and cultural developments. Specifically, he marks out five basic phases of cultural patterning. These are the Palaeolithic, the Neolithic, the classical-traditional, the scientific-technological and the now emerging ecological phase (Berry, 1990: 93). In each phase, the variations between diverse expressions of human cultures are held to be minimal in comparison with the divergence existing between human cultures across the five basic phases. For instance, Berry notes that the "difference between the Neolithic and the great classical

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<sup>39</sup> Berry devotes an entire book, written in co-operation with Thomas Clarke, to outlining a theology that would help to change "the destructive processes of our time" (Berry and Clarke: 42) and therefore aid in the overcoming of alienation.

cultures is much greater than the difference between any of the Neolithic cultures amongst themselves” (Berry, 1990: 93).

What Berry labels “the educational problem” (1990: 93) thus becomes especially significant during shifts between the five basic phases. Berry sees the last completed transition as having been especially severe. He argues that the “creators of the scientific-technical stage” had “only minimal awareness of what they were doing” (1990: 94). As supporting evidence for this statement, Berry points to the now self-evident truth that the “industrial civilization that came to dominate this period has required some centuries of functioning before its creative and destructive aspects could be revealed in any effective manner” (1990: 94).

Berry reads education, during this period, as shifting away from a focus on initiating humans into knowledge of symbols and “numinous experiences of the divine” to an orientation towards “training in manipulative techniques” (1990: 94). While efforts were made at the time to “keep the religious faith of the past [as well as] the moral and spiritual values and the humanistic education” the then emerging way of proceeding, nonetheless, provided the philosophical basis for both colonialism and ecological exploitation, as society became more oriented towards amoral secular values (Berry, 1990: 94). In light of the current ecological crisis, an unfortunate marker of scientific-technical education has been a de-emphasis on ascetics or contemplation in favour of engendering skill sets which look towards ever more efficient means to exploit the natural in terms of harvesting, manufacturing and distribution (Berry, 1990: 94).

In the face of the resultant “disruption in the natural world” (Berry, 1990: 95), counter-cultural movements have sprung up that are seeking to end the discontinuity between the ecological and human cultures. Berry understands such movements as precursors of the ecological age. He sees real and effective instruments of change in these movements, which via their primordial nature are causing a paradigm shift. Through such dynamics, ecologically aware individuals are changing the way the cultural collective acts in both its institutional and professional forms (Berry, 1990: 95).

Education is necessarily drawn into this process of change. However, because of the sheer volume of changes which have occurred in the recent past, education is brought into this emerging paradigm shift blind and must now, as during all times of change, go through “a period of groping [before moving] towards its new formal expression” (Berry, 1990: 96). Here, it should be noted that Berry is not asserting that formal education, in its immediate expression, can solve the ecological crisis. Several physical and psychological barriers prevent such a “quick fix” solution. As an example of these barriers, Berry cites the layout of North American culture on the landscape; all too often a landscape that is so geared towards the automobile that walking (and I would add running and bicycling as well) becomes dangerous (Berry, 1990: 96). This shift from walking to driving is representative of the ongoing erosion and suppression of the skills necessary for humans to creatively interact with life processes. At a minimum, “[n]ew forms of physical conditioning as well as cultural adaptation and technical training are required before this



new relationship between the human and the earth can become fully functional” (Berry, 1990: 96).

Given this difficulty generated by the current state of affairs, and cognizant of the fact that education cannot solve the problem in isolation, Berry asserts a need for formal education to “be transformed so that it can provide an integrating context for total life functioning” (Berry, 1990: 96). Only through this means can the “historical continuity needed for the integral development of the ecological age” be nurtured (Berry, 1990: 97). Berry sees no other choice for education than to respond to the current crisis. This is because our urgent need for an ecological age necessitates an education that never waivers from the principle of sustainability. It follows that formal education, especially at the higher levels, must engage “with the needed processes of reflection on meaning and values... within this critical context” (Berry, 1990: 97).

In Berry’s vision, such education will foster the ability of learners to engage with a more encompassing view of reality.<sup>40</sup> The educational project of the college thus becomes one of “enabling the student to understand the immense story of the universe and the role of the student in creating the next phase of the story” (Berry, 1990: 98). This “new story” ought to provide the context for all educational efforts given the reality of the

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<sup>40</sup> To fulfil this prescription, a recognition of the ability of human society to shift into different modes of being in the world is needed. Berry made this link explicit, during a lecture delivered at Harvard University in 1996, when he offered a reading of the dominant way of being which corresponded with different historical phases of the Western system of higher-education: “[t]here have been stages when the university was dominated by Theology as the Queen of the Sciences. There have been stages when the universities were dominated by humanistic concerns. There have been times when the university was dominated by mechanistic science. The new situation requires that the university find its context in a functional cosmology, that is a university that is truly functional—where the spirit dimension of the universe as well as its physical dimension is recognized” (1996(b): 8).

current situation. However, in Berry's estimation this highly complex story cannot be fully appreciated by primary and secondary school students. Thus, the fully nuanced story needs to be engaged within the context of reason and reflection most appropriate to the college level (Berry, 1990: 98). In this manner, Berry's sees his vision of integrated education attaining its fullest practical expression in the constitution of a philosophical basis for higher education. Further, he sees this philosophical basis as most appropriately reflected in a group of six core courses, each with its own set of goals (Berry, 1990: 99).

The first course is meant to foster a respect for and understanding of both the universe and the student's place in that multiplicity. Berry ranks this as the most difficult goal within his proposed curriculum (1990: 99). In line with the idea of interdisciplinary study and dialogue supported by Lonergan's methodology, Berry asserts that this effort is to be multi-disciplinary in order to avoid the mistakes of the past, whereby religious/humanistic type discourses excluded the scientific point of view and vice versa (1990: 101).<sup>41</sup> Therefore, the course content would be based around the "functional" phases of the new cosmology:

the formation of galactic systems and the shaping of the elements out of which all future developments took place; the formation of the earth within the solar system; the emergence of life in all its variety upon the earth; the rise of consciousness and human cultural development (Berry, 1990: 99).

