

Unity in diversity analysis narrative



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The political and social climate that prevails in the world today emphasises difference, disunity, and destruction rather than the qualities of unity and productive and constructive energy that are required to sustain human societies. These negative processes and forces have perpetuated our alienation from the basic material roots of our existence, the natural world of which we are a part. The use of the phrase unity in diversity and similar concepts is not a new phenomenon. Its roots reach back hundreds of years in non-western cultures such as indigenous peoples in North

America and Taoist societies in 400-500B. C. In premodern Western culture it has been implicit in the organic conceptions of the universe that have been manifest since the ancient Greek and Roman civilisations through medieval Europe and into the Romantic era. In contemporary times, sociologists and the academics have the following articulations of the above concept : Unity in diversity is the highest possible attainment of a civilisation, a testimony to the most noble possibilities of the human race. This attainment is made possible through passionate concern for choice, in an atmosphere of social trust. [1] We live in a world filled with a wondrous diversity of experiences, opinions, physical appearance, cultures, religion, etc. One of the challenges of this age is not only to find a way to live in harmony with people who differ from us, but to celebrate the diversity and learn from it. We can only learn a limited amount from those who are like us but there is a fortune of new knowledge to be gained from those who have a different perspective to our own. ‘ Abdu’l-Bahá in Paris Talks says : “ Differences which are only those of blood also cause them to destroy and kill one another.

Alas! that this should still be so. Let us look rather at the beauty in diversity, the beauty of harmony, and learn a lesson from the vegetable creation. If you beheld a garden in which all the plants were the same as to form, colour and perfume, it would not seem beautiful to you at all, but, rather, monotonous and dull. The garden which is pleasing to the eye and which makes the heart glad, is the garden in which are growing side by side flowers of every hue, form and perfume, and the Joyous contrast of colour is what makes for charm and beauty. So is it with trees.

An orchard full of fruit trees is a delight; so is a plantation planted with many species of shrubs. It is just the diversity and variety that constitutes its charm; each flower, each tree, each fruit, beside being beautiful in itself, brings out by contrast the qualities of the others, and shows to advantage the special loveliness of each and all “. [4] However, the most profound use of the concept has developed over the last 150 years as an integral aspect of an ecological understanding of the world and, to that end, it appears most frequently now in literature promoting that vision.

The ecological context of the concept is based on the scientifically derived knowledge that biological diversity is necessary to sustain the healthy existence of ecosystems and that the healthy progress of the planet is dependent on a diversity of such ecosystems. Natural scientists and environmentalists lament the loss of species that will never be discovered because the environments in which they live are being destroyed by massive transformations such as deliberate burning of rain forests to release more changes result in unforeseen consequences such as the extinction of some species.

The long-term consequences of the escalating loss of species diversity is unknown at this time. Efforts are underway at all scales of human endeavour to deal with the problem, the most recent global event being the drafting of the Biodiversity Convention at the Earth Summit. The concept could also find expression in current attempts by Natives in North America to acquire self-governance, drawing on their common experience since European settlement and the diverse expressions of their cultural traditions to provide richness in a new social environment.

Murray Bookchin has articulated one of the central aims of radical ecology as a social force in contemporary society: . one of the tasks of the radical ecology movement is to articulate a general human interest that transcends the real but particularistic interests of class, nationality, ethnicity, and gender in order to build alliances to reconstruct our communities along more humane and ecological lines. Yet we need to be wary of talking too glibly about the general human interest.

Multiculturalism must mean more than mistaking the currently dominant culture as the universal and expecting other people to adopt the perspective of this dominant culture. [2] Unity without Uniformity- a Bahá'í approach The keynote of the Bahá'í approach to social organisation is not uniformity, but unity in diversity. Central to the Bahá'í Faith is a system of teachings and institutions that assure freedom of individual opinion, that protect individual rights irrespective of race, colour, religion, nationality, class or attitude toward the Faith, and that encourage the full participation of minorities in the life of the Bahá'í Community.

In the words of Bahá'u'lláh: " There can be no doubt whatever that the peoples of the world, of whatever race or religion, derive their inspiration from one heavenly Source, and are the subjects of one God. "[3] Multicultural events provide opportunities for members of different communities to learn more about each other, thus fostering increased awareness and understanding of the diversity within the human community. Indeed, in every society many forms of diversity are embraced.

It is useful, therefore, to distinguish between differences that make one minority needful of particular attention to ensure the actualization of their human rights and differences that engender no particular concern. As a matter of fact, the increased visibility and promotion of cultural diversity has been accompanied by stronger feelings of attachment to ethnic roots. Each person, in order to retain those attributes we recognise as human, must live in relation to others, within a social context, a culture which gives meaning to individual existence.

The heightened awareness of and sensitivity to the ecological factors of the human- environment relationship reveal the need to broaden our concept of territory beyond the politically created boundaries that currently denote the international social and economic climate. By adopting scales of attention that reflect the bio- and geophysical factors that shape the earth, human beings will recapture their connection with their natural roots.

By learning more about their local environment sensitivity to and understanding of the immediate factors that influence their lives but also heighten their sense of interdependence with the global community of which

we are all an integral part. The diversity of ecosystems across the planet is the physical foundation for the diversity of cultural groups that have evolved in those regions throughout human history. Increased knowledge of those groups will also enlighten our awareness of the interconnections between human and nonhuman nature. " Thus should it be among the children of men!

The diversity in the human family should be the cause of love and harmony, as it is in music where many different notes blend together in the making of a perfect chord. If you meet those of different race and colour from yourself, do not mistrust them and withdraw yourself into your shell of conventionality, but rather be glad and show them kindness. Think of them as different coloured roses growing in the beautiful garden of humanity, and rejoice to be among them. Likewise, when you meet those whose opinions differ from your own, do not turn away your face from them.

All are seeking truth, and there are many roads leading thereto. Truth has many aspects, but it remains always and forever one. Do not allow difference of opinion, or diversity of thought to separate you from your fellow- men, or to be the cause of dispute, hatred and strife in your hearts. Rather, search diligently for the truth and make all men your friends. Every edifice is made of many different stones, yet each depends on the other to such an extent that if one were displaced the whole building would suffer; if one is faulty the structure is imperfect “.

Bahá'u'lláh has drawn the circle of unity, He has made a design for the uniting of all the peoples, and for the gathering of them all under the shelter

of the tent of universal unity. This is the work of the Divine Bounty, and we must all strive with heart and soul until we have the reality of unity in our midst, and as we work, so will strength be given unto us. Leave all thought of self, and strive only to be obedient and submissive to the Will of God. In this way only shall we become citizens of the Kingdom of God, and attain unto life everlasting. [5-10]