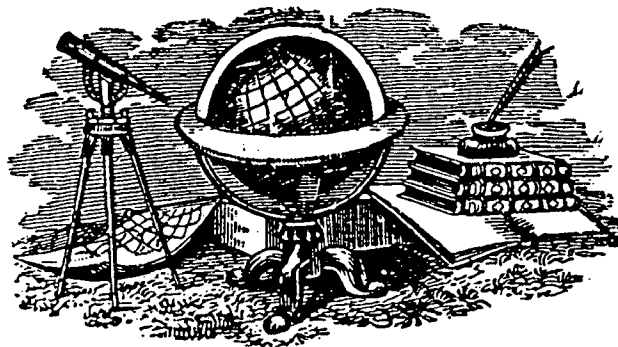


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CANADIAN PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICE TO A MULTICULTURAL SOCIETY: AN AMERICAN PRAISES CANADIAN DISTINCTIVENESS

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The well-worn aphorism from the constitution of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization states that 'since wars begin in the minds of men, it is in the minds of men that the defenses of peace must be constructed.' As we reach the end of the twentieth century, another force can be seen at work to defeat war, namely the construction of hundreds of thousands of new communities — communities of persons, communities of nations, and in many senses, new international communities. The chief architect of this force in our society has been the immigrant, migrant, refugee, displaced person — all names for the individual who sought a new home in a strange country, and on arrival, was faced with the task of adapting to a new community.

This eloquent paean to the immigrant appeared in H.C. Campbell's provocative essay on worldwide immigration and its relationship to public library services.¹ In his essay, Campbell, a Canadian librarian, aptly characterized the immigrant as the building block of a new community. Later, in the same essay, he described this new community as "the pluralistic society, the society pledged to share common objectives and to respect differences."² Should an American librarian and a Canadian librarian simultaneously read Campbell's definition of the pluralistic society, the former would recognize the United States, while the latter would most assuredly recognize Canada.

Canada and the United States are, indeed, remarkably similar nations. Both have been shaped by over four centuries of immigration; both are defenders of democratic ideals and pluralistic values. There are differences, of course, differences as subtle as similarities are obvious. The approaches to the assimilation of the immigrant in each country, for example, represent different, equally justifiable, means of achieving a shared ideal, the pluralistic society, where foreign-born citizens participate as fully as the native-born in the political, social, and

¹ H.C. Campbell, "Worldwide Immigration and Its Relation to Library Services," *Library Trends* 29 (Fall 1980): 207.

² *Ibid.*, 208.

cultural life of the country.

In the United States, the approach to assimilation has been popularized in the minds of Americans as the "melting pot," a metaphor for the "blending of the host society's norms with those of the immigrants."³ A more accurate metaphor to conceptualize the American ideology of assimilation is a sphere with a central core and an outer shell. At the core of the sphere is the ideology of Anglo-conformity, which requires that immigrants adapt to the societal norms of speaking the English language and supporting democratic ideals through becoming a voting citizen. The shell surrounding the core of the sphere is the ideology of cultural pluralism, which implies a respect for the various cultures represented in the overall population. In sum, conformity is central to the American approach to the assimilation of the immigrant; cultural diversity is on the periphery.⁴

Canadians, who view their nation metaphorically as a multicultural "mosaic," eschew the term "assimilation" altogether, since it connotes a sublimation of individual ethnic identities in favour of one united national identity. Instead, Canadians prefer the term "integration," which implies that immigrants are not expected to assimilate according to one normative pattern, but are encouraged to maintain the language and traditions of their native homelands.⁵ Canada's approach to the integration of immigrants is reinforced by the official governmental policy of multiculturalism, which Leonard Wertheimer, a Canadian librarian, has described as "the interplay and harmonious growth of several different cultures combining to...constitute a new

³ Marie F. Zielinska, "Multiculturalism and Library Services to Ethnic Communities," *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries* 32 (January-February 1978): 16.

⁴ For a discussion of the three assimilation ideologies at work in American society, namely, Anglo-conformity, the melting pot, and cultural pluralism, see Milton M. Gordon, "Assimilation in America: Theory and Reality," in *The Shaping of Twentieth-Century America: Interpretive Essays*, selected and with commentary by Richard M. Abrams and Lawrence W. Levine, 2d ed. (Boston: Little, Brown, 1971), 70-89 passim. For a more in-depth discussion of the viewpoint presented here, see, Plummer Alston Jones, Jr., "American Public Library Service to the Immigrant Community, 1876-1948; A Biographical History of the Movement and Its Leaders: Jane Maud Campbell (1869-1947), John Foster Carr (1869-1939), Eleanor (Edwards) Ledbetter (1870-1954), and Edna Phillips (1890-1968)," Ph.D. dissertation, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, 1991, 27-34.