Within this framework, the course content is not to remain in the abstract. Rather, all phases should be related to human modes of existence, such as the experience of

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<sup>41</sup> In his book *Ecological Literacy: Education and the Transition to a Postmodern World*, David Orr concurs with Berry on this point, going so far as to say that our educational institutions must be reshaped so as to overcome their discipline-centric nature before the promise of interdisciplinary learning can be fulfilled. Specifically, Orr equates "Earth-centred education...[with] the study of interactions across the boundaries of conventional knowledge and experience" (1990: 90).

viewing the stars, breathing the air and experiencing the natural life of cities (Berry, 1990: 99). The goal of the course would be realised in moments such as when a pupil, “looking at his or her own hand and considering the time span of fourteen billion years that it took to produce such a hand, could feel a personal importance in the scheme of things” (Berry, 1990: 100).

The objectives of the first course would be further supported by a consideration of the various ways the universe “found its way through the many apparent impasses that it faced” (Berry, 1990: 100). Through such means the students would come to realise the many unlikely twists and turns in the universe story that brought us to our current situation, where “the future of the planet Earth became in a special manner dependent on the human members of the earth community” (Berry, 1990: 100).

An appreciation of the fact of our connection to the universe would be further enhanced by a second course dealing with human cultural development. Content in this module would focus on the complexity exhibited in various stages of human development. Working towards a more nuanced understanding of the various phases, personal explorations of the relative and shifting historical consciousness would be encouraged. The end goal of this exploration would be to foster in the students a “feeling of identity with the entire human venture” (Berry, 1990: 101). The emergence of the scientific-technical phase as a relatively recent European-based phenomenon would also be dealt with in order to demonstrate the construct-based, and thus changeable, nature of this development. Such an understanding would help the student to see the need for a re-

adjustment of human ways of being to help foster a symbiotic relationship with the ecological world (Berry, 1990: 101). The objective-based outcome of this course would be to create opportunities for students to envision “the historical mission of the times...[that]...would provide meaning to life that might not otherwise be available” (Berry, 1990: 101).

Continuing on the theme of providing students with a sense of their historical-cultural situation, Berry’s third course would deal with “the period of the great classical cultures” (1990: 101). When using the term “classical cultures”, Berry is referring to human ways of being that dominated over the last several thousand years in Eurasia, the Americas and Africa (1990: 102). These instances of classical culture are obviously differentiated in their outward expressions. Nonetheless, Berry locates, within their totality, important “basic expressions of the human” (1990: 102). These basic factors include the development of complex language; the emergence of a critical understand in the arts, sciences and literature; the patterns for political, social, legal, recreational, ethical and recreational norms; and the genesis of the concept of craft (Berry, 1990: 102). Even though the classical cultures are “now undergoing the most profound alteration they have experienced since they came into existence” (Berry, 1990: 102), Berry asserts that within the totality of their contributions the basis for what I have labelled an “essential recovery” can be found. For, in Berry’s estimation, “[t]hese traditions are still the most formidable barriers to chaos that the human community possesses” (1990: 102). Based on the local context, the outcome-based goal for the third course thus becomes having the pupils dialogue with “that special humanist-religious tradition to which the students are

generally heirs” (1990: 102). In this manner, the students would become aware of a certain misfortune in human cultural development:

[t]he tragedy...that the dark, destructive aspect of Western patriarchal civilization has become virulent just at this time when the influence of the West has become so pervasive throughout the human community and when its technological capacity for plundering the earth has become so overwhelming that all basic life systems of the planet are being closed down (Berry, 1990:103).

In light of this tragedy, Berry’s fourth proposed course would be based around the study of the foundations and emergence of the scientific-technical phase of human development. The overarching goal of this course would be to provide the students with an awareness of the time sequence in the story of the universe. Through such an awareness, the pupils would come to realise that although this period has chronologically lasted only a few hundred years it represents the first time that humans have been able to effect geological change on such a grand scale. The students would then gain an understanding of how these changes have altered the topography of the planet along with its chemical biological functioning (Berry, 1990: 103). Coinciding with this dominance of *homo sapiens* over the natural world, we can bear witness to a corresponding decline in human contemplation of the “numinous presence pervading the universe” (Berry, 1990: 103). What Berry labels the scientific-technical phase has also marked this period of human history, in which “[t]he globe was affected by political, social, economic and, religious adjustments that have shaken the planet with unique severity” (1990: 104).

At the same time, students would study the rise of profound social consciousness that also took place during this phase. For the scientific-technical age has, additionally, “been the period of medical advance, of increased human population, of release from the

many physical and social ills of the former times" (Berry, 1990: 104). Thus, this fourth course would need to make a complex and multifaceted assessment of the totality of change which has affected humans since the dawn of the scientific-technical age. In light of the "new story", this course becomes focused on the new human power that emerges from the technological innovations of the time. The consequences of this new power, both helpful and harmful, are then considered "along with those social economic, political and cultural changes that we have witnessed in the past two centuries" (Berry, 1990: 103).

A consideration of these multi-layered issues provides the necessary context for students to more fully engage with the subject matter of the fifth course, which would deal with the emerging ecological age (Berry, 1990: 104). This course would be concerned with providing the theoretical means for humans to re-establish their relationship with the ecological. Specifically, the course would focus on how the various disciplines might help integrate "the human within the ever renewing cycles of the natural world" (Berry, 1990: 104).

Berry deals with four subject areas in this light: law, medicine, religion and commerce.<sup>42</sup> Law, in the emerging context, would reflect what Leopold labels "new

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<sup>42</sup> One of Berry's collaborators, mathematical cosmologist Brian Swimme, is actively engaged in an effort to bring science into this new curriculum. He sees a role for science as "a partner in creating the vision" (Swimme: 81). Swimme's motivation in this regard has formed as a result of a consideration of the apathy with which many scientists view any type of thinking that they feel is marked by religious considerations. Also, he laments the community-destroying fact that "approximately half of the world's scientists and technologists are employed in war research and development. And [the additional set of problems marked by the question of] how many of the remaining are employed by corporations heavily implicated in ecological destruction?" (Swimme: 81-82).

ethical categories”.<sup>43</sup> Thus, in integrating the “new story”, law would establish “the inherent rights of natural entities; that is, the rights of living beings to exist and not be abused or wantonly used or exterminated, whether directly or indirectly, by exploitive human processes” (Berry, 1990: 104).<sup>44</sup> Such a situation of enshrined rights for the natural world would mute humanity’s consideration of ecological entities as mere bounty or tools to be used and discarded. In this new biocratic reality, a return to the exploitive discourses in relation to the natural world, so common during the scientific-technical phase, “would be recognized as an inadequate or false perception, or even a criminal perception if made the basis of action” (Berry, 1990: 104).<sup>45</sup>

Driven by the same teleological targets, medicine in the ecological age “would envisage the earth as primary healer” (Berry, 1990: 104). Thus, the role of health professionals would be to help other people achieve their place of balance within the ecological world. Intercommunion would be sought for all humans “with the air and water and sunlight, with its nourishment and the opportunity it offers for the expression of human physical capabilities” (Berry, 1990: 104).

