**National Cultures and Multiculturalism: cultural policy and policy of identity.**

In the mid-20th century, one of humanity’s worst periods, politics were about what we could become. Two collectivist ideologies about destiny claimed to be scientific. Marxism-Leninism was based on inevitable, universal laws of class development and conflict; Nazi-Fascism proclaimed inevitable laws of racial and biological development for one race alone.

Today, we think less about what we could all become. Instead, we worry more about how to live together as individuals in community. The whole world is on the move, migrating and hoping. The rich world, above all Europe and North America, faces the rising determination of a hundred latecomer nations who were once silent under the blanket of colonialism and backwardness.

How do we learn to live together, and at three levels: in an international system, in individual nation-states, and – most immediately and intimately – in western cities which are increasingly the home and the goal of migrants from those “delayed” parts of the world?

The rich world’s current answer to this question is multiculturalism. That is why the main purpose of this essay is to define this term and to outline pluses of this ideology.

Multiculturalism relates to communities containing multiple cultures. The term is used in two broad ways, either descriptively or normatively. As a descriptive term, it usually refers to the simple fact of cultural diversity: it is generally applied to the demographic make-up of a specific place, sometimes at the organizational level, e.g., schools, businesses, neighborhoods, cities, or nations.

As a normative term, it refers to ideologies or policies that promote this diversity or its institutionalization; in this sense, multiculturalism is a society at ease with the rich tapestry of human life and the desire amongst people to express their own identity in the manner they see fit. Such ideologies or policies vary widely, including country to country, ranging from the advocacy of equal respect to the various cultures in a society, to a policy of promoting the maintenance of cultural diversity, to policies in which people of various ethnic and religious groups are addressed by the authorities as defined by the group they belong to. However, two main different and seemingly inconsistent strategies have developed through different government policies and strategies: The first focuses on interaction and communication between different cultures. Interactions of cultures provide opportunities for the cultural differences to communicate and interact to create multiculturalism. This approach is also often known as interculturalism. The second centers on diversity and cultural uniqueness. Cultural isolation can protect the uniqueness of the local culture of a nation or area and also contribute to global cultural diversity. A common aspect of many policies following the second approach is that they avoid presenting any specific ethnic, religious, or cultural community values as central.

Multiculturalism is often contrasted with the concepts of assimilationism and has been described as a "salad bowl" or "cultural mosaic" rather than a "melting pot".

As mass communication and transport continue to grow, societies are becoming more and more alike leading to a phenomenon known as globalization. Some people fear that globalization will inevitably lead to the total loss of cultural identity.

Globalization means that in some ways people around the world are becoming more and more similar. We often eat the same food, watch the same TV programmes, listen to the same music and we wear the same clothes. Some of this at least can be blamed on the spread of multinational brands available all over the world.

In most countries multinational companies and their products are becoming more and more important.

Multinational companies nowadays find it easy both to market their products all over the world and set up factories wherever they find it convenient.

Defenders of multinational companies often point out that they provide employment. Although this is undoubtedly true, it also means that we have become more dependent on them, which in turn makes us more vulnerable to their decisions. When, for example, a multinational company decides to move its production facilities to another country, this has an adverse effect on its workers who lose their jobs.

Another source of a harmful affect is their products. Supporters of globalization would argue that multinational companies make high-quality goods available to more people. While this may be true to some extent, it also means that we have less choice of products to buy. When powerful multinational companies invade local markets with their goods, they often force local companies with fewer resources to go out of business. In consequence, we are obliged to buy multinational products whether we like them or not.

It is sometimes said that globalization are making societies more open. This may be true. However, I would argue that as a result the human race is losing its cultural diversity. If we consumed different products, societies all over the world be more varied. This can be seen buy identical products wherever we live.

On the surface it may appear as if the global diversity of cultural identities is being lost. If people in Tokyo and Moscow look and dress the same, then that must means that differences are disappearing.

Cultural Identity is built on far more than just the films we watch or jeans we wear. The foundation of cultural identity is shared values. When you look in detail at different cultures you realized that the things that are more important to one culture can be very different from the things valued by another culture.

For example, try to compare very different cultures as Japan and India. Japan is a culture which places a lot of value on hard work and that people often work very long hours. The Indian people in contrast greatly value their leisure time and strive to spend as much time with their family as they can. Even if we consume the same products, I am sure that there are still some very deep-rooted differences.

Despite all advantages and disadvantages of globalization, I do not accept that that total loss of cultural identity is inevitable. Even with all the influence of large companies and their products around the globe. Also, I believe that if people as voters pressured their governments to make multinational companies more responsible, to protect local producers from outside competition and to promote the ideas of multiculturalism, they could have the benefits of globalization without its drawbacks.

To summarize, I would like to emphasize that multiculturalism is seen by its supporters as a fairer system that allows people to truly express who they are within a society, that is more tolerant and that adapts better to social issues. They argue that culture is not one definable thing based on one race or religion, but rather the result of multiple factors that change as the world changes.