

HIGHLIGHTS OF OUR RECENT ACHIEVEMENTS



Intercultural Institute of Montreal

INTERCULTURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Issues and questions raised

In 1994 IIM turned its attention to the state of intercultural relations within the social movements and community development in Quebec. A series of questions were raised for reflection and investigation : to what extent do communities of diverse cultural origins participate in the networks of community and social action groups ? What initiatives have been taken to build bridges between these communities that compose Quebec society of today ? What is the nature of community discourse with respect to cultural, racial and religious diversity ? More over we at the IIM felt that there is a need to focus on neighborhood living in a multiethnic and multicultural environment.

Actions taken

- A project to do a survey on intercultural/interethnic relations in the Mile End and Parc Extension districts of Montreal. We consulted 60 Quebecois, ethnocultural and multiethnic organizations. (1995-96)
- A project for intercultural neighbourhood living was initiated to bring together three communities (Quebecois, Greek and Portuguese) to examine their historical roots in the Mile End and Parc Extension neighbourhoods. (1996-97)
- Introduction of a new program entitled “ Social Movements and Cultural Pluralism” with a goal to encourage participation of people from immigrant and ethnocultural communities in Quebec’s social movements and to propose actions for intercultural relations within these movements. (1998)
- In order to implement these goals we have carried out two important projects in partnership with 12 community organizations : a. Development of Intercultural Modalities for Cooperation at the Grassroots.(1999-2000); b. Interculturality in Community Action. (2002-2003)

The reports of these projects are available at the Institute and can be obtained upon request.

INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE AND SOCIAL ACTION

In many cultures of the world, religion and culture are inseparable, thus inter-religious dialogue is integral to intercultural relations. This has been one of the basic principles of intercultural practices at the Institute. There have been innumerable programs and activities offered over the past four decades. But in recent years, we can observe a resurgence of interest in diversity of religions and in inter-religious questions

in the school system as well as in social interactions. Communities of particular religious origins have been targeted for anti-social activities and students of certain religious background have been affected by unfavorable institutional policies. In this present context, we need to understand the deeper issues related to religious diversity in our societies and their social implications.

Programs offered

2002-2003

- A colloquium on Conditions for and Obstacle to Inter-religious Dialogue where people from four different religious communities were invited to speak and engage in a dialogue. (Christianity, Judaism, Islam and Sikhism)
- A one-day training program on Inter-religious Conflict Resolution. Four different approaches to conflict resolution developed by various organizations, were offered.

2003-2004

- A Public Forum on the theme of *Religious Traditions and Social Responsibility*, was held at *Centre Communautaire de Loisirs Côte-des-Neiges* in a multi-ethnic neighborhood of Côte des Neiges. Leaders of six religious communities (Jewish, Muslim, Christian, Sikh, Buddhist and Hindu) were invited to share the views of their traditions on social responsibility. Questions such as , How can we engage in social action with an inter-religious approach ? and is inter-religious dialogue in itself a social responsibility ?

DIRECT SERVICES TO THE PUBLIC

Over the years many services were and are still being offered in order to meet the needs and requests of people from various communities, organizations and institutions. Some of these services compliment our education and training programs and others provide information on diverse cultural communities, religions, intercultural resources, that are sought by people.

Referral Service

Besides our library and ethnodocumentation services, we provide Referral Services to the public. The following is a statistical profile of this Service :

- An average of 350 people use this service every year
- 50% information and reference; 40% documentation et 10% demands of resource persons.
- Profile of those who use this service : community organizations, social and health-care institutions, educational institutions, immigrant/ethnocultural and multicultural organizations, government institutions, media, individuals and students.

Intercultural Bulletin Board

This monthly Bulletin Board provides information on intercultural activities that are going on in various communities and organizations. It also serves an important instrument to create and maintain links between people and groups active in the intercultural field.

(500 subscribers to this Bulletin Board from different regions of Quebec)

Intercultural Consulting and Counseling Service

The IIM offers an expert consulting service to individuals and professional assistance to community organizations, civic and public institutions. Its aim is to enable these individuals and organizations to evaluate their needs, clarify their intercultural training objectives, assist in the creation of intercultural programs, help to reach and establish contacts with diverse communities, assist in creating intercultural programs, and provide follow-up to training in intercultural intervention.