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<sup>43</sup> Interestingly, in *The Great Work*, Berry fashions a list of twelve 20<sup>th</sup> Century writers whom he feels should have a role in forming “the basic orientation of the contemporary university” (1999: 73). First on this list, which includes David Suzuki and Farley Mowat, is Aldo Leopold (Berry, 1999: 73).

<sup>44</sup> In *The Great Work*, Berry cites jurisprudence as an example of one subject area (along with economics and religion) where “[a]n integral presentation has not yet been given because of their commitment to the view that the nonhuman world is there fundamentally for the use of humans; whether economically, aesthetically, or spiritually. For this reason, the university may be one of the principal supports of the pathology that is ruinous to the planet” (1999: 76).

<sup>45</sup> As evidence of this authentically progressive social shift in the area of jurisprudence, Berry reads the “emergence of the Earth Charter as a basis for recognition of the comprehensive Earth community” (1999: 76). In Canadian terms, such a trend towards integrated legislation may eventually result in the extension of rights to the natural world under the framework of *Charter*-like legislation.

The world religions would follow suit by emphasizing the earth as a principal source in exposing the “revelation of the divine, as primary scripture [and] as the primary mode of numinous presence” (Berry, 1990: 104). In reference to his own faith tradition’s culpability in this regard, Berry asserts a need for the Christian religion, in particular, to “cease its antagonism towards the earth” and start discovering “the sacral quality” of this planet (1990: 104).<sup>46</sup>

Finally, the discipline of commerce would need to come to a realisation that “a base exploitation of the planet—the poisoning of the earth, air and water—cannot be justified as an acceptable mode of commercial or industrial activity” (Berry, 1990: 105). In light of the reformulation of religion presented above, such exploitation is the supreme denial of any sacral quality attributed to the earth. Berry also points out that these activities will ultimately be destructive to commerce and the humans that drive commercial systems as well (1990: 105).<sup>47</sup> A simple revision of bookkeeping will help solve these problems, whereby cost calculations are brought out of their current “fictional context” (1990: 105). In this suggested new context, displaying “some contact with reality”,<sup>48</sup> exploitive technologies would be measured by taking into account “the cost to the environment, the invaluable nature of irreplaceable resources, [and] the awareness of

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<sup>46</sup> The recent establishment of the Forum on Religion and Ecology, which emerged out of a three year conference series held at Harvard University, is cited by Berry as an example a movement in the right direction for the subject area of religion (1999: 76).

<sup>47</sup> As I sat writing these words in a hotel room, I literally had staring me in the face an example of an instance where good ecological practice also made good commercial sense. This example was in the form of an environmental strategy, which was pasted to my hotel door in notice form. This policy, rendered in four languages, cut down on unnecessary waste and encouraged guests to re-use linens and towels (see “Appendix C” for the English version). The overall effect of this is good for the hotel’s bottom line and represents a lower ecological footprint than might otherwise be made by a guest staying at the establishment.

<sup>48</sup> Berry sees the establishment of the Society for Ecological Economics by Herman Daly and Robert Costanza as an example of a significant movement toward biocratic principles within the area of commerce (1999: 76).



the need to integrate the entire industrial-commercial enterprise with the ever renewing cycle of the natural world” (Berry, 1990: 105).

The end goal of the reformulations of these subjects would be to provide a framework that establishes and demonstrates the viability of a biocratic process. Berry feels that a shift in the necessary direction to realise such a situation is already underway. When moved towards their completion, these processes will:

establish centres of human occupation in terms of biocultural regions, that is, identifiable geographical regions where the economic and cultural life of the human social group would be established in relation to the geological structure, the living forms, and the climatic conditions of a given place (Berry, 1990: 105).

To effect such a movement, the ethical categories upon which we base our actions as people will also have to shift. Hence, Berry’s sixth and final course would deal with the origin and identification of values. The stated goal of this course would be “to discover within our experience of the universe just what can be a foundation for values” (Berry, 1990: 105). Achieving this goal would involve a kind of recovery of past values; however, we obviously cannot simply import medieval ideas into the current context. Rather, this journey of discovery would need to be structured in a way that would identify three specific sets of values; namely, the importance of diversity, subjectivity and communion (Berry, 1990: 106).<sup>49</sup> These values would ultimately form the basis for the effective integration of the ideas fostered throughout Berry’s ecological curriculum. As a closing note to this chapter, it should be mentioned that Berry’s vision is not only different from the scientific approach to environmental education, it also diverges from

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<sup>49</sup> Orr sets a similar goal for his program of ecological literacy by citing the “larger purpose” of his program as the establishment “of a quality of mind that seeks out connections” (1992: 92).

many of the demands being placed on the education system today. In particular, Berry's plan for transformative education is integral in that it asks questions about planetary sustainability, which David Orr sees as conspicuously lacking in the imperative of the "industrial economic order [placed] on schools to prepare new learners to be competitive in the new global economic community" (1990: 52).

This is an important distinction, because it shows that concepts and plans for social transformation have dates. Ideas no longer emerge from a primordial soup—and they have not in human historical memory. People like Rosa Parks acted in history, as a result of historical events, such as her civil rights training and her desire for cultural change. Her thoughts and actions, along with the actions of Dr. Martin Luther King can be now read as an example of what was "going forward" (Lonergan, 1990: 189) from the middle of the last the last century. The alternative vision for the future of the United States of the 1950s, as represented by the segregationists, was proved faulty in its larger dimension. The struggle for social equality, however, was far from finished by the beginning of the 1970s. Yet, with the benefit of historic hindsight, we can now read the actions and thoughts of the civil rights movement as bringing the United States closer to where it "ought to be", given that it was a society founded on principles of equality. Certain events came together in the 1950s and 1960s to make such transformative actions possible.