⁵ Leonard Wertheimer, "Library Services to Ethnocultural Minorities: Philosophical and Social Bases and Professional Implications," *Public Libraries* 26 (1987): 27-34.

national culture."⁶

While remarkably similar, then, Canada and the United States, both immigrant nations, have distinctly different approaches to the assimilation of their immigrant populations. It is this distinctiveness that James Eayrs addressed in his thought-provoking article on Canadian-American relations written for the American bicentennial celebration. Eayrs gave graphic examples of the parallels, similarities, and unities between Canadians and Americans, and concluded that Canadians, who have experienced economic and cultural domination by the United States, are more interested in what he terms distinctivenesses, differentiations, and diversities. Eayrs defended his position as follows:

A Canadian wants to know what may be said to be uniquely Canadian in North America. A Canadian feels that unless his people are making some contribution to life on this continent demonstrably and recognizably their own, they have little reason to go on paying the price of being Canadian.⁷

The Canadian pattern of public library service to a multicultural society reflects this quality of distinctiveness to which Eayrs refers. A closer examination of the history of the development of Canadian public library service to immigrants and ethnic groups will make this distinctiveness more readily apparent. The Canadian experience emerges as a model for other immigrant nations where the encouragement of multicultural diversity is at the core, rather than on the periphery, of the assimilation process.

The history of Canadian public library service to immigrants and ethnic groups can, for the sake of convenience, be divided into four periods, each characterized by the following factors: (a) the number and types of immigrants coming to Canada; (b) the nature of public library service to immigrants and ethnic groups; and (c) the extent of cooperation among libraries and librarians. During the first period, covering the years 1867 to 1919, the efforts of individual libraries to provide books in two or more languages emerges as the dominant trend. The second period, 1920-1939, reveals a move toward library cooperation on a provincial basis with the Canadianization of immigrants as the shared goal. Diversification of services and regional

⁶ Leonard Wertheimer, "Multiculturalism and Public Libraries," *Canadian Library Journal* 30 (May-June 1973): 243. See also, Leonard Wertheimer, "Multicultural Toronto," *International Library Review* 12 (January 1980): 105-107.

⁷ James Eayrs, "The Cellophane Border," *Common Ground* 2 (July 1976): 27.

cooperation are of primary importance in the third period, 1940-1968. The period since 1969 has been highlighted by the establishment of a national network for the provision of multilingual books and the encouragement of further cooperative development at the regional level.

The First Period — 1867 to 1919

The 1st July 1867 is a momentous date in Canadian history. On that date the country came into being with an Act of the British Parliament, an Act which gave the British and the French, Canada's two founding cultural and linguistic groups, "constitutional guarantees safeguarding their respective linguistic and cultural identities."⁸ This concept of constitutional government with a bilingual framework created in Canada a situation that was, according to Marie Zielinska, Chief of the Multilingual Biblioservice at the National Library of Canada, "always more propitious for the maintenance of ethno-cultural identity than in many other immigration countries."⁹

By the time of Confederation in 1867, immigrants of German, Irish, Scottish, Polish, and Swiss origin, as well as some Blacks, had made Canada their home along side the more firmly established English and French. Previously, during and following the American Revolution, loyalists of British, German, and Dutch descent had migrated from the United States to Canada.¹⁰

The post-Confederation era was a period of westward expansion which included the building of the Canadian Pacific Railway. This labour intensive venture created a demand for labourers met by a new wave of Chinese immigrants, the first wave coming to Canada in 1858 as mine workers, gardeners, domestic servants, and laundrymen.¹¹

⁸ Zielinska, "Multiculturalism and Library Services to Ethnic Communities," 17.

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ Marie Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities: An Overview," *Library Trends* 29 (Fall 1980): 276.

¹¹ Ibid., and Leonard Wertheimer, "Library Service to Asians in Canada," in *ALA Yearbook, 1976* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1976), 274. See also, Ute Nicol and John Marshall, "South Asian Canadians — A Seminar to Facilitate Interaction (27-28 February 1981) at O.I.S.E.," *Ontario Library Review* 65 (December 1981): 232-234.