Statistical profile of this service 2003

- 135 individual consultations
- 20 assessment and evaluation of theses, projects and articles

RESEARCH - ACTION AND INTERCULTURAL RESSOURCE MATERIALS

The IIM has always been engaged in reflection and action. But in 1989 we began to do research-action through particular projects on various issues and topics. Particularity of this research-action is the intention to explore and articulate an intercultural and community-based research method. These projects are the means to develop resource materials for those who are confronted with cultural diversity in their workplace. Ethnocultural and intercultural investigation into the realities of specific cultural communities and social groups, such as immigrant families, youth, elderly, have been the focus of these projects in recent years.

A list of resource publications 2003

La gang : une chimère à apprivoiser. Marginalité et transnationalité chez les jeunes Québécois d'origine afro-antillaise. Éditions du Boréal, Montreal, 2003. (in french only). Authors : Marc Perreault & Gilles Bibeau (with the collaboration of Kalpana Das).

Living Conditions and Mental Health of the Elderly in Ethnocultural Communities of Montreal. Analytical report. Intercultural Institute of Montreal. Authors : Lomomba Emongo , Anee-Josée Grégoire (under the direction of K.Das) In english and french.

Caring for the Elderly in Ethnocultural Communities. A Reference Guide. Intercultural Institute of Montreal. Authors : Kalpana Das & Lomomba Emongo (collaboration of Anne-Josée Grégoire). In english and french.

L'interculturalité dans le travail communautaire. A Video training document. Intercultural Institute of Montreal. (Conception : Kalpana Das, Direction : Maurice Bulbulian) In french only.

INTERculture JOURNAL

INTERculture intends to contribute to the discovery and emergence of viable alternative approaches to the fundamental problems of contemporary Man, in both theory and practice. Its approach is meant to be integral, which means : Intercultural, Inter and trans-disciplinary and dialogical (beyond duality between mythos and logos)

A list of last issues of Interculture

"Beyond the religion and culture of Human Rights, the Nation State and the Rule of Law. A chronicle / testimony of IIM's research-action (1970-2002)", By Robert Vahon. Issues 143, 144, 146.

"Worldviews in collision. The Challenge of Genetic Engineering". By Scott Eastham. Issue 145.

"The Hindu and Haitian youth of Montreal speak about their community, identity, marginality and help-seeking strategies". By Lomomba Emongo and Kalpana Das. Issue 142.

"At the threshold of the African soul. The Fulani-Mininanka way". By Yaya Diallo. Issue 141



40 years of existence!

Our story in brief

For the first two decades (1960s and 1970s), the Intercultural Institute of Montreal had devoted its energy toward opening up various vistas for reflection and raising public awareness of cultural, racial and religious diversity in Quebec and Canadian societies as well as in the world. In order to reach this goal, a multitude of programs and services were developed and offered to the general public, communities and institutions. Features of our action had been the following : providing information on cultures and religions of the world, giving voices to the immigrant and ethnocultural communities, exposing immigrant communities to the culture(s) of the host society, advocacy for the Aboriginal Nations of Canada, offering innovative intercultural education and training programs for the key actors (professionals) in community organizations and in various institutions, elaborating methodologies and approaches for intercultural and inter-religious relations and for research-action, publishing an international Journal INTERculture and other documents.

Since mid-1980s we have integrated explicitly three other features into our action, namely the international dimension of interculturality, empirical research-action projects on social issues concerning diverse communities and research-action for intercultural community development. Moreover, the inclusion of local-global and North-South dynamics of interculturality and the concern for affecting social change in the pluralistic context of our societies, had given a new direction to our work.

Thus since 1990s a new image of the Intercultural Institute of Montreal began to emerge. Today its vision, philosophy and action are articulated around three fundamental notions : *grassroots*, *interculturality and alternatives*. Revitalization of civil society and its diverse communities, engaging in community-based interculturalism and search for intercultural alternatives for our common good, find their expression in our programs, activities and services.

Visit our new Web site

www.iim.qc.ca

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