In a similar way, I argue that we are at a crucial juncture in the history of humanity because of the ecological crisis. In this context, I offer Berry's writings and

suggestions for educational reform as an example of “what is going forward” (Lonergan, 2003, 189). I reach this conclusion as a knowing subject, based on the clues that I have assembled and described above. This is not a fancy of selection. Rather, it is an example of reading the signs of the times so that seekers of the best way forward can know how to steer their societies. That desire, one for a better future, is a sentiment that I consider inseparable from any educational project. If learning is to be truly beneficial, it must provide for a sustainable future. We cannot go on living in the manner we have as humans—everyone brought up to same high levels of consumption would be ruinous not only to the planet but also, as Berry demonstrated in his poem “A Child Needs a Universe”, to the very core of what it means to be human. To say things like: “multiculturalism is important to this school” or “biocratic principles ought to be reflected in curriculum”, is of course to make value-laden statements. However, if such statements are tested, against prejudice and error, in an authentic and systematic manner (such as the test of speculative concepts offered in Bernard Lonergan’s methodology) and the result comes back that they are, indeed, representative of “what is going forward” in our society, then there emerges a definitive historical point, in the here and now, where a human responsibility exists to not engage in a flight from understanding.

Here, I would speculate that Rosa Parks remained active in the educational sphere, with her institute for self-improvement, because her course on civil disobedience brought her towards action in a definitive way at a specific juncture in history, where she could no longer ignore the situation of herself and her people. Today, for the reasons stated above, I believe we have arrived at a similar juncture in history. Rosa Parks was,

right up until her death in October 2005, seeking equality for a community of people—that quest is representative of what was going forward in her time. This imperative has not disappeared but now the biocommunity needs seekers of equality. I have shown the potential of Berry’s thought to provide a basis for urgently-needed historical transformation of foundational educational philosophies. However, if this potential of a “new story” is to be realized, then the emerging cosmology will need to find praxis-based applications of its principles. The next chapter examines the possibilities for turning such biocratic insights into action.

## Chapter Seven: Genesis Farm, A Model Educational Community Tapping into a Tradition of Owenite Educational Praxis

Based on my reading of Lonergan, as presented in Chapter Four, I assert that Berry's ideas can be seen as growing out of "insight". As such, they hold the potential to be a "starting point for something in the way of new rules" (Lonergan, 1995: 250) upon which concrete functioning systems can come into being. In the spirit of bringing insight into action, one group of Dominican nuns in North-Western New Jersey have set up a model educational community based on Berry's vision. In their efforts, they are following a trend, which can be witnessed at differing points in history, of putting educational theories into practice.

In general, the act of putting theory into practice has come to be termed praxis. In its educational sense, praxis can be traced back to the founding father of the theoretical tradition in learning, Plato. In his Athenian Academy, Plato tried to put aspects of his educational philosophy into practice. However, this school was unable to move Plato's society to establish his utopia.

In the history of educational ideas, there is an interesting example of the attempt of another group, given the label "utopian socialists", to fashion a better way of living within the framework of what Berry has termed the scientific-technological phase of human development—the Owenites. At New Lanark, Scotland, and at New Harmony, Indiana, Robert Owen and his followers established communities formed around Owen's

philosophy. In line with Berry's analysis of consciousness shifts over time, these communities could be classified as efforts to bring ethical considerations of the religious/humanist type into the mainstream scientific-industrial discourse. In these attempts, the Owenites were eventually successful.

This chapter begins with the Owenite example as a praxis-based model through which biocratic education can influence majority thought in the West. I begin by tracing Owen's efforts to mitigate the harsher effects of the industrial revolution, arguing that his labours represent an historical precedent for authentically progressive value-based education successfully exerting influence on the prevailing social discourse. Owen's praxis-based model is then compared to the efforts undertaken by the Dominican learning community of North-Western New Jersey in order to move Berry's ideas from abstraction to reality.

Robert Owen was born in Newtown, Wales in 1771. He began attending the local school as a young child, but at the age of ten moved to North-East England to work in the emerging factory system. Owen made his way through the ranks at various establishments and eventually became manager of a spinning factory in Manchester. In 1799, he married Anne Caroline Dale, whose father, David Dale, owned the factory town of New Lanark, Scotland. In 1800, with the financial backing of several Manchester business people, Owen raised enough funds to purchase the town of New Lanark from Dale. By 1814, with the aid of London-based philanthropists, Owen had gained a

controlling interest in the town and was then able implement his plans for social organisation without the resistance he had initially felt from his Manchester partners.

From 1800 onwards Owen read a great deal on the plight of the poor in the then emerging industrial age. During the same period, he also encountered new continental philosophies concerning education, most notably the work of Johann Pestalozzi. Building on the insights generated from his readings, Owen sought to use his owner status to lessen the harsher effects of the industrial age on the citizens under his charge. Education was to be a chief means of achieving this goal. Indeed, with the resistance of his initial set of investors left behind, one of Owen's first acts after gaining controlling interest in New Lanark was to open (on New Year's Day, 1816) a long-planned Institute of Education. Prior to 1816, Owen's philosophy of education and worldview had already been maturing. In order to attract sympathetic investors, Owen had written treatises that set out his vision for the future and his critique of the industrial age. He was adamant that prevailing commercial practices of his time were flawed. Of particular concern to Owen, were the changing modes of socialization that marked the spread of the industrial world:

[t]he manufacturing system has already so far extended its influence over the British Empire, as to effect an essential change in the general character of the mass of the people. This alteration is still in rapid progress; and ere long, the comparatively happy simplicity of the agricultural peasant will be wholly lost amongst us. It is even now scarcely anywhere to be found without a mixture of those habits which are the offspring of trade, manufactures, and commerce (Owen, 1815: 1).

It follows that, like Berry in our day, Owen was concerned with an essential recovery; in his case one that would adequately deal with the problem emerging from the unrestrained principle of "buy cheap and sell dear", which he saw as destructive force in

relation to human honesty and happiness (Owen, 1815: 2). This vision was “utopian” in the sense that Owen was able to imagine a future of harmony and equality that would foster good character in all areas of human interactions, including commerce. He explained this vision to the citizenry of new Lanark at the opening of the institute:

[w]hat ideas individuals may attach to the term "Millennium" I know not; but I know that society may be formed so as to exist without crime, without poverty, with health greatly improved, with little, if any misery, and with intelligence and happiness increased a hundredfold; and no obstacle whatsoever intervenes at this moment except ignorance to prevent such a state of society from becoming universal (Owen, 1815: 1).