By the end of the nineteenth century, land for homesteading attracted large numbers of peasant farmers from eastern Europe. These immigrants tended to settle near others from the same country of origin, a behavioural pattern which eased the transition from the old country to the new, but slowed the integration of immigrant groups into the host society and contributed to the preservation of ancestral languages and cultures. Although the majority of these European immigrants were farmers and unskilled labourers, they brought with them an interest in books and reading, the need for which resulted in the creation of small ethnic libraries often administered by churches and other religious organizations.¹²

The first attempts by public libraries to serve newly arrived immigrants as well as established ethnic groups occurred toward the end of the nineteenth century. As early as 1885, the Toronto Public Library began to collect books in French and German as well as English, and, by 1909, provided books in many languages and reported an especially large circulation of books in Russian and Yiddish. This type of service was representative of other public libraries throughout Canada. The public library of Regina, Saskatchewan, for example, could by 1914 boast of a collection of books in English, German, French, Romanian, and Russian. The Ottawa Public Library was from its inception in 1906 a bilingual collection in English and French. Another library in Ontario, the Kitchener Public Library, was also bilingual, with English and German as the two languages.¹³

Ethnic groups themselves often donated books to public libraries and, in some cases, demanded the purchase of materials. Zielinska relates the following chain of events from the annals of the Saskatoon Public Library in Saskatchewan as representative of similar occurrences in other communities throughout Canada: (1) in 1916, the Library Board received nine requests for books in Russian and approved a budget of \$20 for their acquisition; (2) in 1934, several hundred German books were donated by the Concordia Club of Saskatoon and a cultural association in Germany; and (3) in 1935, when seven Ukrainian cultural organizations asked for books in Ukrainian, the Library Board agreed to make purchases and accept donations.¹⁴

¹² Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 276.

¹³ *Ibid.*, 276-277.

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, 277.

This pattern of give and take between ethnic groups and their organizations and public libraries occurred time and time again throughout Canadian public library history, a pattern not uncommon in the United States and other countries with large immigrant and ethnic populations. Campbell has noted that ethnic groups "often develop parallel systems of library and reading services — those catering to their general needs and those catering to the special needs of their own linguistic communities."¹⁵

Attempts by public libraries to serve ethnic minorities during this first period were limited to the provision of books in languages other than English in English-speaking Canada and in languages other than French in French-speaking Canada. Although it did not diverge from this pattern, one incident reported in the library literature of this period was remarkable in that it represented a particularly aggressive approach to library service — taking the library to the library users. In 1900, Alfred Fitzpatrick, through the auspices of the Canadian Reading Camp Association, provided camp libraries for the French-speaking lumberjacks working in English-speaking Ontario.¹⁶

The Second Period — 1920 to 1939

After World War I, Canadian immigration policy shifted in the 1920s in favour of the skilled European labourers rather than European peasant farmers as the majority of immigrants had been previously. This newest wave of newcomers settled primarily in the large urban centres of Ontario, which soon became the most prosperous province of Canada. These immigrants continued the tendency to cluster together in certain areas "often creating ethnic ghettos where their presence was sufficiently apparent to attract the attention of public librarians."¹⁷

In 1929, the Ontario Library Association (OLA) appointed a Committee on Books for the Foreign Born and charged its six members "to prepare a list of books suitable for use in Canadianization work among the foreign born citizens of Canada." Two years later the committee published its list of English books that libraries throughout Ontario had found

¹⁵ Campbell, "Worldwide Immigration and Its Relation to Library Services," 208.

¹⁶ Alfred Fitzpatrick, "Camp Libraries in Ontario," *Public Libraries* 9 (May 1904): 201-3.

¹⁷ Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 277

"especially valuable in their work with foreigners."¹⁸ Although the intent of such Canadianization efforts was to promote "the absorption of the foreign born into...national life," it reflected, according to Zielinska, "the spirit of 'Anglo-conformity' which, despite some individual efforts to promote cultural pluralism, was the dominant ideology in English-speaking Canada."¹⁹

An editorial appeared in the *Ontario Library Review* within a few months after this list was published that dramatized the irony of such literary efforts when the problem facing many librarians was how to serve illiterate library users. The librarian submitting the editorial was serving a population consisting primarily of French Canadians who could read neither French nor English, but could speak both. However, as the librarian noted, "they think in French." He turned to the public schools for "a list of supplementary reading in French" which he could use to start a French section in his library.²⁰ This case aside, the importance of the OLA committee's work was that it represented perhaps the first attempt at library cooperation on a provincial level.

The most significant document on Canadian libraries during this second period is *Libraries in Canada: A Study of Library Conditions and Needs* by the Commission of Enquiry. This Commission, sponsored by the Carnegie Foundation, was composed of three Canadian librarians who personally visited each province in Canada. Their mission was "first, to ascertain present library conditions in the various parts of Canada, and second, to obtain the opinions of interested and competent people as to what might be done for their improvement."²¹

The most enlightening finding, although somewhat depressing, was "that four-fifths of Canada's population of ten and a half million people...[was] utterly without library service of

¹⁸ "Report of the O.L.A. Committee on Books for the Foreign Born," *Ontario Library Review* 15 (May 1931): 165.