Education was Owen’s chief tool for overcoming such ignorance. Learning at New Lanark was marked by several key principles. Building on the tradition of Presbyterian parish schools in Scotland, literacy in this context was meant to foster moral living (McLaren: 6). Important for Owen’s educational efforts was his restructuring of the work regime at New Lanark. Rather than having children work long hours under exacting and harsh conditions, Owen reduced the working day at New Lanark to ten and three quarter hours (less meal breaks) and did not take any children under the age of ten into his mills. This cut in working hours and Owen’s policy on child labour were key features in allowing for New Lanark’s educational achievements. For, at the dawn of the industrial age, in most other mill towns and industrial cities, the long hours that the majority of children and adults had to work severely hampered any educational efforts (hence, the genesis of Sunday School). At New Lanark, children under the age of ten were required to go school full-time and all other residents were offered classes and lectures at night. At most other places, only the rich could afford to attend the emerging educational institutions. In Owen’s settlement workers and their children were granted education as a benefit.



Another important characteristic of New Lanark's Institute of Education was the lack of harshness and corporal punishment employed by the teachers. Education was child-centred and attempted to build upon themes of interest to the children. To peak children's interest, teachers kept the lessons short and used pictures, maps and other visual aids (including live animals). After Owen implemented his cut in working hours, attendance at these lectures rose significantly. Realising the opportunity before them, both children and their parents made a special effort to use the part of their day not spent working as learning time.

New Lanark not only provided education to its inhabitants, but also functioned as an example to the outside world. Owen made every effort to publicize his efforts. Soon, he was attracting the attention of the social establishment, who came in large numbers to see New Lanark in operation. Given the current social welfare state and social philosophy held dear by most Canadians, it is difficult to grasp just how revolutionary Owen's project was in his time. It was not revolutionary in the sense that it sought to overthrow the prevailing system (as Marxist ideology would later), but it was remarkable both for working within the existing system and at the same time being so different from the rest of the industrial experience. By April 1816, the fame of New Lanark was such that Owen was brought before Robert Peel's House of Commons committee at Westminster to explain his project. The questions asked of him were varied but one particular line of questioning, concerning education, summarizes the manner in which his teleological path was diverging from the dominant discourse:

Question: At what age to [sic] take children into your mills?

Robert Owen: At ten and upwards.

Question: Why do you not employ children at an earlier age?

Robert Owen: Because I consider it to be injurious to the children, and not beneficial to the proprietors.

Question: What reasons have you to suppose it is injurious to the children to be employed at an earlier age?

Robert Owen: Seventeen years ago, a number of individuals, with myself, purchased the New Lanark establishment from Mr. Dale. I found that there were 500 children, who had been taken from poor-houses, chiefly in Edinburgh, and those children were generally from the age of five and six, to seven to eight. The hours at that time were thirteen. Although these children were well fed their limbs were very generally deformed, their growth was stunted, and although one of the best schoolmasters was engaged to instruct these children regularly every night, in general they made very slow progress, even in learning the common alphabet. I came to the conclusion that the children were injured by being taken into the mills at this early age, and employed for so many hours; therefore, as soon as I had it in my power, I adopted regulations to put an end to a system which appeared to me to be so injurious.

Question: Do you give instruction to any part of your population?

Robert Owen: Yes. To the children from three years old upwards, and to every other part of the population that choose to receive it.

Question: If you do not employ children under ten, what would you do with them?

Robert Owen: Instruct them, and give them exercise.

Question: Would not there be a danger of their acquiring, by that time, vicious habits, for want of regular occupation.

Robert Owen: My own experiences leads me to say, that I found quite the reverse, that their habits have been good in proportion to the extent of their instruction (Owen, 1816(b): 2-4).

However, despite successes such as this appearance before Robert Peel's committee, and visits of continental royalty to New Lanark, Owen grew frustrated with the level of social improvement he was able to bring about in Britain. In 1825, upon hearing of a town for sale in Indiana (USA), Owen purchased that settlement, so as to set up a model community in the Americas. His son, Robert Dale Owen, who had also

studied continental educational philosophies, was put in charge of the settlement, which the Owens renamed New Harmony.

By 1827, Robert Owen had sold his share in New Lanark and the rest of his family had moved to New Harmony. Owen, himself, stayed in Britain and continued to advocate for his vision of reform. Much to Owen's disappointment, New Harmony failed in 1828. His attempt to establish another Owenite community, at East Tytherly in Hampshire, was also unsuccessful.

Over the next decade, Owen played an important role in establishing the Grand National Consolidated Trade Union (1834) and the Association of All Classes and All Nations (1835). He died in 1858, unrelenting in his efforts to bring about authentically progressive social reform till his last days.<sup>50</sup>

Contemporary critics and later Marxist commentators cited Robert Owen's failure to liberate the workers under his charge as a major deficiency in his approach. These critics pointed out that Owen himself had profited from the industrial age, and continued to profit from it, even while applying his ideals. Owen always granted his reforms to the workers in his towns in a "top-down" manner; working out of a type of benevolent/philanthropist tradition. As such, the workers were not able to control the infrastructure (or in Marxist terms, the means of production) in the Owenite communities. Without the reality of self-determination that ownership would have engendered, the

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<sup>50</sup> A comprehensive description of Robert Owen's life is available in Frank Podmore's work, *Robert Owen: A Biography*. Podmore traces Owen's entire life story in two detailed volumes.

well-being of community members' remained contingent on Owen's continued good will. For such detractors, these criticisms tinged the Owenite framework.<sup>51</sup>

Even granting the validity of such critiques, Robert Owen still holds a place of high esteem in the minds and hearts of many democratic socialists. Additionally, he is considered to be the founder of an authentically progressive philosophy of education, which sees its expression in mandatory school laws, anti-child labour legislation and the principle of education as a basic human right. His involvement as a founding member of the cooperative movement<sup>52</sup> is also often cited as a prime example of why Owenite thought is also viewed as a model of how authentically progressive social principles can be applied from within existing systems, rather than by promoting physically violent revolution.

Today, the religious community of Genesis Farm, near Blairstown, New Jersey, is fashioning a model educational community in the Owenite fashion. There, Dominican nuns are creating a micro-level society based upon of Thomas Berry's vision. Their praxis-engaged project is only one of many such agricultural ventures undertaken by religious communities to provide models of sustainable ways of being in reaction to the ecological crisis (Splain: 1).