¹⁹ Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 278.

²⁰ George H. Knight, "Our Library Problem," *Ontario Library Review* 16 (November 1931): 48-49.

²¹ Commission of Enquiry, *Libraries in Canada: A Study of Library Conditions and Needs* (Toronto: Ryerson Press; Chicago: American Library Association, 1933), 5.

any kind."²² The notable exception to this pattern was library service in Ontario. The city libraries in this province were praised highly beginning with the Toronto Public Library which was heralded as "a Mecca for all Canadian librarians."²³ The Ottawa Public Library was singled out as well for its service to ethnic minorities, namely, French-speaking Canadians in Ontario. The Commission categorized the library as "exceptional in that it is bi-lingual [sic] to a unique degree." The Commission continued that "there is probably no other public library in the world that carries on its English and French work side by side to the same extent."²⁴

The bilingual public library at Kitchener was also complimented for its fine collection in German and English. The Commission noted that "one can conceive of a very interesting regional library that would have Kitchener at its centre, for the surrounding communities are largely German."²⁵

While doing research for an essay on American and Canadian library service to immigrants and ethnic minorities for the centennial celebration of the American Library Association (ALA), in 1976, Haynes McMullen, an American library historian, analyzed the Commission of Enquiry's report. Based on his reading, McMullen noted that the needs of immigrants and ethnic groups during the 1920s and 1930s was an increasing "concern...over the needs of the English-speaking minority in Quebec and the French-speaking minority in Ontario." The Commission had noted linguistic problems but, continued McMullen, "in describing existing services, few instances of work with minorities were mentioned."²⁶

McMullen also observed in his ALA Centennial essay that, during the 1920s and 1930s in the United States, American librarians, principally through the auspices of the ALA Committee on Work with the Foreign Born, were striving with publishers and other interested

²² Ibid., 139.

²³ Ibid., 50.

²⁴ Ibid., 50-51.

²⁵ Ibid., 51.

²⁶ Haynes McMullen, "Services to Ethnic Minorities other than Afro-Americans and American Indians," in Sidney Jackson, et al., *A Century of Service: Librarianship in the United States and Canada* (Chicago: American Library Association, 1976), 55.

organizations to provide library materials on America in foreign languages as well as in elementary English. These materials were to help immigrants and ethnic groups, particularly in the populous urban centres in the Northeast, Midwest, and West, learn to speak English and prepare for citizenship.²⁷

The dearth of reports and articles in the library literature of the period from a Canadian library's perspective may have indicated that, according to McMullen, "Canadian librarians were not so quick to report their struggles and triumphs in the published literature as were their colleagues to the south."²⁸ The reality is that the 1920s and 1930s were particularly fertile decades for American librarians working with immigrant and ethnic clientele; Canadian librarians would experience their heyday later.

The Third Period — 1940 to 1968

By 1940, the majority of the immigrant influx into Canada was a result of the disastrous conditions brought about by World War II in Europe. Although these highly skilled and educated Europeans were grateful to leave the hardships of the war behind them, they were nevertheless proud of their cultural heritage and eager to keep in touch with political, cultural, and social events in their native lands.²⁹ These immigrants, unlike their predecessors, sought out the public library within a short time after their arrival, rather than they themselves being discovered by the library.³⁰ The library was a source of information on the world they had left behind as well as a place to begin to discover the land that had welcomed them, a place "to help them get through the first months of loneliness."³¹

One Czechoslovakian newcomer wrote to the *Ontario Library Review*, in 1942, that he

²⁷ Ibid., 49-55 passim.

²⁸ Ibid., 55.

²⁹ Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 278.

³⁰ Josephine Phelan, "The Library and the New Canadian," *Ontario Library Review* 41 (May 1957): 85.

³¹ Charles Deane Kent, "New Canadians and the London Public Library and Art Museum," *Canadian Library Association Bulletin* 6 (March 1950): 205.

was "deeply impressed by the free accessibility of the books."³² He concluded his letter with a remark which could have been written by hundreds of immigrants in other communities throughout Canada, but especially in Ontario:

I know from my own experience and the experience of my wife that the first friends we found in this country were the Public Libraries in Burlington and Hamilton and we are very thankful indeed for what they have given and still are giving us.³³

The principal need of these immigrants and those to follow was, according to Wertheimer, "a knowledge of English adequate for smooth adaptation to Canadian social and economic life. The problem is recognized by the provincial governments, municipalities, and many semi-official bodies, which, besides helping newcomers to settle in a community, offer English classes at various levels and at different times to accommodate the housewife, as well as the breadwinner."³⁴ Classes such as these are described in the Canadian library literature of the 1950s, most of the accounts describing programmes in Ontario where the majority of the new immigrants were settling.³⁵

By 1950, Toronto was attracting most of the newcomers to Canada; almost 380,000 settled there between 1950 and 1960, which led to the proportion of the population of non-British origin approximating sixty percent.³⁶ In 1959, the Toronto Public Library Board (TPLB) commissioned Andrew Kapos, "a social psychologist with experience in surveys of various language groups in Canada," to survey the west and central areas of Toronto where the majority of the immigrants had settled to ascertain that changes had occurred and to assess current needs.³⁷

³² A. Lustig, "A Newcomer to Canada Looks at the Library," *Ontario Library Review* 26 (May 1942): 194.

³³ *Ibid.*, 196.

³⁴ Leonard Wertheimer, "Language Studies in Public Libraries," *ALA Bulletin* 62 (September 1968): 985.

³⁵ For example, see Joan Magee, "Work with New Canadians," *Ontario Library Review* 35 (May 1951): 122; and Joan Magee, "English for New Canadians," *Canadian Library Association Bulletin* 9 (November 1952): 83-85.

³⁶ H. C. Campbell, "Multi-lingual Library," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 38 (September 1963): 68.

³⁷ Henry C. Campbell, "The Immigrant and the Public Library," *Library Journal* 86 (1st June 1961): 2057.

The results of that study, a study also supported by the Toronto Board of Education, the Ontario Department of Education, and the Atkinson Charitable Foundation of Toronto, was published in 1960 in a report entitled *Toronto Speaks*. Kapos found that the greatest need was, not surprisingly, for language learning facilities, materials, and programmes. The TPLB, in response to these findings, worked in cooperation with the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) and the Metropolitan Educational Television Association to present a series of half-hour television broadcasts called "Let's Speak English." For many years the CBC had already been providing programmes "to foster an interest in the French language."³⁸

A few years prior to the publication of *Toronto Speaks*, the Toronto Public Library's chief librarian, H.C. Campbell, had established a Foreign Languages Collection. This collection opened on 14th May 1957, in an area of Toronto where large numbers of immigrants of many ethnic origins had settled. Not only were the local readers provided for, but also this collection functioned as a central distribution point for the whole city system. High standards of selection were ensured by the creation of a special committee for choosing representative literature as well as audiovisual and written language learning aids for each language group.³⁹

The Foreign Language Collection, renamed the Languages and Literature Centre, was moved to the newly constructed Parkdale Branch in 1964 and a lending service, operating on a rental basis, was established to help libraries outside Toronto. Blocks of books were sent to libraries requesting them, some as far away as British Columbia, for a period of six months.⁴⁰ A Self-Instruction Centre, which utilized teaching machines and programmed instruction to assist adults in learning English and other languages and in studying subjects of their choice from accounting and bridge to statistics and shorthand, opened in 1965.⁴¹

³⁸ H.C. Campbell, "New Canadians Tune in to the Public Library," *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries* 17 (March-April 1963): 63-64.

³⁹ Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 278-279.

⁴⁰ Leonard Wertheimer, "New Canadians and the Public Library: A Decade Later," *Unesco Bulletin for Libraries* 28 (May-June 1974): 141; and Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 279.

⁴¹ "Automated Teaching Laboratory Opens in Toronto Branch Library," *Library Journal* 90 (1st June 1965): 2516; and "A Self-Instruction Centre," *Wilson Library Bulletin* 39 (June 1965): 825-26.

In 1968, the establishment of the Metropolitan Toronto Library Board (MTLB) brought about the reorganization of libraries throughout the city and its five boroughs, each having its own library network. The Languages and Literature Centre was taken over by the new central body in 1968. A year later, the facility was moved to the central library building and its name abbreviated to the Languages Centre.

Along with these administrative and name changes, the character of the library changed. A fine literature and language learning centre developed. By the end of 1979 it had a collection of over 110,000 monographs in 70 languages, approximately 6,000 records, tapes, and cassettes for teaching 130 languages as well as teaching English as a second language and approximately 300 serial subscriptions, including newspapers in 37 languages and periodicals in 30 languages. About three-quarters of the monograph collection was kept at the Languages Centre; the remaining quarter was circulated throughout the Metropolitan Library System in the form of deposits.