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<sup>51</sup> An excellent collection of contemporary critiques of Robert Owen is found in A.L. Morton's book, *The Life and Ideas of Robert Owen*. In the concluding chapter, Morton assembles the thoughts of seven socialists on Owen's philosophies and work. Included among these seven commentators are William Lovett and Karl Marx's benefactor, Frederick Engels (177-184).

<sup>52</sup> In fact, it was through this involvement that I had my first opportunity to read about Owen, which came in the form of a brochure given to my father when he joined Manitoba's Red River Co-Op in 1999.

Like Robert Owen, the sisters acquired an existing location and sought to modify it in order to challenge mass society. In the Dominicans' case, this took the form of a donation, bequeathed by the previous owners of a 140-acre farm in North-Western New Jersey. Upon receiving the gift of land and buildings, in 1980, the sisters renamed the settlement "Genesis Farm". The key feature of this re-christening was the sisters' vow to use the property "as a new expression of their traditional work in education" (DSOB: 2). Impressed by their efforts and to support the Dominicans' work, in 1998, a neighbouring farmstead owner donated an additional 86 acres of real estate, which included a pond. Currently, both properties have been put into conservation. In line with Berry's suggestions for a curriculum, programming at the farm is mitigated by biocratic considerations.

Building on Berry's ideal of post-secondary education, the sisters administer a graduate-level Certificate Program in Earth Literacy. Graduate qualifications and credit are earned through St. Thomas University of Florida. Credit may also be applied towards Masters degree programs at St. Mary of the Woods University (Indiana), The Sophia Center (Holy Names College, Oakland, California) and Drew University (Madison, New Jersey). Moreover, students can receive undergraduate credit for the program through Sussex County Community College (Newton, New Jersey). Additionally, individuals seeking to deepen their understanding of the human relationship with the ecological world may enrol in the program, without pursuing university credits.

The stated goal of the program is to “provide a variety of learning experiences, many of which are hands-on ways for people to make practical changes that will bring them into a closer relationship with nature and into a more deeply satisfying inner fulfillment” (DSOB: 3). Graduate courses given in the program are residential at the farm and provide both theoretical frameworks and practical application strategies to overcome the ecological crisis. Undergraduate courses are also offered within a residential framework. A resource library supports both sets of courses. This library contains resources on natural history, in general, along with in-depth primary documents, cards, cassettes, maps and books that chart the ecological story of the northern New Jersey bioregion. Resources in the library are made available not only to program participants, but also to the local community (DSOB: 3).

In addition to graduate and undergraduate courses, the centre offers educational programs that are not available for academic credit. Amongst offerings in this category are courses for local community members that explain Berry’s cosmology and special residential seminars for educators. Other non-credit programs take place in a teaching kitchen, where students learn ecologically sustainable food preparation techniques. An example of such a program is a cooking class dealing with the preparation of natural foods.

Around the theme of food production, the centre supports two programs: a community biodynamic garden and the Foodshed Alliance of the Ridge and Valley. The biodynamic garden is located on Genesis Farm. It currently has over 200 shareholders.

The economic capital generated from their investment is used to fund the planting and growing of organic crops. All efforts are made to use human labour where possible and no synthetic pesticides or chemicals are used on the farm. The produce is redistributed to the shareholders at harvest time. In line with Leopold's recommendation for a new relationship with the land, the sisters consider the work done in the biodynamic garden, to be marked by "a deep spiritual commitment and love" (DSOB: 4).

The Foodshed Alliance of the Ridge and Valley can be read as engaging in a project that supports Berry's assertion that agricultural production, in line with past practice, needs to move towards becoming centred around bioregions. With the stated goal of connecting the community to its local food source, the group represents a "grassroots effort to sustain the farmers, agricultural lands, and rural way of life in the Ridge and Valley area of Northwestern New Jersey" (DSOB: 4). Another goal of the Foodshed Alliance is "to enable farmers to make a viable living and stay on the land" (DSOB: 4).

Additionally, the sisters offer youth and childhood educational programs such as summer camps. Students in these programs are taught basic concepts of both natural and ecological history in the setting of the farm. The hope of these programs is to foster a respect and a sense of wonder for the ecological (recall here Berry's poem, *It Takes a Universe*). For instance, one children's camp offered during the summer of 2004 was entitled "At Home in the Stars". The camp was two weeks long and geared towards children five to twelve years of age. Children at the camp were exposed to the wonders of

the world by being “immersed in the story of the universe: galaxies, stars, sun, earth, water, air, plants, animals” (DSOB: 5). Pedagogical programming that same summer also included the use of arts and crafts, narrative, song, dance and outdoor adventures (DSOB: 5). In all these efforts, the Dominican sisters and their supporters hope to be more successful than the Owenites in the long term.

If Berry’s cosmology is correct, and we are indeed shifting into a new basic phase, then Genesis Farm will surely achieve success. For, if we humans chose to be wiser than Burroughs’ potato bug and use our faculties to divert our course away from self-destruction, then in Blairstown, New Jersey, we now have a sustainable model of the “new story” in action. This community offers, along with Berry’s core curriculum, a starting point in forming a foundational philosophy of education for the ecological age.



## Conclusion

The very fact we are able to discern some philosophically foundational building blocks in the combination of Berry's core curriculum and the work being done at Genesis farm offers us further insight into the remarkable character of human knowing. From this deduction and other insights arising from the wider context of our cultural development, we can discern a path that education can follow in order to begin to effect necessary and authentically progressive social change. As our Western culture has matured, we have moved through a variable intellectual journey in a geologically very short period of two and one half millennia.

Writing on the shores of the Aegean in 5<sup>th</sup> century B.C.E. Athens, Plato, gave us a first vision of the "ideal" education system. His guardians were to be nurtured within a closed system, one that feared and excluded diverse expressions and opposing information. This "ideal" was the mainstay of Western philosophy and educational thought until modern times. Today, with the benefit of over two millennia of accumulating insights, we have updated his classical conclusions in most of Canada to the point that his simple system has been displaced by a democratic ideal which fosters multiculturalism and a diversity of expression. Inspired by the thought of Bernard Lonergan, in this thesis, I traced and offered an explanation for this change from a particular point of view on social and community change.

That very process of tracing and review led to a Lonergan-styled intellectual conversion in myself. As Lonergan's explains:

One can find out for oneself and in oneself just what one's conscious and intentional operations are and how they are related to one another. One can discover for oneself and in oneself why it is that performing such and such operations in such and such manners constitutes human knowing. Once one has achieved that, one is not longer dependent on someone else in selecting one's method and in carrying it out. One is on one's own (2003: 344).