As another development, the MTLB established the Languages Coordinator Office to organize the activities of Toronto libraries in the field of multilingual services and in order to give this office more power in the direction of city-wide services, the Coordinator's Office was replaced by a Regional Multilanguage Service Office. The manager of this service acted as executive director of the Metro Multilanguage Services Committee composed of representatives from all boroughs and city library systems.⁴²

The responsibility given this service was to develop a cooperative acquisitions and cataloguing programme as well as circulating deposits for language in which readership was not large enough to warrant acquisitions by individual library systems.⁴³ In 1980, Zielinska wrote that this reorganization of metropolitan Toronto's multilingual services system represented "the first serious attempt in Canada to create a functional, cooperative network in this area of library work. If successful," she claimed, "the system...[would] gradually cover the whole province,

⁴² Zielinska, "Public Libraries Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 279-280.

⁴³ For examples of the problems involved in setting up such an operation, see, Helena Mott, "Some Practical Implications of Multicultural Library Service," *International Library Review* 12 (January 1980): 109-12; and Leonard Wertheimer, "Foreign Books for Canada: Problems of Supply," *Ontario Library Review* 53 (December 1969): 203-206.

creating an organizational model for other provinces or even other countries."⁴⁴

While Toronto assumed the lead in the development of public library service to immigrants from 1940 to 1968, the library literature of this period provides other examples throughout Canada of ingenious efforts to provide a wide range of programmes and activities. The Ottawa Public Library, for example, conducted an Italian Book Festival entirely in Italian. The public library in Edmonton, Alberta, published a list of "special devices for encouraging immigrant use of the library," which was essentially a handy compilation of methods for publicizing library services to the immigrant community. A public library in British Columbia benefited from the advice of an East Indian library school student, who assisted in the development of the library's collection of books in Punjabi.⁴⁵

The Fourth Period — 1969 to the present

The lending service of Toronto's Languages Centre described above was so successful that within a few years the demands for assistance from outside Toronto began to overtax its facilities and staff. In 1968, the Canadian Library Association (CLA) sponsored a survey "to identify resources in and need for books in non-English languages."⁴⁶ Leonard Wertheimer, Languages Centre librarian, designed the survey, the results of which were published in 1970.⁴⁷

The adjective "non-English" used in the survey caused some confusion since, in 1969, while the survey was being taken, the French and English languages were recognized by the Official Languages Act of 1969 as Canada's official languages. Many results of the survey had to be adjusted since books in French held by a public library in English-speaking Canada would not be considered "foreign." The survey, as summarized by Zielinska, showed that: (1) many

⁴⁴ Zielinska, "Public Library Service to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 280.

⁴⁵ "Italian Book Festival Held in Ottawa Children's Room," *Ontario Library Review* 52 (September 1968): 156-157; Eleanor F. Cock, "Specific Devices for Encouraging Immigrant Use of the Library," *Edmonton Public Library News Notes* 6 (December 1961): 65-66; and Gurdial S. Pannu, "Punjabi Books in Victoria Public Library," *British Columbia Library Quarterly* 25 (January 1962): 19-20.

⁴⁶ Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 280.

⁴⁷ D.W. Miller, "Non-English Books in Canadian Public Libraries," *Canadian Library Journal* 27 (March-April 1970): 123-129.

libraries throughout Canada were interested in providing services to all ethnocultural groups in their area; (2) of those surveyed, 72% were already acquiring books in several languages, although in the majority of cases the book stock was built up by gifts rather than purchases; (3) only the larger libraries could cope with the problems inherent in dealing with multilingual materials, particularly cataloguing; and (4) all libraries responding would welcome assistance in the form of loans of fully processed books.⁴⁸

These findings documented the need for a central agency to serve as a backup for public libraries throughout Canada. A committee of the CLA studied the issue and in 1970 recommended the creation of a multilingual library within the National Library of Canada. The fact that this recommendation coincided with the introduction of multiculturalism as the official ethnocultural relations policy of the Canadian federal government fostered a positive attitude toward the committee's recommendation and facilitated its speedy implementation. In the fall of 1973, the Multilingual Biblioservice (MBS) began operation as a division of the National Library of Canada with Marie Zielinska in charge of its programme.⁴⁹

Since Canadian public libraries fall under provincial jurisdiction, the MBS works through provincial library systems rather than with individual libraries. As Zielinska pointed out, the "function of MBS is not to replace the collections of public libraries but rather to supplement them with material of current interest which can be more efficiently used through a circulating system." Through the coordinated efforts of provincial and national library authorities, shipments of books in non-official languages are forwarded to communities throughout each province in accordance with predetermined local needs.

Over the past eighteen years of MBS operation, from 1973 through 1991, demand for materials has grown rapidly, attributable primarily to increasing awareness of the service by libraries and members of ethnocultural communities. Presently, books are supplied in thirty-two non-official, non-aboriginal languages, that is in languages other than English and French, and Inuit and North American Indian languages. Ironically, a survey taken earlier, in 1976, by the

⁴⁸ Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 280-281.

⁴⁹ *Ibid.*, 281; and Marie Zielinska, "Multilingual Biblioservice," *Canadian Library Journal* 33 (October 1976): 441-443, 445. See also, "Multilingual Biblioservice," *Feliciter* 21 (May 1975): 13, and "Librarians Praise NL Biblioservice as Second Year of Operation Begins," *Feliciter* 22 (January 1976): 3.

Directors of the Ontario Regional Library System determined that 59 languages were handled by the various libraries of Ontario alone. It has been estimated that, in order to fulfil the reading needs of the majority of Canadians, the MBS will eventually have to provide collections in at least seventy languages to reach approximately 98% of the target population.⁵⁰

Material supplied by the MBS is, for the most part, non-scholarly and intended for leisure reading. Deposit collections consist of 40% contemporary fiction, 30% children's books, and 30% nonfiction, mainly biographies and books on topics of cultural or practical interest, including folklore, travel, gardening, cooking, and hobbies. Currently the circulating collection of the MBS consists of 400,000 volumes, including, since 1983, books in large print format, and since 1986, talking books on cassette. Zielinska reported in 1988 that 90% of the MBS collection is regularly in circulation.⁵¹

Since the fall of 1986, the MBS has been working toward the development of an MBS multilingual online system with acquisitions, cataloguing, and circulation capabilities. The MINISIS online database management system, developed in Canada at the International Development Research Centre, was the computer system of choice, since it will accommodate both Roman and non-Roman scripts. Retrospective conversion of MBS holdings began in the fall of 1987 when the Roman script portion of the MINISIS system became operational. As of July 1989, retrospective conversion of 80% of the MBS collection had been accomplished. Long-range plans call for the completion of retrospective conversion for both Roman and non-Roman script materials by the end of 1991.⁵²

⁵⁰ Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 281-282, 285 (quotation is from page 285); Marie Zielinska, "Multilingual Biblioservice: Canada's National Library Serves the Canadian Ethnic Mosaic," *COMLA Newsletter* 60 (June 1988): 2-3; and Letter, Zielinska, MBS to Jones, Elon College, 28th July 1989.

⁵¹ Zielinska, "Multilingual Biblioservice: Canada's National Library Serves the Canadian Ethnic Mosaic," 2-3; Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 282; and "The Lending Collection of MBS Special-Format Books," *National Library News* 21 (February 1989): 3. See also, for an introduction to library service to children in Canada, Leonard Wertheimer, "Serving Children in Multilingual Communities," *Canadian Library Journal* 36 (February-April 1979): 37-41.

⁵² Zielinska, "Multilingual Biblioservice: Canada's National Library Serves the Canadian Ethnic Mosaic," 3, 6; Witold Merkis, "Multilingual DBMS Access," *Interact* (October 1988): 97-100; Letter, Zielinska, MBS, to Jones, Elon College, 28th July 1989.

That the MBS is vital to the operations of libraries in provinces throughout Canada is evinced in two important documents promulgated by the Canadian Library Association (CLA). In August 1986, the Multilingual Services Interest Group of the CLA published its "Guidelines for Multicultural Library Services in Canadian Public Libraries." In June 1987, the CLA adopted a "Statement on CLA Policy on Library Service to Linguistic and Ethnic Minorities," which was endorsed later, in November 1988, by the CLA Council. Cooperation in the area of multilingual public library service between the United States and Canada, notably in educational and publishing enterprises, is manifested most dramatically by the active leadership of Zielinska in the Ethnic Materials and Information Exchange Round Table (EMIERT) of the American Library Association (ALA), which was established in 1983.⁵³

Conclusion

Remarkable progress in the development of public library service to immigrants and ethnic groups has taken place in both Canada and the United States during the last century. Canadian and American libraries have evolved distinctly different approaches to the provision of multilingual public library service. The differences are fundamentally related to differences in approach to the assimilation of immigrants and ethnic groups.