It follows that cognisance of myself as a knower led me to update my personal thinking and conclude that the direction for reform represented in the thought of Thomas Berry ought to be included within cultural, and by extension, educational, practice. Such inclusion would allow the teleological process of expanding moral categories to follow its course, providing for both a sustainable and diverse future. Further, this target can be viewed as philosophically and morally objective (*i.e.*, virtually unconditioned), as can be seen through the application of Lonergan's test of speculative concepts. Hence, it is with every confidence that I propose the praxis-based model established by the Dominican sisters in rural New Jersey as an excellent one for the Western world to adopt, adapt and follow in terms of its educational practice.

There is another interesting implication of the argument I have presented in this thesis. If I am correct, and multiculturalism is transitory and any new movement toward authentic social progress ought to be towards a biocratic embrace of the ecological, then it follows that a subsequent movement in this process will be toward the universe in all its complex multiplicity. In that phase, education will need to find ways to incorporate the universe in its entirety, including currently unknown and diverse forms of life and their corresponding modes of existence. These life-forms could be divergent in terms of size and dimension, not to mention culture, far beyond imaginations of even contemporary science fiction writers. Ponder, for instance, what a school curriculum that at once necessitated an inter-dimensional and cross-cultural approach would involve.

For now, however, all I can reasonably conclude and suggest is that the current paradigm shift (mandated by the ecological crisis) requires a movement beyond the supreme expression of democratic principles founded on the multicultural ideal if we, as humans, will ever be able to transcend the fate of Burroughs' potato bug and avoid being the cause of our own extinction. The life forms and systems, which sustain human beings both physically and aesthetically, are now in perilous danger of being wiped from this planet. Such a state of affairs is deplorable given the evolutionary fact of "where we came from" and our very human ability to image the future. Because of these factors, we have a responsibility to both maintain a state of high biodiversity and to foster the continuation of the evolutionary process from which humans emerged. As Leopold suggests, if we *homo sapiens* are to show ourselves worthy of any special cosmic value, we must now reformulate our being to avoid our own tendencies towards self-destruction and the accompanying decimation of diversity.

This is not to say that efforts should be spared to foster human understanding and social equality. Rather, I suggest that those goals should only be viewed as necessarily transitory, and not end points, in the process of ever expanding moral categories. That dichotomy accepted, decisions and policies fashioned to achieve human unity and solidarity would always be constituted mindful of the need for unity in a larger context. Authentic insight mandates a consideration of the larger context precisely because "flight from understanding", in regards to the ecological crisis, will have terminal implications for biodiversity and eventually, quite possibly, for our very selves.

Even if *homo sapiens* somehow survive the ecological rupture, we will have lost a significant existential reference point for our humanity without the natural world. It follows that, what is needed today is a movement from democracy to biocracy. This movement will be affected by the emergence of a biocultural system, supported by a set of insights into the importance of the universe and resting on the axiom that everyone, everything and a framework for a sustainable future ought to be included in our decision making processes. The human educational project, due to its intrinsically future-oriented nature, will be a key forum for both permitting and fostering this transition. Granting this point, the goals of education for this new millennium, regardless of subject, would reflect not only multicultural objectives but also biocultural-integrative goals. As Berry has shown, history is my witness for this statement. Further, Leopold's framework strongly suggests that it is by history that we humans shall be judged. It follows that a failure to integrate the "new story" into foundational educational philosophies for the new millennium will be a failure of the "human" in every sense of the word. Human knowing, as conceived by Lonergan, mandates such integration.

The question that remains is whether educators will engage in this effort to provide an authentically human response to the ecological crisis. If Berry is correct and a child needs a universe and the college student must understand the multi-layered implication of the "new story", then educators cannot but integrate biocratic principles into their work. Through these means, this integral change becomes the teaching profession's human responsibility in relation to a sustainable, biocultural future.

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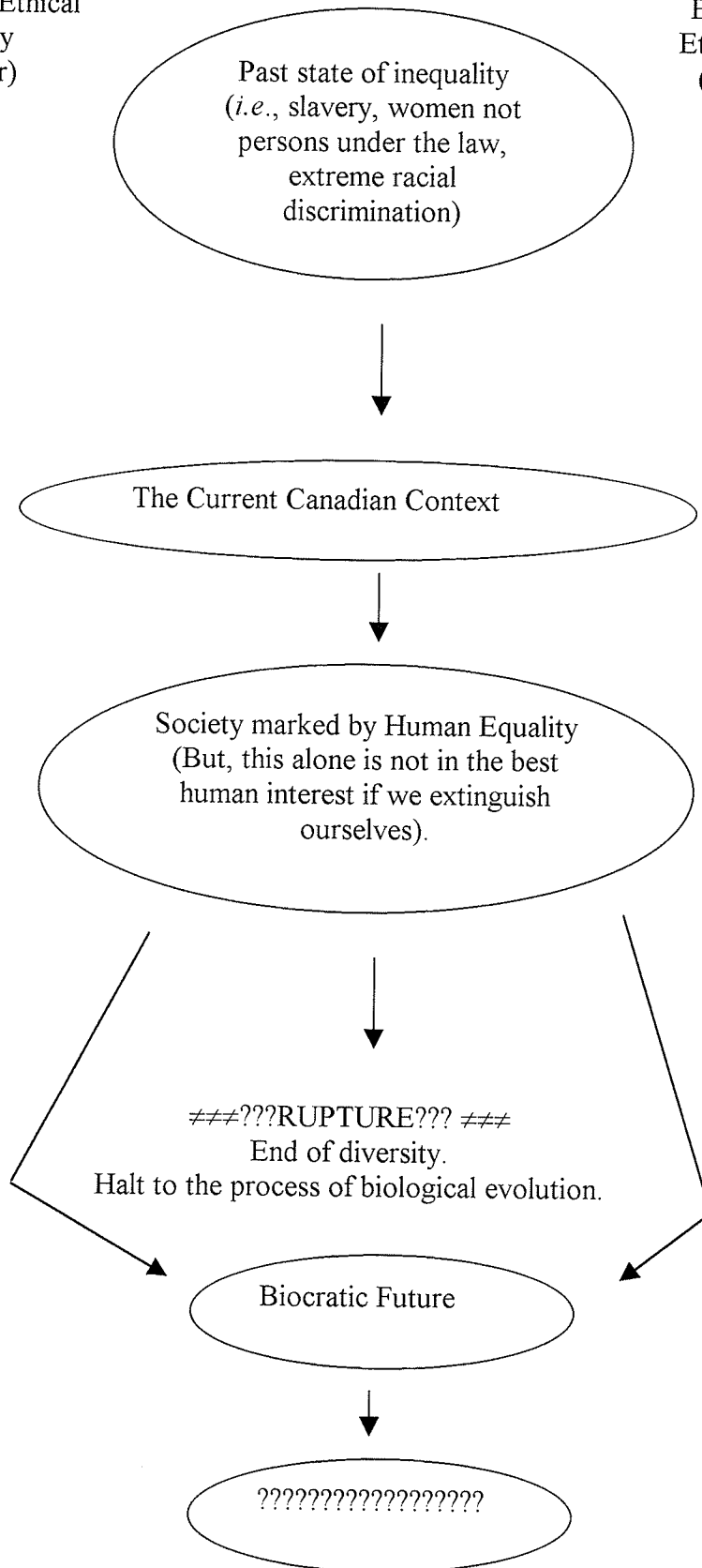
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## Appendix A: Chart Depicting Argument

Increasing Ethical  
Authenticity  
(Not Linear)

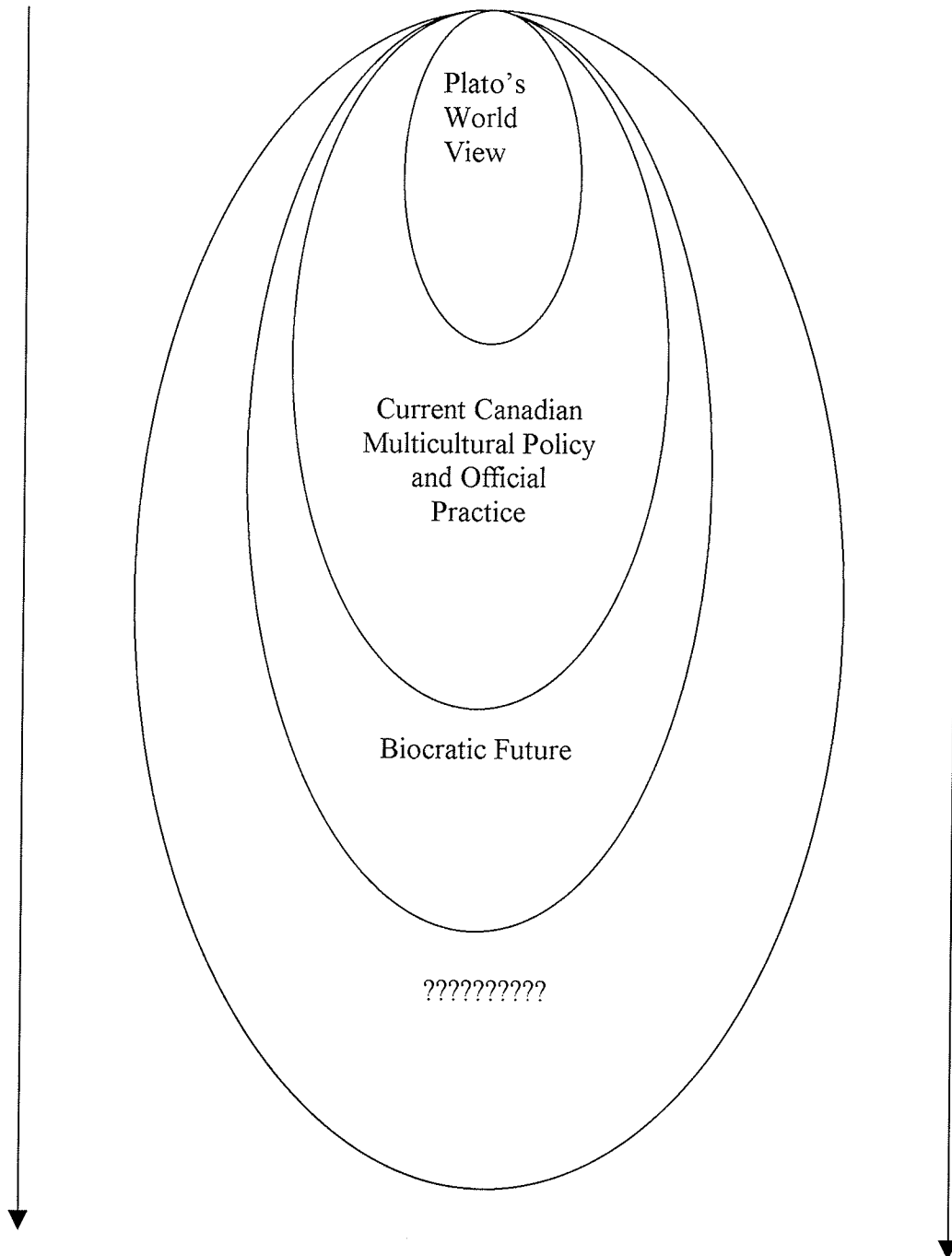
Expansion of  
Ethical Criteria  
(Not Linear)



## Appendix B: Alternate Diagram of the Argument

Increasing Ethical  
Authenticity  
(Not Linear)

Expansion of  
Ethical Criteria  
(Not Linear)



## Appendix C: "Preserving the Environment"

[as pasted to the hotel room door at the Crowne Plaza: Toronto Don Valley,  
December 04, 2004]

### Preserving the Environment

#### **TO PROTECT OUR LOCAL ENVIROMENT WE ARE:**

- Recycling paper, aluminium, cardboard and other materials where possible.
- Looking for opportunities to buy products from environmentally friendly suppliers.
- Providing smoke-free guest rooms and dinning in our restaurants.
- Changing linens every three day – or upon request – for guests staying multiple nights.
- Changing towels upon request.
- Reusing towels helps the environment by allowing the hotel to eliminate the disposal of thousands of gallons of detergent and water each year.

**If you would like to reuse your towels, please hang them on the towel rack. If not, please leave them in the bathtub and we will change them for you.**

We are a hotel that recognizes and accepts our environmental responsibilities. We have joined hotels across the nation in an effort to conserve our natural resources and preserve our planet.

*Thank you for your assisting us to preserve the environment*