Although the United States as a nation does not impose uniformity on its citizenry, Americans as a people generally expect conformity of immigrants and ethnic groups to the normative patterns of speaking English and becoming a voting citizen. Ironically, within this framework of conformity, American librarians as a profession have emphasized pluralistic values in library service. Thus materials provided by public libraries in non-English languages have traditionally been of two types: (1) recreational reading to help newly arrived immigrants as well as established ethnic groups to adapt to American patterns of behaviour; and (2) instructional materials and representative literary selections for students of foreign languages and English as a second language.

⁵³ "Statement on CLA Policy on Library Service to Linguistic and Ethnic Minorities," photocopy of document supplied to Jones by Zielinska, 28th July 1989; and "Guidelines for Multicultural Library Services in Canadian Public Libraries, Prepared by Multilingual Services Interest Group, Canadian Library Association, August, 1986," *Feliciter* 33 (June 1987): 6-7; and *ALA Handbook of Organization 1990/1991 and Membership Directory* (Chicago: ALA, 1990), 170.

Taken in 1979 and published in 1980, the latest survey of multilingual public libraries in the United States showed that the development of multilingual public library services has been largely at the metropolitan or regional level in the major urban centres, primarily in the Northeast, Midwest, and West, where the majority of immigrants settle and where ethnic communities of long standing are located. North Carolina, in the South, a state with relatively small foreign born population, has developed the only statewide system for the delivery of multilingual public library service.⁵⁴

Rather than funding a central lending library for library materials in non-English languages, the Federal government in the United States has opted to fund multilingual library programmes through Title 1 grants of the Library Services and Construction Act (LSCA). Individual states receiving Title 1 LSCA grants are required to use these funds for resources and services for the non-English-speaking residents. Most states route these LSCA funds to public libraries in their major population centres.⁵⁵

Canada, on the other hand, has developed a system whereby individual public libraries cooperate on a regional, provincial, and national basis, through the MBS, to provide multilingual public library service to Canadian immigrants and ethnic groups.⁵⁶ This pattern is distinctive, but also necessary in a country where individual ethnic identities are not sublimated. Without this distinctive pattern of library service to immigrants and ethnic groups, Canada could not maintain its multicultural mosaic.

The United States and Canada have thus evolved two distinctively different approaches to attaining the ideal of the pluralistic society, an ideal championed by Campbell and shared by

⁵⁴ Natalia B. Bezugloff, "Library Services to Non-English Language Ethnic Minorities in the United States," *Library Trends* 29 (Fall 1980): 259-274.

⁵⁵ See, for example, Patrick M. Valentine, "The North Carolina Foreign Language Centre: A Public Library Service," *Public Library Quarterly* 5 (Winter 1984): 47-61.

⁵⁶ As of 1980, according to Zielinska, there were regional library systems in Nova Scotia, Ontario, Saskatchewan, Alberta, and British Columbia. See, Zielinska, "Public Library Services to Canadian Ethnocultural Communities," 285-90. For an example of library services for immigrants and ethnic groups at the provincial level, see, Harold Brian Attin, "Newcomer Services of the Ontario Government," *Ontario Library Review* 65 (December 1981): 225-31. See also, M.L. Wertheimer, "Multicultural Libraries," *Emergency Librarian* 5 (September-October 1977): 23-24.

Canadians and Americans alike. Canadian and American public libraries, in turn, have evolved patterns of multilingual library service which reflect the divergent philosophies inherent in these two contrasting assimilation ideologies. The differences between how immigrants and ethnic groups are assimilated and how public libraries cooperate in this process, then, are the distinctivenesses, to use the term preferred by Eayrs, which separate not only Canadians from Americans, but also Canadian from American library service.

CALL FOR PAPERS

The CLA Library History Interest Group is planning to present a programme on library history at the Annual Conference of the Canadian Library Association in Winnipeg, Manitoba, 11th-17th June 1992. Particular attention will be placed on Canadian library history. Selected papers may be published by the Library History Interest Group in conjunction with CLA.

Papers are solicited which fit any one of the following categories of library history:

- Overviews and syntheses.
- Studies of particular institutions and developments, which provide generalizable interpretations or else serve as case studies.
- Methodological studies which look at various aspects of research in library history.

It is anticipated that papers will probably be based upon work done during the course of a personal, funded, institutional, or degree research project. Papers should not have been published elsewhere. They should also be fully documented and be accompanied by photographs where appropriate. Papers may be in either English or French.

Deadline dates: 1st February 1992 for outlines or drafts; 15th May 1992 for completed papers. For further information or submission of outlines, drafts, and papers contact as soon as possible: Professor Peter F. McNally, Graduate School of Library and Information Studies, McGill University, 3459 McTavish Street Montréal, Québec, H3A 1Y1. Telephone: (514) 398-4204; Fax: (514) 398-7193.